

"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The **Word and Work**



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1998

90 YEARS YOUNG,

By the Grace of God



R. H. Boll --

The writer and his writings

The WORD Became FLESH

"In taking part of flesh and blood, Jesus partook of our infirmities, and bore our weaknesses, as, in his own body, he bore our sins. It is not in his maturer years that we are to behold the man Christ Jesus. . . It is rather in the feeble infant in its unrocked cradle, the helpless Christ-child, nurtured upon a mother's bosom, or hastening to her side with pattering feet for protection or for solace . . .

"Had he not assumed our nature, he could not have borne our griefs or carried our sorrows."

-- Robert Richardson (biographer of Alexander Campbell). Communings in the Sanctuary

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THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

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Dennis L. Allen, Missions

Bennie Hill, New & Notes

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90 YEARS YOUNG, by God's Grace

Alex V. Wilson

Thanks be to the Lord, He has preserved and used **Word and Work** for over 90 years now. The first issue appeared in March 1908. Dr. D. L. Watson, assisted by Stanford Chambers, published it in New Orleans. An editorial stated, "One of the leading ideas in establishing **Word and Work** was to locate isolated congregations and put them to work, by telling them how well others are doing who are similarly situated." A yearly subscription cost \$1.00. (The price is still low, considering 90 years of inflation.)

New Orleans continued to be its home through the end of 1915, when it moved to Louisville. Then from 1916 - 1956 R. H. Boll was its editor--forty years! He was without doubt its most outstanding writer and editor, though he came under repeated attacks from men who didn't know much of the grace of God.

In January 1991 we put out a special issue celebrating **WW's** 75 years of being published in Louisville. We reran an article by each former editor, plus a biographical piece on Brother Chambers. On this present special occasion we thought it would be a blessing to hear some of Brother Boll's rich teaching again. So we have given this entire issue over to him, except for the following article which is *about* him. It is the first in a series taken from a paper I gave at Pepperdine last July.

If Brother Boll were alive, he would protest our emphasizing him, especially his life and character. His daughter Virginia, now living in California, remembers how as a girl she overheard someone ask her father's permission to write his biography. RHB replied, "If you want to help Christians, write about the Lord Jesus rather than me." And when the Portland Ave. Church honored him upon his completing 50 years of ministry there, he began his response by quoting Psalm 115:1, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be glory."

Why then are we doing what he disliked? For one reason, because we have much to learn not only from **what** he taught, but **how**. Or to put it another way, he blessed others by the character of his life as well as the content of his preaching. On the bulletin board of the School of Biblical Studies there is a poster that says, "What we teach you to know is less important than Whom we teach you to love." He would agree. Second (and this is closely tied to the first reason), we can greatly benefit from studying the lives of godly people. God knows this; that's why the Bible contains much history and biography.

And church history, modern as well as ancient, is stimulating for the same reason.

Third, Brother Boll was the most influential leader among the churches to which the majority of WW readers belong. Yet to the younger and middle-age folks in our congregations, he and his co-workers are nothing more than names. The present generation needs to know of the joys, sacrifices, struggles, strengths and weaknesses of our predecessors. That is why we recently published Tom Bradshaw's biography of Brother Boll and why we are running my Pepperdine talk in this and the following months of WW. (The two overlap sometimes, but not very often, since I was asked to speak of him only as a writer and editor.) We believe after you read this issue you will agree our decisions were wise. For God gave him a great gift of unfolding His Word in a very helpful way.

R. H. BOLL AS A WRITER, EDITOR, and CHRISTIAN

Part 1

Alex V. Wilson, 1998

Introduction: My personal relationship with Boll

R. H. Boll preached in Louisville for 32 years before I got to hear him. But that wasn't my fault. They tell me I was perhaps a month old when I first attended the Portland Avenue Church of Christ and did hear him. So I drank in Bible teaching from "Brother Boll" along with my mother's milk.

Our family heard him not only on Sunday mornings but also Sunday nights and in his Friday night Bible classes. And a highlight of each summer was "tent-meeting time," when he would preach six nights a week for one, two or maybe three weeks straight. We read the *Word and Work* too, which he edited. Yet little did anyone dream that when Boll died in 1956 (I was a college freshman then), my dad--a businessman and church elder--would succeed him in the pulpit. Or that 28 years after that, I would become the preacher there, and later on the editor of the *Word and Work*. Excuse these references to our personal experiences, but that's the only kind we've had.

Is it possible for someone with that background to write about his controversial man objectively and impartially? You must be the judge of that. It may help you to know that the present writer doesn't agree with all that Boll believed (and *he* wouldn't get uptight about that). If

you ask me, I could list several points on which we differ. But though he's not my pope, my indebtedness to him is incalculable.

Now on to our subject: R. H. Boll as a writer, editor, and Christian.

I. Boll's Attitudes In Writing And Policies In Editing

Before 1916 Boll wrote numerous articles in various publications: the *Gospel Advocate*, *The Way*, *Christian Leader and The Way*, the *Gospel Review*, and *Word and Work* (which was then edited by Stanford Chambers down in New Orleans). He also gained editorial experience with three of those journals. From 1909-1915 he was front page editor (perhaps today we would call him a regular columnist) for the *Gospel Advocate*. When he left that position, he was offered space in five other papers, but chose to become editor of *Word and Work*, which was moved to Louisville. He continued in that post for forty years, from 1916 till his death. Besides his voluminous editorials and articles in that magazine, for decades he wrote a Sunday School quarterly for adults. In addition, he wrote over ten books, plus a number of booklets and pamphlets.

In *what* he himself wrote, and *how* he wrote it, and in the writings of others which he *included* in his magazine, seven characteristics impress me especially. First, his attitudes: he held strong convictions, yet valued doctrinal freedom for all. Also, he was positive in emphasis, gracious toward those who differed from him, broad in fellowship [within the limits of the Gospel], and spiritual in character. Second, in *method* he was mainly expository. Let's take these up one at a time.

A. He held Strong Convictions--was Not a Conformist

He was not wishy-washy, but stood firmly for the truth of God's Word as he understood it. The depth of his convictions is obvious, for through decades of strong opposition he taught and defended what he believed. As a German ex-Roman Catholic himself, he held Martin Luther in high regard. Early in his ministry, before controversy swirled around him, Boll penned these prophetic words:

You must lay aside all that preoccupies your heart and your mind, and go straight to God's Word. There listen, there learn, and obey, no matter where it may lead . . . But if you follow that principle, you will have occasion to face enemies and say, as Luther once said, "Here I stand--God help me! I can not do otherwise."

Being committed to Scripture, Boll opposed what he believed were unbiblical practices and beliefs. He warned his readers against both moral evils and doctrinal errors. For instance, it was his belief that Christians who fought and killed in their country's wars were wrong, and he said so more than once. In fact he came under government investigation for several months during World War I because of

what he wrote in that regard.¹ At least once in his writings he denounced abortion, a practice not often dealt with in those days. He spoke out strongly against modernism with its denials of the supernatural. He exposed the false doctrines he himself had been taught growing up in Roman Catholicism.

And he warned his readers against the cults. For example, in 1909 he wrote in the *Gospel Advocate*, "It is because of our great ignorance of things prophetic that often simple Christians . . . are fascinated and taken in by Mormons, Adventists, Russellites [Jehovah's Witnesses], and other isms that make great stock of prophecy." Indeed, historian Hans Rollmann concludes from his research that during Boll's "tenure as frontpage editor of the *Gospel Advocate* from 1909 to 1915, he wrote no less than 10 articles directly against Russell [Charles Taze Russell, founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses] . . . in fact Boll was the most persistent and prolific critic of Russell in the *GA* . . ." This is ironic in light of the insinuations made by several of Boll's later critics that his prophetic views were in some ways shaped by Russell.

For a while Boll was a columnist for the *Gospel Review*. Every other month his column was entitled "In Defense of Truth." In the intervening months it was called "Homiletic Paragraphs." Probably he enjoyed writing the latter more than the former. Establishing the veracity of the faith was important. But explaining the contents of the faith was more important, as we see next.

B. He was Positive in Emphasis—Not Combative

Though Boll opposes what he believed was evil or erroneous he did not major on such themes. The main focus of his writings was on what is true and upbuilding. Warnings were made when and as needed. But his delight was to present the breath-taking Good News of God's grace, and the riches of His provisions for our growth in love and all-around holiness.

He did not enjoy controversy. True, he refused to back off from writing and preaching about endtime prophecy after that became a bone of contention in 1915 and following. Some faulted him for that. But he tried not to over-emphasize eschatology nor to neglect other aspects of Biblical truth. And his attitude affected not only what he taught, but how. Earl West comments, "It was one of [Boll's] convictions to be gentle. He observed that one could not keep a horse by whipping it; one must feed it, so he believed preaching [and writing--AVW] should not concentrate on negatives."

Boll was reluctantly willing to engage in written debate when he felt it was necessary, but even then he sought to be constructive and

1. Michael Casey, a faculty member of Pepperdine University, wrote a paper on "Government Surveillance of the Churches of Christ in World War I." He points out that in Boll's writing he "did not condemn the war, nor did he oppose Christians doing military duty, but he encouraged draft age men to do "that it was wrong for Christians to buy Liberty Bonds and War Stamps." As a result of this (plus the fact that Boll was still a German citizen, for his application for U. S. citizenship was not finalized at that time), one government agent wrote to another asking if he considered Boll "a proper subject for summary arrest under a Presidential warrant." Nothing was done, one reason being that the war was nearly over.

2. Boll's evaluation of debating (Feb. 1936 *Word and Work*) began as follows: "So far as my acquaintance with religious discussion goes, there is no poorer method of seeking to arrive at truth than a debate, especially an

He seemed to fulfill that aim. During the 1940's a librarian at Harding College more than once told some students that if they tired of magazines that argued and fought all the time and wanted to find something positive and upbuilding, they should read *Word and Work*.

The first thing we want to say about the new *Word and Work* is that it goes out on a mission of peace and good will. . . . It is not designed to compete with any other publication. . . . It is our chief aim to produce a clean magazine. . . . free from objectionable controversy, from personalities, and bitter sayings. . . .

Boll deplored and avoided the combative attitude which became popular in many Churches of Christ publications. In his first editorial for *Word and Work*, he wrote,

When in 1927 he engaged in a written debate with H. Leo Boles regarding endtime prophecies, the latter remarked in his concluding statement, "I have had many discussions and many kinds of opponents, but I have never had a more courteous and brotherly opponent than Brother R. H. Boll. . . . Our differences and a discussion of them do not keep me from esteeming him very highly in Christ Jesus."

That differences of views and doctrines should exist in the church of the Lord is not strange. Nor is it in itself bad. When free brethren study God's word independently it is to be expected that on one point and another they will arrive at different conclusions. Where brotherly love rules, these different. . . findings and the discussions that follow, are mutually helpful. Where motives and other than love control, differences result in dissension, strife, bitterness, sectarian parties and partisan hate. The blame in such a case, however, does not rest on the differences themselves, but on the spirit and attitude of those who differ. The wrong comes in when lines are drawn, when brethren are branded, ostracized, distellowshipped

loving? He felt that when differing views were compared in a loving manner, truth-seekers could benefit from it. But if harshness prevailed, all were losers. Here is how he expressed it in 1938:

oral debate. I have heard of some exceptions, but as the general rule, I think the statement will stand." [AVW's emphasis.] After two full pages, Boll's last sentence was, "Promiscuous debating, especially among brethren, is productive of evil rather than good."

However, to defend himself against continuing allegations of extremism and also to set forth what he actually believed re: prophecy, Boll presented to the *Gospel Advocate* 10 propositions for debate. The Sept. 1919 *WW* announced the propositions. They included the false charges that he taught "Russellism" (Jehovah's Witnesses' doctrines) and "Adventism," and that Christ would return "in mortal flesh"; that Boll set the date for Christ's return, and taught that God's kingdom has not been established. He wished to deny that the prospect of death--rather than that of Christ's return--is to be emphasized as a motive for preparation. He wished to affirm that God's kingdom in its present stage will be followed by another, wider manifestation of the Kingdom when Christ comes, in which He and His Church will rule over all the nations. This debate was not held then, though 8 years later the Boles-Boll debate in *Gospel Advocate* dealt with some of those issues.

[To be continued]

"ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD"

R. H. BOLL

"And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28)

How often quoted is this passage, and, how often *misquoted*, and also *misapplied*! It does not say that everything works for good. Often people comfort themselves and one another in losses, misfortunes, sufferings--sometimes even in their sins--by saying "Well, I guess it's all for the best." But that is far from the truth, and neither does this passage say so. What it says is that all things work together combining, co-operating, for the ultimate good--the great final blessing--of a certain class of people, namely those who *love God*; and this class is further defined as those who have been called according to His purpose. Let us note here first, who these are that are said to love God; and then let us see how they are called, and according to what purpose; and thirdly let us see how they came so to love God.

WHO ARE THEY THAT LOVE GOD?

Now those that love God are known by three outstanding marks.

1. *They keep His Commandments.* "If ye love me," said the Lord Jesus, "ye will keep my commandments"; and "he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." (John 14:15, 21.) "For this is the love of God," said John, "that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5:3.)

2. *Those who love God are a people who love not the world.* "Love not the world," John writes again, "neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:15, 16.)

3. *Those who love God show it in the fact that they love the children of God.* "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen cannot love God whom he hath not seen. And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." (1 John 4:20, 21.)

These then are three identifying marks of those who love God: (1) that they keep His commandments; (2) that they love not the world; and (3) that they love the children of God.

THE CALL AND THE PURPOSE

If now we inquire further about their being "called according to his purpose"—we find no difficulty as to the nature of the call, nor what is the purpose of God back of it. "He calls you," says Paul, "through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thess. 2:14.) There you have both the call, and the purpose of it: the call came by the gospel; and God's purpose was that those so called should share the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. This agrees perfectly with the context of our passage. "For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son; that he might be the first-born among many brethren: and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. 8: 29, 30.) It is the purpose of God to bring many sons unto glory (Heb. 2:10)—and the glory will be this, that they shall be like Him when He shall be manifested. (1 John 3:2.)

WHY DO THEY LOVE GOD?

There is a glorious future awaiting those who love God; and the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed toward them. But who are they that love God in such manner? How did it come that they so love God? Was it because of their love of God that God called them? Or, was their love of God due to the call? Not the former but the latter. God loved them

first, and called them first, before ever they knew Him or loved Him. God's love ever takes the initiative. "Herein is love," says John, "not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10.) And then he says flatly, "We love because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19.)

This then is the secret of their love for God, as also of their love for the brethren--it was begotten in their hearts by the love of God. Therefore they love Him, because He first loved them. No one loves God, no one can love God, unless first he has heard and known and tasted and received God's love for him. But then he can and will. Instead of straining to work up love for God we do well sometimes to drop everything and go back to God's love for us, to realize again the forgiving love of God, the love so great and faithful, which does not fluctuate with our feelings, nor does it depend on our worth. He loves you because it is you; and He loves you as His own child because you have come to Him through Jesus Christ His Son. Thenceforth it is yours to love God.

And to them that love God, all things work together for good--good things, bad things, sorrows or joys; gain or loss; friends or foes; sickness or health; honor or reproach--the kindness of friends, the malice of enemies; the blessings of peace, the horrors of war; dark hours and bright--all are woven together, and not a thread too many or too few, to make up the pattern of God's design--namely, the good of them that love God, who are the called according to His purpose. These are some of the things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.

THE GREATEST SAINT

R. H. Boll - 1934

If God should point out to us the greatest sinner in the world, we might be surprised. He might not be at all a criminal, an inmate of a penitentiary, a profligate, or even an infidel. He might be counted as respectable, polished, polite, charming, attractive. He might pass for a gentleman among men. He might profess Christianity and hold a church membership. Who knows? Men rate sin by outward appearance. God has other standards.

So likewise if the All-knowing should point out to us His greatest living saint, we might again be surprised. Like as not he (or she) would be a very simple person, lowly in station. Possibly he would not even be a "preacher." He could be far from thinking himself great

and extraordinary. Certainly he would not rate himself as "a wonderful saint, of whom God could justly be proud." He would be just a plain child of God, childlike, natural, harmless, sincere. His goodness would not be pretentious, self-conscious; nor flaunted, Pharaonic, nor fault-finding. *And*--he would no doubt be a man sorely tempted, troubled, burdened; hated too, and more or less openly persecuted. For how could Satan let such a person alone? In character he would be full of faith, full of love, prayerful, obedient, full of good works. The fruit of the Spirit would be manifest in him. You would find him living in utter dependence on the Lord Jesus--in fact as Paul in Gal. 2:20, he would be dead and Christ living in him would be doing His works. And withal he would be a "stranger and pilgrim on the earth," of the sort whom the world knoweth not (for it knew *Him* not), and bearing His rejection and reproach. He would seek the things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. And he would be waiting for, looking for, watching for, that blessed hope, and *loving* the appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. The principalities and powers in the heavenly places, angels good and evil, beholding him would wonder and admire--yet not to say, "what a great human being this is!" but only to bow before the glory of Christ and exclaim, "What hath God wrought!"

SALVATION BY WORKS

R. H. Boll 1936

"Salvation by works" is ingrained in the flesh. The universal religious instinct of the natural man is to perform some work, to do some feat, to go through some exercise (the more painful or disagreeable the better) in order to commend himself to God and to procure His favor. The thought back of it all is, "See what I have done and am doing for thee? Now am I not worthy of thy recognition and salvation?" Sir Monier Williams, one of the foremost scholars of the sacred lore of the East, says that all those religions have one common keynote and one theme that runs through them all, namely *salvation by works*. Judaism in Christ's time had degenerated into that. The true faith, when it becomes corrupt and degenerate, turns into that. The "Liberalism" of our day is nothing else. Every false and fleshly religion centers around that idea of self-preservation by works of merit.

In his natural ignorance of God and of himself, man can think of no other way. He does not know Him--neither as to His holiness, nor His love. He cannot give God credit for pure disinterested grace and goodness. He cannot conceive of a gift from God, except it be on a basis of some value received. For a free gift of grace he cannot trust

Him--it is too good to believe. If God notices him or does anything for him, it must surely be because of some special desert or merit. So that in the end, for whatever he has and is, he has himself to thank. Such a sentiment as

"Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to thy cross I cling"

finds no place in his thinking. He *must* bring *something* in his hands to placate the offended Deity and to win the Divine favor. That all that is obnoxious to the Lord, and that it really constitutes a reflection on His character (for some things done along that line are nothing more or less than attempts to bribe the Judge of all)--he does not in his blindness perceive.

THE NATURAL TENDENCY

The same error easily creeps into the Christian's life--which is one reason why he should stay in constant, wide-awake contact with the word of God. We slip from God's point of view, to *man's* way of thinking by a natural gravitation. God's outlook can be got only from the Bible; but the world's outlook is that which is common to all humanity. Chrysostom had Paul's letter to the Romans read to him once every week. "If I don't do that I forget it," he said. It is astonishing how quickly we forget what is foreign to our natural notions. We are shaken out of the rut of our wrong thinking by the word of the gospel; then insensibly we lose again what we have learned; presently it is gone, and we are back on the old ground. The law stays with us; the gospel, like the sweet fragrance of a perfume, vanishes away. Works, merit, desert, judgment, these are elemental concepts, easily grasped, and familiarized by the constant remindings of experience. But all-engrossing love of God in Christ Jesus, the free gift of His grace, the new life in the Spirit, the filial relationship to God--these are exotic plants as it were, which do not grow naturally in our soil, but must be carefully planted and nurtured, and watered from above.

WORKING FOR FORGIVENESS

This is seen in many ways. For example, a Christian sins. Now to be humbled, to be penitent, like Peter to "weep bitterly," to be afflicted and mourn and let our laughter be turned into mourning, and our joy to heaviness (Jas. 4:9, 10) is fitting and right. A man who would go on lightly when conscious of sin before God is beyond help. But take heed. Before you realize it, you may be "doing penance" and imagining that in some way with your sackcloth and ashes you are procuring God's mercy, or even paying up in some measure for what you have done. But God's forgiveness is free and freely given out of the abundance of His loving heart. ("I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy

transgressions--return unto me, for I have redeemed thee.") It can be obtained in no other way. It cannot be purchased at any price.

Your difficulty is to get into a right attitude, so that God *can* bestow the mercy upon you (for who can estimate the pride and self-will in a sinner's heart?). The father of the Prodigal Son could not reveal his love and forgiveness to him till the son came humble and penitent to receive it. But in no sense did the son attain to, or merit, his father's love and mercy by coming home. It was there for him all the time, but he could not receive it till he came as he came. We must never forget that it is the Lord who stands knocking at our door, not we at His. The opening of the door pertains to us; but no amount of door-opening would cancel our sins, except He stood there with forgiveness in His hands.

"WORKS' IN PRAYER-LIFE

Again some dear souls work hard and labor and strive in prayer--not always with the right conception. Is it really so much blessing for so much prayer? Then go to it! The more prayer and the longer, the greater the blessing. Then, too, the Gentiles who think they are heard for their much speaking, are not so far wrong. But one thing our Lord wanted to teach us is that prayer is not a meritorious performance. Praying all night is a great feat, which, some seem to think, God is bound to regard. If you add fasting to prayer, especially if it makes you feel right faint and miserable--that surely ought to bring God to terms! For no doubt He delights in your hardship and suffering and your painful efforts. Surely you will get results for all you have gone through! (Of course no reflection on true all-night prayer of burdened souls or in order to commune with God is intended. Would there were more of this. Our Lord continued in prayer--once all night, at another time till the fourth watch of the morning.)

But how are you better in your thinking than the Hindu fakir who lies on a bed of spikes, and endeavors to attain to sanctity by reducing his body to a skeleton? Or the monk who wears a hair shirt and sleeps on a bare plank, and castigates himself unto blood, thinking thereby to get nearer to God? Oh fools and blind! It is *God* that beseeches *you* to be reconciled to Him. It is He who brought the great Sacrifice, and you do not have to propitiate Him. If that were your task, you could never accomplish it. But yours is to believe, to receive, to enter in upon the boundless grace so freely provided for you. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." It is yours to come *with boldness* to the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace to help you in your time of need.

Limitations of God's Pardon

R. H. Boll 1928

In the great Old Testament revelation of God's character which was made to Moses on the Mount, two contrasting statements stand side by side: ". . . forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and"--here follows what one would least have expected--"*that will by no means clear the guilty*" (Ex. 34.7).

These two features of God's unchangeable character are in such strong contrast as almost to clash; yet in His nature both are united. He is a forgiving God, but He will not clear the guilty. Since, however, it is none but the guilty that need forgiveness, the guilt of the guilty must in some way be dealt with before God can forgive. He cannot clear the man until the guilt is removed. In this fundamental fact lies the whole Bible doctrine of the atonement, the whole grace and truth of the Gospel. "He will not clear the guilty"--that is God's integrity, His incorruptible justice and righteousness. But "forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin," that is His mercy and His lovingkindness. The harmony of these two attributes demands--not only that He forgive where in righteousness he can (for that alone would mean nothing to us)--but that He must make a way which will make it possible for Him to forgive the guilty while yet upholding His perfect righteousness, so that He may be just and the justifier of those who have sinned.

Forgiveness Not Arbitrary

In nothing is the fleshly judgment of men so wrong as in the question of forgiveness. Most men see no reason why God should not freely forgive any and every man that may desire forgiveness, or even those who do not. Being themselves devoid of any real sense of sin, or of righteousness, or of judgment, they see no reason why God should take great exceptions to sin. They would be disposed to blame Him if he held men guilty and condemned them to any severe punishment. The natural lawlessness of their own hearts sees no difficulty in the way of God's arbitrarily wiping out man's score of guilt--just as some rich man might generously cancel a poor man's debt, or as they themselves good-naturedly would let off their own children for acts of disobedience and insubordination.

Why not? That there might be any *principle* involved in God's sight, that the disregard of such principle would compromise God's character and make Him as lawless and criminal as themselves, does not seem to enter their thoughts. To their minds all the reconciliation needed is on man's part. There is nothing on God's side that needs to

be adjusted, and there never was. Men only *thought* He was offended because they felt they had acted meanly toward Him; but in reality He never was out of humor with us poor silly children. His Son came down from heaven to tell us that there was really nothing the matter. His death was only a dramatic exhibition to impress us all with the greatness of His love--but there was no necessity of such a death to remove guilt or judgment. (One shrinks from even stating such notions, as from blasphemy.)

Little do they know of a God whose holiness is a consuming fire, and who, by His very nature must render to every man according to his works; who must and will bring every work into judgment with every secret thing whether it be good or bad. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do *right*?" But they think of His love as laxness, and His mercy is nothing more to them than easy-going good nature. They think that the supreme liberty of His will is exercised in lawless, unprincipled license of decree and action. They think he is free to clear the guilty, and that He does without rhyme or reason whatever and wherever He may choose. His government in their eyes is nothing more than an arbitrary exercise of power.

Justice and Judgment

"He that condemneth the righteous, and he that justifieth the wicked, *both of them alike are an abomination unto Jehovah*" (Prov. 17:15). The judicial function among men is delegated from God and is to be exercised after the pattern of His judgment. For this every public official is responsible to God. "If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, and the judges judge them; *then they shall justify the righteous and condemn the wicked*" (Deut. 25:1). God hates unjust judgment, for the perversion of justice in high places strikes at the very heart of the nation and at the foundation of human welfare. Men instinctively feel the outrage of it. The seed of injustice necessitates a future harvest of blood and disaster. The nation in which that sort of thing goes on is headed toward ruin. I suppose that most people felt something of the significance of the following news item, taken from the front page of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Dec. 13, 1927.

Gov. William J. Fields opened and shut the prison doors sixty two times today, releasing as many men convicted of murder, manslaughter, malicious shooting, robbery, child desertion, house breaking, embezzlement, forgery, automobile stealing, and barn burning

* * * * *

With the pardons announced today, the Governor filed his reasons. The number granted today ran the total of pardons granted since No-

umber 1 to more than 129. This does not include pardons and commutations granted for misdemeanor and minor offenses.

I give this without comment. I cite it merely for illustration. This kind of pardon God cannot give. If God, the Judge of all, should exercise pardoning power in an arbitrary fashion, the whole world--and heaven too--would become hell.

God's Way Of Forgiveness

The stern integrity of God's government shines forth in the very message that proclaims the good tidings of mercy to sinners. The sending of the Son, His coming to the earth, His ministry and death, in which on God's behalf and as the representative of man before God He assumed the judgment of sin and "bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (for "Jehovah laid upon him the iniquities of us all") is to be explained in no other way than that eternal, inflexible justice demanded it. And just as plainly was it eternal, infinite love and mercy that provided it, and so provided a free and righteous pardon to all who will come and avail themselves of it.

GROWING OLD

R. H. Boll

[This was written in 1936; the writer was 61.]

"Let it be our unceasing prayer that as we grow older we may not grow colder in the ways of God," said good George Muller. Some do. The enthusiasm of their earlier years flees away, and they become jaded in their affections, stale in their thoughts, indifferent towards everything. The sense of wonder is gone and they have no longer any interest. All things are full of weariness--all is vanity and vexation of spirit. They have given up the idea of going any further or learning anything more. "What do you do all day, Uncle Jimmy?" "Just sit and think and sit and think--and sometimes I just sit," answered Uncle Jimmy. That's getting *old*, in the bad sense of the word--ceasing to live before we die.

God has something better than that for His saints. That same George Muller, above quoted, lived up into the late nineties--always bright, full of interest, hopeful, joyful. In his last years he would often stop in the midst of his conversation to exclaim, "Oh, I'm so happy!" And it was not mere mannerism, nor was it feigned. "As we advance in years," he had written long before, "let us not decline in spiritual power; but let us see to it that an increase of spiritual vigor and energy

be found in us, that our last days may be our best days . . . Let the remaining days of our earthly pilgrimage be spent in an ever-increasing, earnest consecration." So indeed it was with him, and so it should be with all God's people. "The devil has no happy old men," it has been said. But those who are the Lord's increase in joy.

Psalm 71

The writer of Psalm 71 entered upon his old age with trepidation and fear. He had enemies who watched for the first signs of failing strength and first symptoms of decrepitude, who would rejoice at the day that would see him disabled, that they might make him their prey. And the day seemed not far away. But the psalmist carries his anxiety to the Lord. "In thee, O Jehovah, do I take refuge--let me never be put to shame . . . Be thou to me a rock of habitation whereunto I may continually resort . . . For thou art my hope, O Lord Jehovah; my trust from my youth. By thee have I been held up from the womb . . . I am as a wonder unto many, but thou art my strong refuge."

Then follows the burden of his heart: "*Cast me not off in the time of old age*, forsake me not when my strength faileth . . . Yea, even when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not, until I have declared thy strength to the next generation." He ever looked to God for better things: "I will hope continually, and will praise thee yet more and more . . . Increase thou my greatness and turn again and comfort me."

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree," he says elsewhere . . . they shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be full of sap and green; to show that Jehovah is upright: he is my rock and there is no unrighteousness in Him" (Ps. 92: 12-15).

"ANOTHER GENERATION THAT KNEW NOT JEHOVAH"

R. H. Boll

The story of the Book of Judges is on the whole a dark and sad one. It tells the history of the tribes of Israel after their glorious conquest of the land of Canaan--a story of declension and of progressive failure, defeat upon defeat, oppression by their enemies, relieved by short seasons of Divine intervention which alone saved the people from utter ruin and destruction. The key not of the book of Joshua

(which just precedes the book of Judges) is victory; but that of Judges is failure and defeat.

If we inquire the reason for this melancholy turn of events, we shall find it in the second chapter of the book, particularly in verses 7 to 10: "The people served Jehovah all the days of Joshua, who had seen all the great work of Jehovah which he had wrought for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun died . . . and also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers"--now mark the next statement: "and there arose another generation after them, that knew not Jehovah, nor yet the work which he had wrought for Israel." (Judg. 2:7-10.) Here is the explanation of all the tragic story that follows throughout the book of Judges: "There arose another generation that knew not Jehovah nor yet the work which he had wrought for Israel." That can mean just one thing: namely, that *the older generation had failed to teach their children the word of God.*

The Lord had given explicit commandment and made special provision that the knowledge of His word and truth should be transmitted to the rising generation. He enjoined upon the fathers of Israel to teach their children and their household. "He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel," we read, "which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children that should be born; who should arise and tell them to their children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments . . ." (Ps. 78:5-7.)

In the very heart of the Law He says, "Hear O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah: and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." But how could they love Him in whom they had not believed? And how could they have believed in Him of whom they had not heard? And how could any have heard unless they had been taught the faithful words of God? Therefore He goes on to say--"And these words which I command thee this day shall be upon thy heart; and thou shall teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up . . ." (Deut. 6:4-7; compare 11:18-21.) Which is to say that the word which had been given them through Moses should occupy the chief place in their hearts and minds and homes; and that it should be the chief and all-important theme of instruction and education of the young. "For this is your wisdom and understanding in the sight of the peoples, that shall hear all these statutes and say. Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people." (Deut. 4:6.)

Moreover the Lord made provision for the public reading of the Law. "At the end of every seven years, in the set time of the year of release, the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before Jehovah thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Assemble the people, the men and the women, *and the little ones*, and thy sojourner that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn and fear Jehovah thy God, and observe to do all the words of this law; and that their children, who have not known, may hear, and learn to fear Jehovah your God . . ." (Deut. 31:10-13.)

It is certain that if these commandments had been obeyed it could never have happened that "there arose another generation that knew not Jehovah." Now it was this new and untaught generation that plunged the nation into ruin. Even as may happen again to us at this day.

So strangely interlaced are human guilt and human responsibility. A child untaught or mistaught goes down the way of perdition, and as is always the case, carries others with him. The responsibility of the sinner's sin lies upon him--but what of those elders who have criminally neglected the child's soul? The child untutored, unguarded, unrestrained, drifts into juvenile delinquency and crime. Does anyone else share the wrong done? Ah what strange and unexpected angles the judgment of God may not reveal? True, this new generation that knew not Jehovah was guilty; but is there not a further word to be spoken about the older generation which failed to give them the one and only light that could have guided their feet into the path of righteousness? It does not follow that every child rightly taught will go right. But this much is certain, unless given the light of the word of God none will go right. "Show me a place ten miles square anywhere on this earth," said James Russell Lowell, "where there is honor and purity and kindness and faithfulness and marital fealty, where the Bible has not gone, and I will give up the argument."

Just so. For the knowledge of God and the fear of God must be taught. It does not spring up of itself--it must be sown and implanted. The gospel is not self-propagating. It must be carefully, lovingly instilled in the hearts of the young. The heart left to itself quickly declines into evil. Some years ago a Norwegian infidel willed his estate to the devil. The court was perplexed as to how to execute such a will, and finally decided that the best way to do it would be to put a fence around the property and *let it alone*. So can parents dedicate their children to the devil by simply letting them go their own way, without teaching or restraint or discipline. For foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child. In every child, said an internationally known psychologist (quoted by G. Campbell Morgan), lies a potential criminal.

A neighbor of Samuel Taylor Coleridge remarked to him that he would not teach Christianity to his children till they were old enough and mature enough to judge for themselves and decide whether or not they wanted it. "You gave me an idea," said Coleridge, "I had intended to set out this patch in strawberry-slips. I believe now I'll wait till next summer and see whether my garden really prefers strawberries or whether it would rather have weeds."

Fallen human nature tends downward to the beast. When men refused to have God in their knowledge and exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and "God gave them up," they sank to the low level so fearfully described in the first chapter of Romans. And so it will go again. The one and only real restraining, remedial and uplifting power humanity has ever known is that old Book. All the good we have has come out of that book. The moral and cultural superiority of one nation as compared with another can be measured by the place the Bible has in that nation.

It may not be generally known that Charles R. Darwin, father of the Darwinian theory of evolution, in his latter years became a life-long contributor to Christian missions. In his "Voyage of the Beagle" he remarks upon the low, beast-like state of the Patagonian savages, who seemed to him the nearest approach of mankind to the brute creation he had found. When later he learned of the transformation wrought among these savages through the teaching and labor of a devoted missionary, he was utterly amazed. He would not have thought such a change among such a people possible without centuries of preliminary education and civilization. And thenceforth he became a supporter of Christian missions. What other book has thus proved over and over its power to uplift human life from the depths, to heal broken hearts and comfort the sorrowful, and to guide and enlighten souls in darkness and error bound like the Bible? In it the soul finds God and learns of His ways; in its pages walks the Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of men. There we find ourselves also, and the way of salvation from ourselves and from final ruin and perdition through God's perfect sacrifice, so freely given for us. In one Book, and in only one, shines this perfect light.

In the light of such facts the neglect of our youth appears inexcusable. We have heard of "the revolt of modern youth." There is no such thing as "modern youth." Youth today is what it was ages ago. The same tendencies and propensities, the same urgings and aspirations, the same desires and passions that motivates youth today were working in youth when time was young. Human nature has not changed one whit since Adam and Eve. Circumstances have changed from what they were two and three generations back. There is in our day a growing scarcity of godly parents who will teach their children

the word of God and bring them up in the way, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The family altar has become almost obsolete. Our Chief of Police just a few days ago speaking of the perilous situation of our youth said, "Mothers and fathers making big money are too busy spending it to look after their children." Yea, too busy making it and spending it; and in the meanwhile they lose their children. And what shall it profit a man?

Among the youth of our day there is a marked and growing distaste for the Bible and divine things. Too large a contingent of the youth from the better homes are being emancipated from the restraints of God's commandments. The boasted enlightenment of modern teaching has made them scornful of old-fashioned ways--of the manners and moral standards for which the word of God stands. They scoff at God's judgments; they sneer at "prudishness," and extol the freedom of the lower creation. They get their ideas and inspiration from Hollywood, and their views from the godless education which ridicules the Bible and inculcates notions of human descent from primeval scum. Certainly the devil loses no time or chance to capture the hearts and minds of the young.

What in the meanwhile are Christian parents doing to counteract this current of our times? Is there much home teaching and training? Perhaps they lay the burden upon the church. There is the Sunday school. That is a good work, where it is good; but at best it is pitifully inadequate. A half hour a week in Bible-study (granting that it always is really Bible-study)--26 hours a year. And when the attendance charts register only 50 percent, the average is reduced to 13 hours a year. And that is not taking into account that vast multitude of children who never go to any Sunday-school at all. Build up the Sunday-school by all means--in many cases it is all the instruction little ones and many older ones get. Yet, at the best, it cannot take the place of the God-ordained home-teaching in the Christian household.

What a godly father teaches them--however poor and halting his words may seem; what they learn at mother's knees--that will likely go with them through life as no other teaching would. The "faith of our fathers" must be inculcated in the minds and hearts of the children. It will not be "living still" if it is not taught to the coming generation. And if there rises up a generation in our land that knows not Jehovah, our country too will sink down in heathenism and degradation. The responsibility lies at the door of the present generation that still knows something of God and His truth, and whom God expects to hand on the light of His knowledge to the children that are born.

So Walk In Him

R. H. Boll-1944

To be "*in Christ*" designates a man's standing and position given him by virtue of his union with Christ, and whereby he is a new creature. (2 Cor. 5:17.) This position, however, is not a stationary one; but being in Him we are to *walk in Him*. (Col. 2: 6,7.) Nor is this "walking in Christ" a marking of time, or a going round and round in aimless circles, but a progress, an advance. Forgetting what is behind, we press on to things that are before. (Phil. 3:14.) Leaving first principles we press on to perfection. (Heb. 6: 1f.) The Christian must evermore go on pressing forward, abounding more and more in knowledge, in spiritual likeness to Jesus Christ his Lord.

But this very thing seems irksome to some Christians. Many seem to think of being in Christ as having come into a possession in which thenceforth to rest. To go on seems difficult to them—even perilous. They find their rest and assurance and satisfaction in what they already have and know, and fondly hope to get through on that, without bothering their minds about things that lie beyond. That course inevitably leads to spiritual death and fossilization. The very manna which they had hoped to hold and keep breeds worms for them and decays.

There are leaders and teachers and preachers who (as one fitly described it) have "learned what they learned, *once*"; who have no room in their minds for further truth; who can see nothing more than what they have always seen (which, they think, is eminently safe and sound, and all-sufficient for every purpose); who want nothing more than what they always had. Yet they wonder at the deadness of the churches to whom they minister. The only semblance of interest they can stir up is by some controversy, about no matter what, and by fighting something. But that too soon plays out. The deadly scurvy due to lack of fresh food, and diseases that result from perpetual mental inbreeding, are manifest. There is coldness, indifference, lovelessness, powerlessness, worldliness; or perhaps the plague appears in bitter disputes about little minutiae, about small tithes of mint and anise and cummin, from which spring factions, parties, alienations of brethren.

"If I accepted such and such a teaching," said one brother, "I would have to revise my whole conception of the Bible." Which would in his view have been a first-class disaster. So he would rather save his old wineskin than to risk putting new wine in it. We must indeed hold on to truth we already have and on no account cast it away. But we can only really hold it as we walk onward and forward. You must by all means abide in, and not for anything forsake, the Word; yet it is only as ye *continue* (i.e. go on) in it that ye shall know the truth that shall make you free. (John 8: 30-31.)

THE ELECTION OF GRACE

R. H. Boll - 1945

In Romans 11:5 Paul speaks of "a remnant according to the election of grace." And he adds "if it is by grace it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace." (Rom. 11:6.) That is, the election is not on the basis of personal merit, worthiness, and desert, but by the choice and call of God. This forestalls the idea that only a few extraordinary characters can hope to belong to the elect remnant; but (as in 1 Cor. 1:26f.) the principle of God's choice is that "not many wise," "not many mighty," "not many noble" are called; but that "the foolish things," the "weak things," the "base things" are chosen, "that no flesh should glory before God." The great mistake about "election" has always been due to the fact that men have not been able to separate the doctrine from fatalism on the one hand; and on the other they have brought it into conflict with the worldwideness of God's love, and God's desire that all men should be saved (1 Tim. 2:4). Also they have never been able to harmonize "God's sovereignty" and "man's free agency." So in the natural way of our limited minds, we have taken hold of one side of the truth and explained the other away. And how well men can do that! How completely and proudly each side could vanquish the other! But the child of God does not need to take partisan side, on this or any other Bible doctrine. All God has said is good and true to the believer. If we can harmonize the various statements it is well; if not, we do still believe them, and still preach and teach them as they stand.

If your views of "election," or "predestination," relieve you of responsibility--either in the matter of your own earnest and faithful acceptance of the gospel, or as to your preaching of the gospel to all men--you may be sure your view of it is wrong. Whatever the sovereign choice of God may be, we must teach and preach the gospel to all, and the sinner must believe and obey it, as though there were no such thing. This question does not enter into the matter of a man's individual acceptance of salvation at all; nor does it relieve any man of the necessity of obedience and watchfulness, nor for his concern for others. And most especially should it not be concluded that any man has ever been predestinated to be lost. For God was never willing that any should perish but would have all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

But after you have come to God, upon your own free acceptance of His gracious invitation ("him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out")--if you think a bit, it may dawn on you that (unless you think it all accidental) God has in some ways given you some very extraordinary help and opportunity--has directed your way, has borne

with you, has blessed you in many ways, drawn you, and that (apparently at least) as He has blessed few others. Perhaps you may come to realize that though you chose, it must have been because you had before been chosen. If you should ask yourself *why*--you will never be able to figure it out: one thing is certain--that it was not because in any wise you deserved it. The grace of God will seem wonderful and precious to you; and the realization that back of all your choosing, believing, obeying, back of all your life is the mighty purpose of God who began a good work in you and will finish it unto the day of redemption--that thought will be a strength to you in your utmost need. Then if that creates a deeper sense of gratitude and an all-the-greater sense of responsibility to lay hold on that for which you were laid hold on by Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:12) and prompts you to give diligence to "make your calling and election sure" (2 Peter 1:10) it is well--you have then rightly understood the doctrine of election.

God's Elect

People get confused over the fact that God is not a respecter of persons, yet has chosen certain ones above others to special advantages and blessings. But an even slight examination of the Bible reveals the fact that he evidently has always done so. He chose Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their seed after them. In the New Testament he chose apostles, most notably Paul; and often He spoke of His sheep, His people, yea, of "children of God," although as yet they had never known the Lord. Before getting too much puzzled over *how* that can be, note clearly first the *fact* that so it is. The "what" always comes before the "how"; the fact before the explanation. Many deny the fact because they cannot square it with what they know, or think they know. This shuts the door to all further light. In the study of God's word it is good to discern first and hold to the facts presented. The explanation, if any, can wait.

Some have thought to cut the knot by saying: "God is not a respecter of persons, but He is a respecter of character." Granting that this may often have seemed to be the case, it does not explain God's principle of election. Oftener that not we can see no antecedent excellence or merit in the chosen ones of God. Abraham's one commendation was not that he was a great good man, but that he believed God. Nor have we any reason to conclude that others would not have responded as whole-heartedly if God had revealed Himself to them as he did to Abraham. In Isaac we fail to see any outstanding virtues; and Jacob was not a better man, as men go, than Esau--in some respects not as good. The word of God forestalls any such conclusions that Jacob was in himself worthier than Esau; for in response to their mother's inquiry of God--"the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil that the purpose of God according to

election might stand--not of works but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated." (Rom. 9:11.)

"What shall we say then?" adds Paul--"Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." If He were minded to do us a wrong we would not be able to help ourselves; we would have no come-back whatever, for His power is absolute. But he never will or can do any human being an injustice. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. (1 John 1:5.) So likewise Israel, God's elect nation, was not chosen as a nation because of any goodness or merit which they possessed (see Deut. 7:6-8; 9:4-6, 24; and 10:15). The New Testament leaders also, except for the electing grace of God would have been men of the common sort, in no way different from all other sinners. And we could hardly think that if Christ had appeared to any other hot-headed rabbi as he did to Saul on the road to Damascus that such a one would not have turned to Christ as Saul did. But He did not so reveal Himself to any other, either before or after. Such are the ways of God and who can stay his hand or say to Him, What doest thou?

What Men Are Elected For

No man ever lights a candle for its own sake. When God bestowed upon any man or group of men special grace he always had a purpose beyond that man's own (or that group's own) blessing. He called Abraham, spoke to him, entered into covenant with him, led and directed and taught and protected and blessed him as He did no other man of his time--but at the same time stated his purpose: "In thee and in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed." If He chose Isaac; and if He chose Jacob above Esau for reasons all His own--not because of their personal merit (Rom. 9:11), it was that through them all the nations of men might be blessed. If God chose their seed after them, the people of Israel, it was not because they were more than any other nation, nor because they were more righteous, for they were a stiffnecked and rebellious generation from their beginning (see Deut. 7:6-8; 9:4-6, 24; 10:15; and Ezek. 20)--but that through them He might eventually reach all the world: as the Lord Jesus declared, and as it is this day, "salvation is from the Jews," (John 4:22) For God's love was never less than world-wide. The apparent favoritism which He displays toward some is but His method of working for the blessing of all. In loving Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Israel, Simon Peter, John, Paul, so especially, he loved all the rest of us. God's elect were not his particular pets--they were called to be His instruments, His burden-bearers, His martyrs and scape-goats. High was their calling, heavy their lot in life.

Moreover there was no getting out of it. Whether they would respond willingly or not was left with them--God does not force any man's will. They may, like Jonah, seek to go to Tarshish when God sends them to Nineveh; or like disobedient Israel, try to be like other nations--but all in vain. (Ezek. 20:32) Or they may, like Paul, gladly fall in with God's will, and say "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision." In either case they are to be used; "for the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of." Rom. 11:29.

In one respect God's elect are not to be envied; but in another how great are their advantages, and how happy and glorious is their position! On the one hand theirs is the severest discipline, the heaviest chastisement, and if willfully disobedient, the most terrible retribution; on the other hand theirs is the highest opportunity and glory and blessing. In the very chapter that foretells Israel's awful sufferings, God foretells also their final restoration and vindication (Deut. 32); and presently, in view of all that is to come, He exclaims, "Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, a people saved by Jehovah, the shield of thy help, and the sword of thy excellency!" (Deut. 33:29.)--If thou art a *Christian* today, be glad and thankful for you are one of God's elect; yet rejoice with trembling and seek to fill by the grace of God, within your sphere the high place and position to which He has called you. (Phil. 2:12, 13.)

HOW DENOMINATIONS STARTED

R. H. Boll - 1928

The leaders and teachers around whom the denominations of Christendom are built, did not, in most instances, intend to originate denominations. Most of them were men of earnestness and convictions who had, or believed they had, weighty truths to preach to men; and who sought the good of man and the glory of God. The great leaders before the Reformation--Huss and others, were of that type. Luther stood up wholehearted for God's word; so did Calvin, Knox, Wesley--brave and strong men, who did a great work in their day, in furtherance of the interests of the kingdom of God. Their work was imperfect, their understanding of the truth was limited, and the pure gold of the truth they held was more or less mingled with the dross of human error. But in every such case it could be said, I think, that if the followers had pressed on *in the same spirit and purpose* in which these leaders started they would have attained unto the unity of the faith and the full measure of the truth.

Arrested Development

The denominations of Christendom are cases of arrested development. Instead of pressing on to perfection they stopped. They were content with the good doctrine they had, considered it all-sufficient, formulated it, constituted themselves upon it, and became petrified into a religious party or denomination. Such is the genesis of a sect in almost every case. To fence in what one has, is to fence out what one has not. To declare oneself in possession of all necessary truth is to slight and resist further truth. Thus men are hardened and blinded into partisan beliefs, at the price of life and growth and freedom and power in the Lord, Christendom is replete with fossilized men and parties, who are as unable to shake themselves free from traditional error as they are to go on into better light and understanding. They are more in love with their own peculiar views than with the mind of God.

The Light Turns To Darkness

Moreover (and this is the saddest thing) what hoarded truth they think they have soon corrupts in their hands. A pot of soil taken out of the earth and set by itself molds and sours. A bucket of water taken out of the sea stagnates. A handful of truth taken out of God's revelation is not, as they think, preserved, but, like the manna kept overnight, breeds worms and decays. A little boy stood holding an empty box to the sun, and suddenly clapping the lid down ran into the house with it. What did he capture in that box? What did he have? Sunlight? We know that sunlight can be had and enjoyed only by communion with the sun. Even so the truth can be enjoyed only in intercourse with God through His word. When we shut the lid on it we have lost it.

Going On To Perfection

That a similar danger threatens those who avowedly stand upon the whole Bible as simple Christians must be obvious to us all. The great principles set forth by Alexander Campbell and his co-workers, if followed out in the spirit in which they were proclaimed and stressed will lead us more and more increasingly into the full apprehension of the truth of God. But once we come to the conclusion that we have actually attained to the truth, at least to as much of it as is worth knowing, then, regardless of all Scriptural names and claims to undenominational Christianity, we will fall into the same denominational rut with the sects of Christendom. When men have summed up and sealed up their sound doctrine they can thenceforth only haggle over its details, and work out refinements on its accepted points as the Pharisees did in their law; but they can no longer reach out to obtain more truth and light, neither can they correct themselves nor can they

learn anything any more. When the mill has nothing to grind it will grind on itself. Thus come disruptions and parties and factions. Only the going on in the truth, only the walking forward by faith and the obedience in the path that shineth more and more unto the perfect day, can keep us in unity and fellowship and bring us unto that final unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God.

VOICES from the FIELD

Joy Garrett

Ruwa, Zimbabwe

October 14, 1998

This last two weeks Bob was able to print out the book of Hebrews by Bro. Boll. He'd work a little bit here and there. I did the folding and stapling. As he was unable to get rollers for the folding machine, it all must be done by hand.

The foundations at Epworth were completed last week with the bolts in place for the steel uprights, and so this week the company Stitches 'n Steel are putting up all the uprights, trusses and pylons to hold the roof. Then Bob will pour the concrete foundations; then put up the roofing material. After that the congregation can meet in it, while the bricks are laid in the sides. As this church is located now on the main road it is getting a lot of visitors. It is really a poor area: no sewage, no electricity and piped water across the road is \$65 a month for several buckets. It's a shanty town, the government is trying to upgrade.

For seven months we went almost every Sunday to Glendale and Chiweshe where we are beginning new congregations. Our student preacher Bro. Chenche is going from house to house spreading the gospel. Glendale is now doing well, Chiweshe is still only a small group.

Now we go once a month to Glendale & Chiweshe and are trying to visit once more the many established congregations. We are looking forward to seeing everyone in 1999 should our Lord tarry.

Ken & Cindy Brady

O. M. Lit. Ministry

Nov. 1998

We are thankful for the new additions to the warehouse staff in recent months. Of course, there are never enough people to do all the work, but we keep pressing on. The bar code system has really helped us be more efficient, and we are sending out more literature than ever before. Nearly every month this year we have been sending out more

literature in the one month than in the entire year of 1989, the year we arrived in Waynesboro. The Lord continues to bless us with good relationships with publishers (who sell us books at very low costs) and our customers (who are thrilled to get Christian books and Bibles at affordable prices). People in the surrounding area here are also coming in to shop. All local sales help to subsidize the Bibles and books for needy countries overseas.

Cindy went to a doctor at the Medical College of Georgia. He said that really the only treatment that is left to try is a surgery where they go behind the ear, remove some of the bone there, and put a shunt in to drain the fluid off and stop the pressure that causes the symptoms. He stressed that it is not a cure--there isn't one--but it does help with symptoms in many people, so the surgery is scheduled for December 4. There are some risks, as with any surgery, but they are minimal. There is small possibility that she could regain some of the hearing she has lost in that ear. Please pray with us for relief from the vertigo spells and restoration of hearing in that ear, as well as a quick recovery from surgery.

We finally got Cindy's parents (Hall & Alice Crowder) moved the week before her Dad's hip surgery. They are well settled in now, and seem to enjoy being there. We are very happy to have them so close. Dad's hip is slowly improving, and he hopes to get to the point soon where he can leave the cane behind. He can walk without it, but he limps quite badly. But even if he has to continue with the cane, he doesn't have the terrible pain that he had before, for which we are thankful. Cindy's mom has had some health problems recently. Please pray for wisdom for the doctor and for us as we find out the best course of treatment. They continue to take booktables but may be coming to the point where they will have to slow down and not do so much travelling. Of course, there are plenty of things to do around the warehouse, so they definitely won't get bored!

Here is just a taste of the fruit of Operation Mobilization's ministry. Every summer OM teams take advantage of the opportunity to meek people who are out for their summer vacation. As people stream from North Africa into Europe at Gibraltar, there is much opportunity to offer them the words of life. Thousands of Arabs move back and forth between the two continents, and the waiting that is inherent in moving between these borders gives OM teams a chance to talk to people, and to give out gospels, New Testaments, Bibles and evangelistic tracts.

One day this summer, an Arab man began to run across the lot towards one of the OM men handing out literature. As he approached, the OM'er didn't know what his intentions were. As he came close,

the excitement was apparent, and it became clear that the man was very happy. He began to tell his story. He had received gospel literature last year as he came through the border, and during the year, he had read the literature and through it had put his faith in Christ. As the year went on, his family also came to believe in Christ and put their faith in Him. Their lives were new and changed.

As they approached the border, he was praying that God would let him meet the people who had given him the literature so that he could tell them what had happened and thank them for giving out the words of life. The OM'er was greatly relieved, and rejoiced at the fruit of the Word that had been sown the year before.

"Every Marriage Can Be Saved," believes Joe Beam of Family Dynamics Institute

Eight-week marriage seminar becoming widely used in

churches, facilitator training available for church leaders.

Ken Watson (not his real name) was at the end of his rope. He had been married to Ann for 32 years, and he had been preaching for 25 years. And he was ready to leave them both behind.

The only thing standing in his way was a promise to attend a weekend training program of His Needs/Her Needs, a marriage building seminar created by Joe Beam of Family Dynamics Institute.

"I only went because my elders asked me to," Ken says, "I thought I would endure this pointless seminar and get the church off my back. Then I'd leave my family, friends, and church behind and go drive a truck--anything to avoid facing my failure."

But that didn't happen. What did happen Ken calls a miracle. Through the His Needs/Her Needs training seminar the Watsons found the tools to rebuild their marriage. Ann says, "We had loved each other for 32 years, but didn't have a clue about how to handle conflict. Now we do."

The Watsons are one of more than 5,000 couples who have attended a His Needs/Her Needs seminar, says Family Dynamics President Joe Beam, and many have experienced turnarounds in their marriages as the result of the unique eight-week program.

"Everyone knows numerous examples of people in church who have gotten divorced," says Beam. "We believe strongly that every marriage can be saved, and every couple can have the marriage God intended. This course provides the tools to make that possible."

His Needs/Her Needs is based on the principles in a book of the same name by Willard Harley, who has authorized Family Dynamics to use his concepts.

Joe Beam's work resulted from a painful three-year divorce from his wife Alice. They remarried, fortunately, but needed help to rebuild their relationship. That's when they discovered Harley's "His Needs/Her Needs."

His Needs/Her Needs seminars are conducted for 12 couples in local congregations by a trained facilitator, often a member of that church. Couples meet two and one-half hours weekly for eight weeks and complete four to six hours of "home work."

A key to the seminar's success is its duration, Beam believes. He says the eight weeks of work give couples time to identify damaging behaviors in their marriage and learn to stop them, deal with conflict and learn to meet each other's emotional needs.

Widely-known counselor Carl Brecheen of Marriage Enrichment Seminar praises the program saying, "[His Needs/Her Needs] is the strongest medicine for marriage that I have ever seen. The eight-week design gives couples time to change bad habits."

More than 500 church couples have been trained by Family Dynamics as class facilitators in intensive three-day seminars.

Rick Atchley, minister, Richland Hills church, Forth Worth, commented, "The His Needs/Her Needs program has revolutionized our church." He said that eight Richland Hills couples have been trained as facilitators, and His Needs/Her Needs classes are offered every few months.

Beam concludes, "It is the mission of Family Dynamics to reduce the divorce rate in America. That's a God-size task and we pray that God will continue to use the His Needs/Her Needs seminars to help bring it about." --Marilyn and Steve Stewart, Milan, N. M. and Lindy Adams

[Reprinted from *Christian Chronicle*. On March 26-27 Brother Beam will teach at S.B.S. Conference, but his topic will be on Spiritual Warfare. (He has led many seminars on that as well as on families.) Save those dates and stay tuned.]

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Bennie Hill

Gallatin (Julius Hovan) In Dr. Dobson's August "Family News" the following survey results were shared: Approx. 3-4,000 churches close their doors each year. Attendance at weekly religious activities in the U.S. continue to slip from 49% in 1991 to 37% today. 80% of church growth is from transfers of membership. 80% of ministers and 84% of their spouses are discouraged or dealing with depression. Approx. 1500 ministers leave their pulpits monthly. I say all this to say thanks for recent expressions of appreciation from the elders and various individuals. I look forward to entering the 25th year of work here.

Tell City (David Johnson) Hallelujah! Kate Bryant & Grant Goffinet made the public confession and were baptized into Christ last Sunday. That's 9 baptisms in 1998. Jacob Lawalin was also baptized last week. Joint Thanksgiving Service is planned together with the Lilly Dale church on Wednesday, Nov. 25th at 7:00 p.m. Together we will honor God in thanksgiving, in song, in prayer, with testimonies, and a short message, by Elmer Jose Pacheco, the new minister at Lilly Dale. Jail ministry continues with Large print Bibles, stamps, toiletries for men and women being distributed.

Locust St. (Darren Johnson & Ken Runyon)...Our revival meeting concluded last week with the good folks at Johnson City, Tennessee. The congregation is blessed with two part-time ministerial students at Immanuel School of Religion. Darren Johnson & Ken Runyon are doing a wonderful work there and are

to be commended. There was great interest in the study of God's Word and I praise Him for the time of Christian fellowship together. (Bennie Hill)

Jennings welcomed home many friends and family on Nov. 1st as they celebrated 81 years of ministry. Paul & Rita Estes were among the special guests as Paul brought the morning message. At a recent business meeting - Bro. A.J. Istre agreed to return as our minister. He will serve as the search continues for the Lord's will in securing a new minister.

Hamburg (Randy Coultas)

What you can do for your Minister:

---build his spiritual power by praying for him.

---speak well of him to others.

---encourage him

---attend worship services consistently.

---share in the workload

(thanks to Dana Hill for a good bulletin)

Good News! Word was received from Paul & Virginia Kitzmiller. Things are going well. Their new e-mail is trier@power.indi.ru.

Sellersburg (Dale Offutt) The Sellersburg Church of Christ has recently installed four new deacons: Clint Dorman, Kenneth Pettit, Charles Stewart and Charles Weber. The church is also looking for an Associate Minister who will work with young people and young couples. We prefer a married couple. Contact

Lawrence Montgomery at (812) 246-9874.

Portland (Alex Wilson) Did you remember October was "Bible Teachers Appreciation Month?" Think about those people who have taught you God's word in the past, or are doing it now. Make a phone-call or send a card. It's not too late!

Southeast (Paul Denny) Home Bible Study groups started November 1st. There is power in Christians meeting together in small groups. They are conducive to: a more casual, relaxed environment, praying for specific needs, developing closer ties, sharing openness & honesty, discussion & questions, confessing struggles & sins, learning the needs and hurts of others, expressing care and concern, relaxed Bible study, sharing food together.

If you are interested in the potential for a close, more personal and intense level of Christian fellowship, Get in a Christian Small Group.

Ralph Ave. (Bill Smallwood)

Special services were held on Nov. 8th as the elders laid their hands on Bro. Joe Jones ordaining him for the eldership.

News & Notes...is what you make it! Thanks again for the overwhelming response to the News & Notes section of the Word & Work. This is a great way to advertise the various activities of your church. Don't leave everything up to the minister. Why not appoint a news reporter and let them share in the blessing of this work?

Goin Fishing Ministries' (Earl Mullins Sr.) An update and information meeting was held at the Kentucky Ave. Church of Christ, Louisville, Kentucky on Thursday evening November 19, 1998 at 7:30

p.m. Upcoming events will include: Louisville Area Christians to Host Russian Young People & Adult Sponsors from Kineshma.(March 21-31,1999). For additional information and reports you may contact Earl Mullins St. at 4136 Hickman St., Louisville, KY 40213 or e-mail: 102147.2733@compuserve.com

Iroquois Philippine Mission (T.Y.Clark) Please destroy all old return envelopes as we have a new box number: **Box 18542, Louisville, KY 40261-0542.** If you do not receive a new return envelope, please use the address above on your personal envelope.

Cherry St. (New Albany, Indiana)

Bro. Nick Marsh is nearing the end of an interesting series of sermons covering each of the Old Testament books. This past week we had our second Sunday night fellowship for the first time in our new basement facilities. We are thankful for those who spent many hours in making this possible. Since one of our elders, Bro.J.R.Satterfield, is the Administrator at Portland Christian School, our Laura Means is now a teacher there, and we also have seven students at PCS, we are now more involved in the activities there. Matthew Mellon, one of our college students, is a sophomore at Harding University. This semester he is at Athens, Greece, and is having wonderful experiences along with his studies. The students have visited Mars Hill, most of the cities where the seven churches of Asia were located, and at this writing they are in Israel for ten days. Last, but certainly not least, we have had four recent baptisms for which we rejoice with the angels in Heaven. **(Bruce Chowning)**

Thomas W. Hartle

Sept. 29, 1910 - Sept. 26, 1998

Baptized into Christ - May 9, 1932

Married - May 10, 1932

Two sons, two daughters, several grand-children and great-grandchildren

Brother Hartle became a fulltime evangelist in 1955. I had read his reports of church activities in the *Missionary Messenger* and *Word and Work* magazine for years before meeting him. Sister Myrtle Smith was a faithful supporter of Brother Hartle from the beginning of her work at *Missionary Messenger*.

I first met Brother Hartle on Sunday February 27, 1972 when he met the ship at Cape Town harbor and took me to Woodstock Church to speak that morning. I spent six days with Brother and Sister Hartle and their daughter, Ruth, before leaving for Rhodesia. Again in April 1972, I was with the Hartles for nine days while picking up a car and freight from the U.S. Also, in December 1972 while at Cape Town with Brother and Sister Forcade I was with the Hartles for nine days.

The Hartles were always entertaining and keeping missionaries on their way to and from the African Field since at that time most traveled by ship to or from Cape Town.

Brother Hartle was not only a servant to foreign missionaries, but to local Christians and all others. Besides preaching fulltime, he had several home Bible studies each week. He used his car to transport others to church meetings, home Bible studies, doctor appointments, hospitals, etc. Truly he was servant to all.

As an evangelist, Brother Hartle was always under-paid and had to supplement his income as a photographer. He was a gifted musician and enjoyed playing the violin.

I had the privilege of meeting his two sons and their families: Raymond and Jean and their children, Paul, Graham and Catherine; also Lionel and Carol and their children, Carol, Allison and Nicola.

Ruth, the Hartle's youngest daughter, lived with them and assisted in the ministry while working in a childcare center. She has cared for her parents for the last several years.

Sister Marian Hartle survives as an invalid. She will be 92 years old in January.

Sister Hartle and Ruth are most deserving of our prayers and any gifts prompted by our Lord.

--Robert F. Gill

99-05 Z:1

James R. Satterfield
114 Brandywynne Lane

New Albany

IN 47150

SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

Class Schedule for Spring Semester, 1999

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Day/Time</u>
Work of the Church II	2	Nathan Burks	Mon. 12:30 - 2:30
Isaiah & Jeremiah	3	Jerry Carmichael	Mon. 3:00 - 6:00
Hermeneutics (Principles for Interpreting the Bible)	3	Alex Wilson	Mon. 6:30 - 9:30
Epistles of Peter & John	3	Mike Abbott	Tue. 1:00 - 4:00
Personal Evangelism	2	Bennie Hill	Tue. 6:30 - 8:30

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