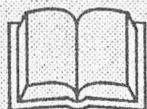


"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The Word and Work



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

July, 1999

Christ Is Reigning, Christ Will Reign

SIDE BY SIDE

*They lie on the table, side by side,
The Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
One is well-worn but cherished with pride,
(Not the Bible, but the TV Guide).
One is used daily to help folks decide,
(No! Not the Bible. It's the TV Guide).*

*As the pages are turned, what shall they see?
Oh, what does it matter, turn on the TV.
Then confusion reigns, they can't all agree
On what they shall watch on the old TV.
So they open the book in which they confide,
(No! Not the Bible. It's the TV Guide).*

*The Word of God is seldom read,
Maybe a verse e'er they fall into bed.
Exhausted and sleepy and tired as can be
Not from reading the Bible, but watching TV.*

*So, then back to the table, side by side,
Lie the Holy Bible and the TV Guide.
No time for prayer, no time for the Word,
The plan of salvation is seldom heard.
But forgiveness of sin is full and free
Is found in the Bible, not on TV!*

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

Dennis L. Allen, Missions

Bennie Hill, New & Notes

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Guest Editorial:

THOU ART COMING, O MY SAVIOR

Frances Ridley Havergal

Thou art coming, O my Savior,
Thou art coming, O my King,
In Thy beauty all resplendent,
In Thy glory all transcendent;
Well may we rejoice and sing:
Coming! in the opening east
Herald brightness slowly swells;
Coming! O my glorious Priest,
Hear we not Thy golden bells?

Thou art coming, Thou art coming;
We shall meet Thee on Thy way,
We shall see Thee, we shall know Thee,
We shall bless Thee, we shall show Thee
All our hearts could never say:
What an anthem that will be,
Ringing out our love to Thee,
Pouring out our rapture sweet
At Thine own all-glorious feet.

Thou art coming; at Thy Table
We are witnesses for this;
While rememb'ring hearts Thou meetest
In communion clearest, sweetest,
Earnest of our coming bliss,
Showing not Thy death alone,
And Thy love exceeding great,
But Thy coming and Thy throne,
All for which we long and wait.

O the joy to see Thee reigning,
Thee, my own beloved Lord!
Every tongue Thy Name confessing,
Worship, honor, glory, blessing
Brought to Thee with glad accord;
Thee, my Master and my Friend,
Vindicated and enthroned;
Unto earth's remotest end
Glorified, adored and owned.

What the Bible Teaches about...

The KINGDOM of GOD

Part Two

Alex V. Wilson

We concluded last month's article with these questions: **Was the kingdom of God here in the days of Christ? Is it here now? Or is it still to come in the future?** And we found Biblical evidence for these answers: **Yes, yes and yes.** Light is shed on these matters by looking at Matthew 13, Jesus' parables about the kingdom. And also by considering the actual meaning of the term, *kingdom*.

The "Secrets" of the Kingdom (Matt.13:11)

The seven parables in this chapter relate to the kingdom of heaven during this age when "the message about the kingdom" is being proclaimed (v.19). A main point Christ makes is that **the kingdom has indeed already come among men (due to His presence in their midst), but men can reject that kingdom.** This is very different from the situation foretold in the OT, especially by Daniel. Remember how he said that God's kingdom would "crush" all the kingdoms of the world and "bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever." God's kingdom and men's kingdoms would not peacefully coexist nor would His empire just gradually permeate the others by its holy influence. No, when His kingdom entered, the world's kingdoms would exit. (Dan. 2:31- 45.)

But now Jesus presents a far different picture. Men can say "No" to God's kingdom and yet get away with it. In fact they can persecute those in the kingdom (v. 21), or -- what's worse -- remain "in" that kingdom as counterfeits, as troublesome weeds among the wheat (24-29). How could that be?

What the Lord is saying is that in this age the kingdom is an Offer, a Gift which may be accepted or rejected. The OT did not foretell this; it is the "mystery" (ASV) or "secret" (NIV) of the kingdom (v. 11). Jesus did not contradict nor cancel Daniel and the other prophets. No, but He amplified their revelations with additional information God had not given them. Thus He supplied us with supplementary insights.

God's kingdom is now here with Persuasion rather than compulsive Power. It is here, but evil still abounds, even within that kingdom. But "at the end of the age" (and here Daniel's insights are brought in), Christ "will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom...all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace.... Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt.13:40-43). So Daniel had it right, but incomplete. Jesus fills in the picture, showing that the Lord now allows-yet-overrules evil, but at the end He will totally demolish it.

What do you mean, "Kingdom"?

The main meaning of this term is not so much **kingDOM** as **kingSHIP**. It is not so much a place (like "the kingdom of England"), but the kingly authority that Jesus has. (Compare Luke 19: 12, "A man... went... to have himself appointed king" or to receive kingly power.) We Christians are in His kingdom now, because we have given Him kingship over us. We have repented of running our own lives. We have surrendered to His reign, His will.

Ungodly people have not bowed to His authority now, when they may do so freely. They shall do so, like it or not, at His return when He will squash all rebellion. At that time every knee in the universe shall bow, but it will be too late to benefit those who kneel only because they have to. **The time to bow is now!**

Our Prayer about His Kingship

Our Lord taught us to pray, "Your kingdom come." That request is pregnant with significance. Following the Jewish style of parallelism, it is best explained by the following statement, "Your will be done." But since there are different aspects of God's kingdom and His will, we can apply the request in several ways.

Applied to the future, we pray "Your kingdom come" prophetically: "Come, Lord Jesus. Return soon, so that the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ -- and You will reign fully and forever, without end."

Applied to the world today, we pray with a missionary application: "May Your kingdom grow, and spread throughout the earth.

May those people who have never yet heard of King Jesus hear and submit to His Kingship now."

Applied to the Church, both worldwide and locally, we pray for divine empowering and growth: "Revive your work, O Lord' -- deepen your work among us. Make us holy, and wholly obedient to Your kingly will. Purify and rule us, your subjects, O King."

Applied to me, personally, "Your kingdom Come" means "My kingdom Go." When we sincerely sing, "Have Thine own way, Lord," or "I surrender all," or "Break down every idol, cast out every foe," or "King of my life I crown Thee now" -- we are praying this prayer.

Someone observed that in every heart there is both a Cross and a Throne. If I place Self on the throne of my life, I am putting Jesus on the cross, saying "Away with Him; I'll not have him rule over me!" But if I place Self on the cross, I put Jesus on the throne. And that is where He deserves to be. For He is King. And His kingdom is here and is coming.

Additional Note:

By and large, amillennialists emphasize the present stage of the kingdom -- the church in this present age. And by and large, premillennialists emphasize the kingdom's future stage, after Christ's return. Each side usually admits that the kingdom has more than one aspect, but tends to put the accent on one side, as just described. Yet we see that scripture strongly stresses both sides, so let's be sure to do the same.

Matt. 19:16-30 is a valuable passage to study in this regard. What does it teach about the kingdom's being already here and yet being not yet? What different terms are treated as equivalent in meaning? Does eternal life have different "tenses" -- present and future? Prove it from scripture. Does being saved have various "tenses" -- past, present and future? Prove it from scripture. And what do these facts reveal regarding the kingdom of God?

Recommended Reading for Further Study:

The Kingdom of God, by R.H. Boll, is available from us again, though copies are limited. A masterful survey of many Old and New Testament passages, and how they fit together. (\$10 + postage, & tax in Ky.)

The Gospel of the Kingdom, by George E. Ladd; published by Eerdmans. A survey of differing viewpoints, plus a clear presentation of Biblical teaching -- especially the moral applications of Jesus' kingship. (Please get this from your local Christian bookstore; we do not carry it.)

What the Bible Teaches about...

The MILLENNIUM or 1000-Year REIGN of CHRIST

Alex V. Wilson

It is deplorable that this topic has often occasioned bitter debate and even church division. That should never be. Sincere Christians who hold differing interpretations should be able to love and respect each other and cooperate in God's service despite their disagreements. Otherwise Satan wins great victories by sowing strife among the Lord's people. "Divide and conquer" is one of his favorite strategies.

Since we have reached the topic of the millennium both in our series of doctrinal studies and in our survey of R.H. Boll as writer and editor, we are making it the theme for the month. We do not want to over-emphasize the subject, as though it is the only or even the major focus of Biblical prophecy. On the other hand, it should not be shunned. It includes far more than merely one passage of God's word, Rev. 20. (By the way, we recommend you read the preceding article *before* reading this one.*)

Read the following Scriptures & try to discern whether they have already been fulfilled or -- if future -- when will they be fulfilled? That is, Is the fulfilment of each passage in the OT age, the present church-age, or in heaven during eternity? If in none of the above, could it be here on earth during a period between Christ's 2nd Coming & the eternal age in heaven?

	<u>OT era</u>	<u>Church era</u>	<u>Millen.</u>	<u>Hvn/Eter.</u>
Isa. 2:3-4				
Isa. 11:1,4-7,9				
Isa. 35:3-6				
Isa. 65:17-25				
Dan.7:13-14,27				
Matt. 19:28-30				
Acts 3:18-21				
1 Cor. 6:1-3				
Rev. 2:26-7				
Rev. 3:21				
Rev. 5:10				
Rev. 11:15				
Rev. 20:1-6**				

We see that Rev. 20 does not stand alone. But it is the major passage to consider on this question. So let's look at it.

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years. [1-6, NIV]

Many fine Christians take the amillennial interpretation (or more accurately, the "realized-millennium" view). They say, "Yes, there's a millennium, but it's **now** -- we're already in it! It's the entire church-age. The above passage doesn't present the last chapter of world-history, but a symbolic review of all of church-history, between Jesus' 1st and 2nd comings." They believe that the first resurrection is a symbol of salvation: those who were dead in sin being raised to spiritual life, **now** (cf. Eph.2:1ff). Some interpreters equate reigning with Christ with Rom. 5:17, "Those who receive God's grace reign in life through Christ Jesus," **now**. And Leon Morris (usually a fine commentator) suggests that the binding of Satan "may mean that, though Satan is busy, he is restrained from doing his worst. He cannot destroy the church."

This interpretation seems appealing at first, until you notice the text closely! Then you see that the resurrected ones are not **figuratively** raised from a spiritual death due to sin, but are **literally** raised from a physical death due to **martyrdom for Christ's sake!** There's a world of difference between those views. Which does the text teach?

As for Satan, a vast contrast exists between Rev.12:9 (ASV, RSV), which mentions his present role as “deceiver of the whole world,” and Rev. 20, where he will be bound “to keep him from deceiving the nations.” It doesn’t say, “...to keep him from destroying the church” (Morris’ view); that’s an idea utterly foreign to the text, isn’t it?

There’s a great difference between putting a mad dog in the pound so no one need fear his presence (the pre-mill view), and giving everyone a can of Mace-spray so they can protect themselves from the attacks of the loose dog -- so he can’t destroy them (the a-mill view). Which view does Scripture really teach?

There may be symbolism here, but it’s not all that obscure. We may not understand at all how the Lord will do these things. But isn’t the general meaning of what He will do fairly plain, if we take these passages at face value? To speak in scholarly terms, the book of Revelation is indeed in “the genre of apocalyptic” (a literary style where the war between good and evil, God and Satan, is portrayed with vividly dramatic symbolism). But that does not mean we can’t make heads or tails out of it. It has had some pre-filments: probably the first recipients of Revelation thought that “the Beast” was Domitian Caesar. He persecuted some of the Christians, and sometimes began his letters to the provincial governors of the Empire with these words: “I, your Lord and your God, order you to....” Yet we still await Revelation’s ful-filment, “the blessed hope of the appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ” (Tit.2:13). As we keep applying our minds to study these matters, may our hearts echo John’s prayer: “Come, Lord Jesus.”

*Our two studies of the kingdom of God show that, contrary to the accusations of some, we unquestionably recognize and teach that God’s kingdom has been in existence since the beginning of the church (Col.1:13). In fact earlier: since Jesus’s ministry (Matt.4: 17; 12:28). In fact earlier still: since John the Baptizer’s ministry (Matt.3:1-2; 11:12). Indeed some aspect of the kingdom existed before then (Psa.103:19 etc.).

**For further study see: Matt.5:5 & Rom.4:13; during which of the time periods does this inheriting of *the earth* occur? And note that Luke 19:11-27 shows that in at least one sense God’s kingdom did not occur soon after Calvary. And what of Acts 14:22 -- to which “stage” of the kingdom does this refer? 2 Tim.2:12 speaks of God’s people reigning in the future, but does not specify whether referring to a millennial kingdom before the eternal state (as in Rev.20) or to God’s kingdom in its final, fully-glorious eternal state (as in Rev.22:5), or to both (which is very likely).

R. H. Boll as a Writer, Editor and Christian

Part 8

Alex V. Wilson

J. What He Taught about the Millennium:

The shortest and easiest way to present Boll's beliefs on the millennium is to quote from a 1942 article, "'Premillennialism'--What Is It?" There he listed what he called "the essential points in premillennial teaching":

1. That the Lord Jesus Christ will return from heaven.
2. That, if there is ever to be a time
--of the restoration of all things (Acts 3:19-21);
--when the old curse shall be lifted and thorns and thistles shall cease (Isa.55: 12,13);
--when the nations shall learn war no more (Isa.2:4);
--when the knowledge of Jehovah shall cover the earth as waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:9);
--when the groaning of creation shall cease (Rom.8: 18-23);
--when Satan shall be dethroned, bound and imprisoned (Rev.20: 1-3);
--when the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ (Rev.11:15)--

if there is ever to be such a time as that, *then Christ must and will come before that time*

As all standard church histories, and the encyclopedias... testify, so the primitive church in general, from the days of the apostles for 300 years, believed. [A number of] . . . preachers of the Restoration Movement also freely voiced such belief [He mentions eight examples, then continues:]

David Lipscomb also, in his book, "Queries and Answers" (p 360) wrote:

"Jesus had been to earth and returned to heaven. Heaven must receive him until 'the times of the restoration of all things.' Then 'the times of restoration of all things' must be when Jesus returns again to earth--the restoration of all things to their original relation to God. The relation which the world originally sustained to God was broken when man, the ruler, rebelled against God... The whole material creation shared in the evil. Briars, thistles, thorns grew in the material world, as in the spiritual. Sickness, death, mortality afflicted the material world. When man rebelled against his Maker, the under creation rebelled against man . . . When Jesus comes again, the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and all things in the world will be

restored to harmonious relations with God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe." [End of quote from Lipscomb. RHB concludes:]

And it is edifying to note how brethren of the old days, as seen in the *Millennial Harbinger*, freely voiced their understanding on both sides of this, without even a thought of mutual excommunication.

Sometimes critics of the premill view claim that it is based on only one brief passage in only one chapter of only one book--and that book is full of symbolism and figurative language. In reply Boll would say something like this: Notice in the above article we have based our conclusions not merely on Rev. 20. There are six other passages mentioned there--three in the OT and three in the NT--and others could be added as well. For example, the following paragraphs written at another time specifically mention five other texts but omit Rev. 20 entirely.

The reign of the saints comes after the suffering of this present time, and is part of "the glory that shall be revealed to usward." (Rom.8:17,18.) It is a promise given to those who overcome and keep His works to the end. (Rev.2:26-29.) How then say some that the saints are reigning now? Reigning? Over what? Over whom? Now is the time for suffering and patience; now we sow in tears;.. now are God's people tempted and tried, rejoicing only in being partakers of the sufferings of Christ, that at the revelation of His glory also they may rejoice... [1 Pet.4:12-13]

"Already ye are filled, already ye are become rich, ye have come to reign without us" says Paul to the self-complacent Corinthians--"yea, and I would that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you." (1 Cor.4:8.) If the Corinthians had been reigning, the apostle also would have been reigning with them. He would that they were reigning, he says, for then the time of his reign, too, would have come, and he would reign with them. But were the apostles reigning? Far from it. They were as "men doomed to death," "a spectacle unto the world. . . ." "Even unto this present time," he continues, "we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted...we are made as the filth of the world, the offscouring of all things, even until now." (1 Cor.4:9-13.) But when the crown is bestowed then all sufferings are past and the reign begins. They only reign who receive the crown; and the crowning-day is not till Christ's appearing. (2 Tim.4:8; 1 Pet.5:4.)

III. THE BALANCE BOLL AIMED FOR

R.H. Boll has been accused of being almost a one-issue teacher, a prophecy addict. One historian writes that by 1912 Boll "saw premillennialism in every parable and lesson of the New Testament." But his evidence to support this charge is not impressively strong. Another critic says,

Word and Work . . . continued to be a paper with the special purpose of teaching on these prophetic visionary speculative theories relating to premillennialism. This paper, as a publishing house, has printed many books and much literature, the majority of which has

had such visionary speculative themes as a major feature.... The first edition [of the hymnal *Great Songs of the Church*, edited by Boll's co-worker E. L. Jorgenson] reeked with premillennialism.

Even the outstanding missionary to Japan, J. M. McCaleb, chided Boll on this point. Boll and Jorgenson and their congregations, Portland Avenue and Highland, generously supported the McCalebs with finances, prayer and kindness. For years his wife and children lived in Louisville, while Brother McCaleb was in Japan. But when the prophecy controversy arose and continued, McCaleb felt constrained to say, lovingly, that in his opinion "Boll was giving more time and space to the question than it deserved.... To prove his point, he glanced through one issue of Boll's paper and discovered that out of twenty-nine pages of reading material, nine of them were on the kingdom, or one-third of the whole...." To him that seemed out of proportion. He also wrote, "Brother Boll's danger is not in holding the views he does about the prophecies, but in becoming so carried away with them that he neglects the weightier matters of the law to the hurt of his own good influence."

Were these criticisms valid? Perhaps they were at some times. Here are comments RHB made on this matter:

As to "featuring" the disputed teaching--it is not my purpose to press it unduly or disproportionately, nor to make it obnoxious by undue and offensive emphasis; but only in faithfulness to the word of the Lord, as occasion may require. Also, we recognize the fact that though *the Scripture* is inspired, *our conclusions* are not; and our *conclusions* are, therefore, not to be insisted upon as though they were. Only the statements of God's word are the basis of Christian fellowship.

Notice four additional points. First, he believed that prophecy was grossly neglected or abused in most congregations. Scripture speaks of "waiting" and "watching" for the "blessed hope"; but such attitudes were practically unknown. He wanted to correct that great imbalance. In 1909 he wrote, "I protest that the brotherhood in general holds the most absurd, grotesque, and crude kinds of notions concerning prophecy." And six years later he claimed, "It is not difficult to find Christians who have been members of the church for years and have not heard one sermon on the subject of the coming" --the second coming of Christ. (*Gospel Advocate*, May 20, 1915.)

Second, when anyone's teaching is attacked (and even misrepresented) on certain points, those points are the ones he naturally will defend. Third, at times during the controversy Boll seemed to write almost as much about the Biblical principle of freedom as he did about prophecy *per se*. He feared that some leaders among Churches of Christ were establishing not only a party-line but almost a papacy that would destroy our nonsectarian goal. Probably you remember one his-

torian's statement, "Churches of Christ don't have bishops, they have editors." This trend is what Boll was resisting.

Fourth, in a recorded sermon he pointed out that in the New Testament the return of Christ is referred to oftener than the church, or baptism or repentance--as essential as they are. So his over-emphasis, if any, may have been nearer to Biblical proportions than the under-emphasis of some of his critics.

Of course it is obvious that he wrote a lot about prophecy. But he wrote a lot, period--a lot about many other Biblical subjects as well.

a. Notice the books he wrote. Studies on Daniel, 1-2 Thessalonians (combined), and Revelation--yes, these contain many prophetic passages. But he also wrote expositions of Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, and Hebrews, and at his death was writing on 1 Peter. His other books include a collection of articles he wrote before becoming WW editor, and his discussion with Boles on prophetic themes, also a survey of what the entire Bible teaches on the kingdom of God, plus two books of sermons. One of those sermon books contained a series of three regarding Christ's return. The other contained sixteen sermons on various topics; only two were about prophecy. So we might say that six of his thirteen books were on prophecy, though it is stretching things a great deal to think of Daniel, 1-2 Thessalonians, Revelation, and even the kingdom of God as nothing but eschatology!

b. What about his booklets, pamphlets and leaflets? I find twenty-six of such, ranging in length from four to thirty pages. Three of these were expositions or study-guides of Biblical books (Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Philemon). Of the remaining twenty-three items, seven were related to salvation, two were defending the Christ faith, and at least four were on non-sectarian Christianity. A few others were practical, doctrinal, or moral. And prophecy? Five of the twenty-six related to prophecy! If you add the study-guides on Isaiah and Jeremiah to the "prophecy" category, that raises the number to seven out of twenty-six -- still hardly "a majority."

Is the accusation justified that his "publishing house has printed many books and much literature, *the majority of which* has had . . . visionary speculative themes as a major feature"?

c. It might be easier to sustain the charge of "too much about prophecy" when looking at the *Word and Work*. But here the emphasis and proportion differed from year to year and from issue to issue, and is hard to gauge in an overall way. Undoubtedly there is a great amount on eschatology, perhaps sometimes too much. But it is hard for us now to judge what circumstances and needs Boll and his co-

writers considered as they decided what subjects should be covered throughout the months and years.

d. It may be relevant to the question of "over-emphasis" to examine the subjects brother Boll taught in his winter Bible classes, as announced in *W&W*. Browsing haphazardly through the years, we made the following discoveries about what this one-man Bible Institute taught.

1913-14: Luke and Acts. Exodus through Deuteronomy. Matthew and Prophetic Studies. Joshua through 2 Chronicles. Poetical Books and Minor Prophets. John and Hebrews. [That's around 35 books plus the topical prophetic studies!]

1917-18: O.T.: Genesis. Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther. Isaiah. N.T.: Matthew, Acts; Galatians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 John. "Topical Study of the Kingdom of God, covering the entire Bible."

1927-28: O.T. studies: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth and the Minor prophets. N.T. studies: John, Galatians, Ephesians, Philipians, Colossians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, James, 1-2 Peter. Also "possibly" some studies in Job, Psalms and Proverbs--if time allowed. [That's 29 and maybe 32 books of Scripture studied in one winter! And here's an interesting discovery: In none of the three years picked at random was the book of Revelation studied.]

It seems that R. H. Boll was obsessed not only with prophecy, but with the entire Bible. And as we saw earlier, he believed in Bible study not just to know the word of God, but to know the God of the word--in a personal way. May we all have such an obsession as that.

10. Since it is clear that unity amid diversity of prophetic views was practiced in the Stone-Campbell movement during the 1800s (as RHB mentions here), why and/or how did the issue become explosively divisive during the 1900s?

There may be several reasons for that, including some sociological ones, as Robert Hooper observed at the 1987 Restoration Forum: "The key to understanding the 1930s is to remember the most important happening of the decade--the Great Depression.... [Foy Wallace Jr] was totally sure of his positions. As a result, he gave to many within churches of Christ an assurance of their religious positions. This established a stability they did not have in their economic and social conditions. Thus a strong dogmatism developed during the 1930s within the fellowship, especially in some of the journals...."

But how did this doctrinal conflict get started in the first place? Boll refrained from telling names or assigning blame. But when asked that question

by a few members of a Bible class one day, he replied, "That whole thing was due to preacher envy!" He would not amplify. I have heard several versions of the who, why, what, and when related to the preacher envy he mentioned. But since he chose not to go into those details, should we?

WORD AND WORK 1931

QUERIST'S DRAWER

(A question answered by the Query Editor of The Christian Standard, April 4, 1931.)

1. Do you understand the Scriptures to teach the premillennial coming of the Lord?

2. Do you understand the Scriptures to teach there will be a literal millennium?

3. What do you understand the Scriptures to teach concerning the millennium?

I am strong for the postmillennial view, and want to see what you can say in defense of the premillennial view, if you hold that view.

—A Reader.

We will answer the three questions together.

It is impossible to tell, in the space we have, all that we understand the Scriptures to teach on the subject of the millennium. We believe they teach the premillennial coming of our Lord, and that there will be a literal millennium. The Scriptures teach, as is generally confessed, that the antichrist is to be premillennial, and that he is to be destroyed with the brightness of Christ's coming (2 Thess. 2:8). This fixes the coming of Christ to be premillennial. Bishop McIlvaine says that this argument "is wholly unanswerable."

A second reason for believing that His coming is premillennial is that He said (Matt. 24:29, 30) that He would come immediately after the great tribulation. This tribulation period is premillennial, or before the reign of peace (Matt. 24:21; Isa. 24:20-23; Luke 21:24).

A third reason is that the millennial church is to be free from persecution, because the millennium is to be a reign of peace. The premillennial church is a persecuted church (John 15:19-21; 16:33), a suffering; afflicted people, and is thereunto appointed (1 Thess. 3:3), and this will continue until Christ comes (2 Thess. 1:7-10). This precludes any millennium until after His coming.

A fourth reason is, we are taught that the tares and the wheat will grow together until the end of this age (Matt. 13:29, 30); that evil men

and seducers shall wax worse and worse (2 Pet. 3:3, 4; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:13), and that, as it was in the days of Noah and Lot, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of man (Luke 17:26-30; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4; Matt. 24:37-51). Furthermore, the character and number of the tares are described as being such that their destruction before the harvest would endanger the children of the kingdom (Matt. 13:25). This absolutely precludes a millennial reign of righteousness before His coming.

Since the first Adam surrendered the kingdom to Satan all efforts of men to re-establish it have failed, and will continue to fail until the second Adam returns to purify the earth, and to establish the kingdom of righteousness on resurrection ground, when a righteous King shall reign and prosper.

A fifth reason is that the Scriptures teach that the millennial kingdom will be a literal reign of Christ on earth. We are told that "a king shall reign in righteousness" (Isa.9:7; Luke 1:32,33), "in Jerusalem" (Jer. 3:17; Zech. 14:16); the apostles shall sit upon twelve thrones (Matt. 19:28), and the saints shall reign upon the earth (Rev. 5:10); Jesus is now in heaven at the right hand of God (I Pet. 3:22), but heaven has only received Him until the time of the restoration of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets (Acts 3:20,21), when He shall come again to sit in the throne of His father David.

In fact, there is such a multitude of passages, specific and full of detail in their literalness, that we can not begin to refer to them here.

A sixth reason is found in the order of the resurrection. All of the dead will not be raised at one time. Just as Jesus was raised *out of* the dead, and the rest of the dead were left, so the dead who are in Christ will, at His coming, be raised *out of* the dead and the rest of the dead will be left until another and final resurrection, one thousand years later (1Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 20:4-14). This is in full accord with I Cor. 15:22-26: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. *But each in his own order* [or band]: Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's at coming. Then cometh the end.... The last enemy that shall be abolished is death."

Notice that at His coming those to be raised are "they that are Christ's." Nothing is said about the wicked dead. They are left a thousand years. "Then the end." "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Rev. 20:5). Where the resurrection of the righteous is referred to, they are said to be raised *out of* the dead; where that of the wicked is referred to, it is said to be a resurrection *of* the dead. This is clearly brought out in the Greek text.

All will be made alive, *but each in his own order*. First, Christ; next, those who are in Christ at His coming; next, the end—“the rest of the dead” who are not Christ’s, at which time death itself will be destroyed.

The first resurrection is in three stages: Christ, the firstfruits; then “they are Christ’s at His coming” to meet Him in the air, the general harvest; then the tribulation saints that suffer martyrdom under the antichrist while Christ and the general harvest of the righteous are in the air, the gleanings of the resurrection of the righteous. This completes the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5).

If the dead in Christ are raised at His coming, and the rest of the dead are not raised until the end of the thousand years, then Christ’s coming is premillennial.

Christ’s first coming was to set up a spiritual kingdom, His second will be to set up a temporal earthly kingdom. It will be none the less spiritual than the first, however. The prophecies concerning the first and second comings of Christ and the nature of His reigns were confused by the Jews. They saw in them only one coming and understood it was to be earthly, whereas it was spiritual only. Many today are making a similar mistake about His second coming; they consider the millennial reign to be spiritual only, whereas He is to come and reign in person on earth when the “God of heaven sets up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall the sovereignty thereof be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these [earthly] kingdoms, and it shall stand forever” (Dan. 2:44).

This is by no means all that we understand the Scriptures teach on the millennium, nor is it all we can say “in defense of the premillennial view;” it is hardly a starter.

-- Roy L. Porter, in *Christian Standard*, 1931

Should Christians Be Disfellowshipped Over Prophecy?

by David R. Reagan

No—a thousand times no!

The split over prophetic interpretation that occurred at the beginning of this century among the Churches of Christ is one of the greatest tragedies in the history of the Campbell-Stone Restoration Heritage. The split was needless and sinful, and those who perpetuate it to this day are guilty of dividing asunder the Body of Christ for no valid reason.

Prophecy in Restoration History

For over 100 years brothers and sisters within the Campbell-Stone Heritage worshiped side by side and loved each other while holding every prophetic viewpoint known to man. The two founders of the movement, Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone, held different viewpoints. Campbell was a Post-Millennialist; Stone, a Pre-Millennialist. Neither thought such a doctrinal difference should serve as a basis for determining fellowship. In their minds, it clearly fell into the area of opinion, where there should be liberty of thought.

During the second and third generations of the movement, the diversity of prophetic views continued. Robert Milligan ably continued to advocate the Post-Millennial view, whereas Moses Lard, James Harding, and Daniel Sommer all advocated the Historic Pre-Millennial view.* The split did not occur until after the turn of the century when World War I delivered a death blow to the Post-Millennial view which was based on a utopian assumption about the inevitable progress of Mankind.

*The Dispensational Pre-Millennial view differs from the Historic Pre-Millennial position in its concept of the Rapture. The Historic Pre-Millennial view called thus because it can be traced back to the earliest Church Fathers in the First Century, places the Rapture at the end of the Tribulation. According to this view, Jesus appears, the church saints living and dead are raptured to meet Him in the sky, and they immediately return to earth to reign with Him. The Dispensational Pre-Millennial viewpoint, developed in England by the Plymouth Brethren in the 1830's, contends that the Rapture will be a separate event from the return of Christ to this earth. Thus, Christ will appear before the Tribulation for His church and will return to the earth with His church at the end of the Tribulation. The Dispensational view spread rapidly across Europe and came to vogue in this country during the latter part of the 19th Century, due mainly to its adoption and proclamation by Dwight Moody and its popularization by C. I. Scofield in his Study Bible (published in 1909). The viewpoint was probably unknown to most Church of Christ folk when it was introduced by R. H. Boll in the late 1910's. Today, it is the predominant viewpoint among Pre-Millennialists.

As those who had formerly held to Post-Millennialism scrambled about for a new viewpoint, a powerful spokesman for the Dispensational Pre-Millennial view emerged on the Church of Christ scene. His name was R.H. Boll, and he held a position of great influence as the front page editor of the *Gospel Advocate*. Boll was driven from the *Gospel Advocate* and ultimately from the fellowship of the mainline Churches of Christ by intolerant brethren who rallied around the A-Millennial viewpoint.

Sustaining a Contradiction

It is paradoxical that the majority of the Church of Christ leaders decided to adopt the A-Millennial view. For that view is based upon a spiritualization of prophetic scripture. So it is incompatible with the conservative view of scripture which is generally held by the Churches of Christ. Their leaders argue that all of scripture is to be interpreted literally *except prophecy!* Prophecy, they argue, must be interpreted symbolically or figuratively by spiritualizing its meaning. What makes this position so incredible is that all the Biblical prophecies concerning the first coming of Christ were fulfilled literally, in the sense that their *plain-sense meaning* was fulfilled. Thus, Jesus was born of a virgin, just as Isaiah had prophesied (Isaiah 7:14). And Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and was hailed as King, just as Zechariah had prophesied (Zech. 9:9 & 10).

If our present day A-Millennial spiritualizers had lived 200 years before Christ, they would have interpreted these passages to mean that the Messiah would be born spiritually pure (rather than literally born of a virgin) and that His perfect spiritual humility (symbolized by His riding on a donkey) would cause men to hail Him as king of their hearts. The idea that He would literally ride into Jerusalem on a donkey and literally be hailed as King would have been scoffed at as heartily as the A-Mill spiritualizers now scoff at Zechariah 14 where the prophet says Jesus will return to the Mount of Olives and that the mount will be split by an earthquake when His foot touches it.

The Point and the Problem

But my main point is this: As incredibly inconsistent as the A-Millennial view may be, I still consider those who hold that view to be my brothers and sisters in Christ, and I intend to embrace them as such and love them even though many of them would consider me to be a person "fallen from grace", because of my Pre-Millennial viewpoint.

The fundamental problem here has nothing whatsoever to do with prophecy—just as the split over prophecy really had little to do with prophecy. *The fundamental problem is the concept of salvation.* Those who draw lines of fellowship over matters like prophetic interpretation are people who believe in salvation by perfected knowledge; that is,

they believe that salvation is dependent upon being right about every doctrine.

I can still vividly recall a classic expression of this attitude several years ago at a prophecy conference sponsored by the church where I was serving as pulpit minister. We tried to arrange to have a speaker representing each of the major prophetic viewpoints. The person who presented the A-Mill view, a mainline Church of Christ preacher, was asked after his presentation whether or not a Pre-Millennialist could be saved. His response was, "I couldn't be saved if I were a Pre-Millennialist, because I know it's wrong." I wanted to jump up and stop the discussion on prophecy and spend the rest of the day discussing the real issue of salvation.

Are we saved by being right about prophecy? Can I really lose my salvation if I am wrong about my belief that Jesus is coming back to reign upon the earth? If I can be lost by being wrong about prophecy, then I can be lost by being wrong about anything—instrumental music, the frequency of communion, or even the number of communion cups. That means I have no hope of salvation whatsoever, because it is impossible for me to be right about everything.

The Certainty of Salvation

But the Apostle John says:

"We know that we have passed out of death into life." (1 John 3:14)

"You know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:13).

"We know that we are of God." (1 John 5:19)

Over and over John says we can know that we are saved. But how can we ever have such assurance if our salvation depends upon our being right about everything? The answer is that we can't. And that is precisely why the mainline Churches of Christ are filled with souls who seem sure of everything except the most important thing of all—their salvation!

I can know with absolute certainty that I am saved, because Paul said I am saved by the "grace of God, as a gift" (Romans 3:24). I can also be certain about my salvation, because I know my Savior, and I know He is trustworthy and that He meant it when He said: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

Being Right v. Knowing the Truth

This means that I can be wrong about a lot of things, but if I am right about one thing—Jesus Christ—then I can claim the promise of eternal salvation. It means that *although all truth is important, it is not*

all equally important. And thus, whatever the truth may be about instrumental music or communion or prophecy, it is nothing compared to *The Truth* that Jesus is Lord (Romans 10:9; I Cor. 12:3). As Jesus Himself put it: "I, am the way, *the truth*, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

Does this mean that what you believe about prophecy is irrelevant? Not at all! It just means that it has nothing to do with your justification before God—with your judicial standing before God. We are justified by our faith in Christ as Lord and Savior (Romans 3:21-26).

Justification v. Sanctification

Much of the problem here is due to the fact that: the mainline Churches of Christ have never distinguished between justification, sanctification, and glorification. They have failed to realize that salvation is a process that begins with our justification through faith in Christ, continues with our sanctification—a life long process of dying to self and living more and more for Christ—and consummates in our glorification when we stand face to face with Christ and are fully conformed to His image (Romans 8:29).

Justification comes through faith in Christ. It results in my adoption into the family of God. When I am justified, I put on the righteousness of Christ, and I stand guiltless before the judgment bar of God, washed clean in the blood of the Lamb (I Cor. 1:30). I receive the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit as the guarantee of my eternal inheritance (Eph. 1:13&14), and I begin my walk with the Lord.

The Meaning of Sanctification

It is true that I am sanctified when I am justified, because I am washed clean of my sins and am set apart from the world as God's sacred possession (I Cor. 6:11 & Heb. 10:10). But the process of sanctification continues as I begin my walk with the Lord. Through the process of sanctification, God shapes me slowly but surely into the image of Christ as I learn more and more about faith and hope and love through Bible study, prayer, worship, and fellowship. This does not mean that sanctification is something I earn, anymore than I earn my justification. My sanctification is still by grace. It is still a gift of God through the power of His indwelling Holy Spirit.

But whereas I am justified by responding to the truth of the *Gospel* (the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus—I Cor. 15:1-4), I am sanctified by responding to the truths of Christian *Doctrine*. This means that the quality of my walk with the Lord will be substantially affected by what I believe about such things as the Holy Spirit, the church, discipleship, stewardship, miracles, prayer, and prophecy.

A Personal Example

To use a personal example, before I came to a Pre-Millennial understanding of prophecy, I had little enthusiasm for the return of Christ. I certainly was not watchful for His return, and I felt that the only impact of His return on world history would be to bring it to an end.

Now I have a whole new perspective that has drawn me closer to the Lord and has strengthened my faith, deepened my love, and enhanced my hope. I now look to the return of Christ with fervent expectancy as my "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13). I rejoice that such watchfulness is a motivation for holy living (Romans 13:11-14). I thrill to the thought of the triumph of Jesus over Satan and the establishment of His reign of perfect peace and righteousness here on earth. I rejoice that He will be fully vindicated *in history*, just as He was humiliated in history. I praise God for the redemption that Jesus will bring to all the creation (Romans 8:18-23). And I look forward for the first time to an eternity in the presence of God upon a new earth that has been purged of its corruption and renovated to its previous glory (2 Peter 3:1-13 & Rev. 21.1-4).

I have also been brought to the awe-inspiring realization that one of the greatest miracles of history is occurring before my very eyes — the regathering of the Jews to Israel. Old Testament passages regarding the Jews, passages which never had any meaning at all to me, have suddenly come alive (Isa. 11:1-11, Jer. 23:5-8, & Amos 9:14 & 15). And for the first time, I understand the meaning of Paul's writings in Romans 9-11 where he talks of God's grace for the Jew.

I have a grasp of God's control of history that I never had before and that has given me a sense of comfort and peace that serves as a sturdy anchor in such perilous times as these. I now know with a certainty I never had before that God's Word is sure, that His promises are certain, that He is alive and well, that He still cares intensely about His creation, and that He still intervenes in marvelous and miraculous ways to direct and comfort His people while He orchestrates the evil deeds of man to a climax that will bring eternal honor and glory to His holy name.

A Call to Love

As you can see, what we believe about prophecy does make a difference in the quality of our Christian lives. But it should make no difference at all as to our attitude toward each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. I have Christian brothers and sisters who are Pre-Mills and A-Mills and Post-Mills, and I have some relatives in Christ who don't know the difference in a millennium and a centipede. I will spend eternity with some who have never even read the Book of Revelation (the Apostle Paul being one of them!).

We need to stop playing God by drawing lines of fellowship which we have no right to draw over matters of opinion, and we need to start loving each other because we share a belief in the fundamental fact of history—that Jesus is Lord!

[We gladly add this fact: In the years since this article was first written, a growing number of folks in "the mainline Churches of Christ"--led by such men as Rubel Shelley, Mike Cope and Max Lucado--have come to appreciate and emphasize the grace of God, the possibility of knowing we are saved, and the blessed hope of Christ's return. Yet brother Reagan's statements are still true of many other churchmembers. Where the shoe fits, wear it. --ed.]

A Time To Embrace

By Don Deremer

Years ago, one of my graduate-school professors said, "Don, I've been unfair to you. When I learned that you are an Independent Christian Church minister, I unfairly stereotyped you. Now that I know you, I realize I was wrong; I apologize." I extended forgiveness, thanking him for his humble, Christlike spirit.

I too have been guilty of negatively labeling and stereotyping those who did not share my Christian Church background. My limited understanding, coupled with pride in my own beliefs, gave me little patience for those who differed theologically. Through the years, God has faithfully widened my view of His church. Once I held little interest in conversations with the Church of God (Anderson). Now more than ever, I am filled with excitement about such steps.

Admittedly, there are differences between us. Presbyterian and Baptist roots give the Restoration Movement a mild Calvinistic flavor, while the Church of God stems from the holiness tradition and is predominantly Arminian. I'm premillennial; the Church of God is largely amillennial. They have women elders and preachers. We take Communion each Sunday. They practice foot-washing.

Even with our differences, we cannot blithely dismiss the Church of God as spiritually inferior. I used to do that, and limited my fellowship to Christians who shared my beliefs. God, however, was not pleased with my spiritual arrogance and isolation and decided to personally introduce me to the Church of God.

Three years ago, God placed me in a new church work in a small community where there were four churches from varying denominations. F. Dale Senseman from the Church of God was one of the first pastors I met. Dale quickly evidenced his passionate love for Christ. His church roots embrace all Christians covered with Christ's blood; he was more loving and accepting of me, despite our differences, than I was of him. He was acting more like Jesus.

I was guarded. I discovered that Dale knew his Bible quite well; theologically, he was biblically-rooted and well-researched. The more we talked, the more our mutual love for Christ became evident. Our agreements in Christ outnumbered our differences. It's been said, "A man does not have to be my twin to be my brother." I no longer feel compelled to convince Dale that foot-washing is no longer mandated. Church of God saints have most assuredly studied the Bible; their conclusions differ from mine. I can live with that.

Last year Dale said, "Don, why rent a school for \$700 a month when you could use our building instead? We love Jesus, we love you, and we support your work." I was stunned! This was the most generous offer I have ever experienced! We accepted. We share maintenance and upkeep of the building--a significant savings to our church.

Dale and I share the same office, and we meet weekly for prayer and planning. Their worship is from 9:00-10:00 A.M.; our worship begins at 11:15 A.M. Sandwiched in between, we conduct Bible school together. We also share Sunday and Wednesday evening services, special holiday services, and youth activities. Our local newspaper printed a highly complimentary story about us which encouraged our community. We have engaged in evangelistic outreach campaigns, special dramas, and community services.

Meanwhile, our congregations have fallen more deeply in love with each other and with Christ.

Recently I said "Dale, I owe you an apology. Not too long ago, I unfairly stereotyped the Church of God. I thought the Christian Church was spiritually superior. My attitude was wrong. Will you forgive me?" Dale embraced me, affirming his love for Christ and for me. God was vividly teaching an important lesson. Spiritual pride and arrogance have no place in the body of Christ. "Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand" (Romans 14:4, New International Version).

David B. Barrett and Todd M. Johnson (*Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 1998*) estimate that by 2000, four billion people will still be without Christ. Christians must confess and renounce our sins of labeling, negativity, pride, and isolationism--none of which represent Christ well to a lost world.

I pray that Heaven won't be the place where we finally realize that too much time was spent witnessing to our brothers and sisters in Christ. Then it will be far too late to apologize to all those unbelievers who have perished without Him.

Don A. Deremer ministers with CrossView Christian Church of North Canton, Ohio. This article is copyrighted by *Christian Standard*; reprinted by permission.

Family Nights

Jim Weidmann and Kurt Bruner
with Mike and Amy Nappa

There is toothpaste all over the plastic covered table. Four young kids are having the time of their lives squeezing the paste out of the tube—trying to expunge every drop like Dad told them to. "Okay," says Dad, slapping a twenty-dollar bill onto the table. "The first person to get the toothpaste back into their tube gets this money!" Little hands begin working to shove the peppermint pile back into rolled up tubes—with very limited success.

Jim is in the midst of a weekly routine in the Weidmann home when he and his wife spend time creating "impression points" with the kids. "We can't do it, Dad!" protests the youngest child.

"The Bible tells us that's just like your tongue. Once the words come out, it's impossible to get them back in. You need to be careful what you say because you may wish you could take it back." An unforgettable impression is made.

Impression points occur every day of our lives. Intentionally or not, we impress upon our children our values, preferences, beliefs, quirks and concerns. It happens both through our talk and through our walk. When we do it right, we can turn them on to the things we believe. But when we do it wrong, we can turn them off to the values we most hope they will embrace. The goal is to find ways of making this reality work for us, rather than against us. How? By creating and capturing opportunities to impress upon the next generation our values and beliefs. In other words, through what we've labeled impression points.

The kids are all standing at the foot of the stairs. Jim is at the top of that same staircase. They wait eagerly for Dad's instructions.

"I'll take you to Baskin Robbins for ice-cream if you can figure how to get up here." He has the attention of all four kids. "But there are a few rules. First, you can't touch the stairs. Second, you can't touch the railing. Now, begin!"

After several contemplative moments, the youngest speaks up. "That's impossible Dad! How can we get to where you are without touching the stairs or the railing?"

After some disgruntled agreement from two of the other children, Jacob gets an idea. "Hey, Dad. Come down here." Jim walks down the

stairs. "Now bend over while I get on your back. Okay, climb the stairs."

Bingo! Jim proceeds to parallel this simple game with how it is impossible to get to God on our own. But when we trust Christ's completed work on our behalf, we can get to heaven. A lasting impression is made. After a trip up the stairs on Dad's back, the whole gang piles into the mini van for a double scoop of mint-chip.

Six years ago, Jim and his wife Janet began setting aside time to intentionally impress upon the kids their values and beliefs through a weekly ritual called "family night." They play games, talk, study, and do the things which reinforce the importance of family and faith. It is during these times that they intentionally create these impression points with their kids. The impact? The kids are having fun and a heritage is being passed.

Intentional or "Oops"?

Sometimes, we accidentally impress the wrong things on our kids rather than intentionally impressing the right things. But there is an effective, easy way to change that. Routine family nights are a powerful tool for creating intentional impression points with our children.

The concept behind family nights is rooted in a Biblical mandate summarized in Deuteronomy 6:5-9.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children "

How?

"Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. "

In other words, we need to take advantage of every opportunity to impress our beliefs and values in the lives of our children. A growing network of parents are discovering family nights to be a highly effective, user friendly approach to doing just that. As one father put it "This has changed our entire family life." And another dad "Our investment of time and energy into family nights has more eternal value than we may ever know." Why? Because they are intentionally teaching their children at the wisdom level, the level at which the children understand and can apply.

Truth is a Treasure

Two boys are running all over the house, carefully following the complex and challenging instructions spelled out on the "truth treasure

map" they received moments ago. An earlier map contained a few rather simple instructions that were much easier to follow. But the "false treasure box" it led to left something to be desired. It was empty. Boo Dad! They hope for a better result with map number two.

Step One: Walk sixteen paces into the front family room.

Step Two: Spin around seven times, then walk down the stairs.

Step Three: Run backwards to the other side of the room.

Step Four: Try and get around dad and climb under the table.

You get the picture. The boys are laughing at themselves, complaining to Dad, and having a ball. After twenty minutes treasure hunting they finally reach the elusive "truth treasure box."

Little hands open the lid, hoping for a better result this time around. They aren't disappointed. The box contains a nice selection of their favorite candies. Yeah Dad!

"Which map was easier to follow?" Dad asks.

"The first one," comes their response.

"Which one was better?"

"The second one. It led to a true treasure." Says the oldest.

"That's just like life." Dad shares. "Sometimes its easier to follow what is false. But it is always better to seek and follow what is true."

They read from Proverbs 2 about the hidden treasure of God's truth and we end their time repeating tonight's jingle—"It's best for you to seek what's true." Then they indulge themselves with a mouthful of delicious candy!

The Power of Family Nights

The power of family nights is twofold. First, it creates a formal setting within which Dad and Mom can intentionally instill beliefs, values or character qualities within their child. Rather than defer to the influence of peers and media, or abdicate character training to the school and church, parents create the opportunity to teach their children the things that matter most.

The second impact of family nights is perhaps even more significant than the first. Twenty to sixty minutes of formal fun and instruction can set up countless opportunities for informal reinforcement. These informal impression points do not have to be created, they just happen—at the dinner table, while driving in the car, while watching

television, or any other parent/child time together. Once you have formally discussed a given family night topic, you and your children will naturally refer back to those principles during the routine dialogues of everyday life.

If the truth were known, many of us hated family devotions while growing up. We had them sporadically at best, usually whenever our parents were feeling particularly guilty. But that was fine, since the only thing worse was a trip to the dentist. Honestly, do we really think that is what God had in mind when He instructed us to teach our children? As an alternative, many parents are discovering family nights to be a wonderful complement to or replacement for family devotions as a means of passing their beliefs and values to the kids. In fact, many parents hear their kids ask at least three times per week "Can we have family night tonight?" Music to Dad and Mom's ears!

[Excerpt from *Heritage Builders Family Night Tool Chest Book 1: An Introduction to Family Nights* by Jim Weidmann and Kurt Bruner with Mike and Amy Nappa, Chariot Victor Publishing. Provided by David C. Cook, Publishing Co.]

Florence O. Collins Remembered As A Christian Who Encouraged Many Lives

by E. Ray Jones in Donelson Church newsbulletin

"Live in such a way that those who know you but don't know God will come to know God because they know you." The source for this quote is listed as anonymous, but it reflects perhaps more than any other words I can think of the life of Florence Olmstead Collins. Those of you who remember the "Donelson Reporter" when it was published as a weekly handout will recall the thought-provoking and challenging articles written by F.O.C. on a regular basis. I hope that some of these will be reprinted to honor her burning desire to minister to those around her through the printed word.

During the course of a busy work week, my job brings me into *contact* with dozens of people. Many of them have my *attention* for only brief moments. It is rare when someone has earned my *respect*. I believe, having grown up in and around a military family, that there is a profound difference. Florence Collins by quiet Christian example had earned my respect.

When my good friend Tom Neal passed away, I felt compelled as never before to sit down and write a tribute to him. From that time forward to very recent months, Florence would call me, send me notes of encouragement, and, when I would see her at church, ask if I had writ-

ten anything lately. She reminded me on a regular basis that she believed that I had received a gift from God to write. She and George have always been, along with so many others, a source of encouragement.

Jim Bill McInter spoke eloquently at the funeral of this lady he had known since childhood. He and countless others were privileged to witness her grow into adulthood, marry a fine Christian man, live an exemplary life, and raise her children. She was a builder and encourager as well as a published author and teacher.

Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you." I would suggest that heaven is a dearer place to us because of the presence of people like Florence who have gone on before us.

My life is better and my faith stronger because of her example, and my resolve is steadfast to live in such a way that another Christian example may honor the memory of Florence Olmstead Collins.

Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

Why do you not use the word "pastor" to refer to preachers?

The religious world quite generally calls a preacher a pastor especially if he is located with a congregation. Many people do so out of habit, adopting a common usage, and the expression without thought as to the meaning. It is, in fact, not a totally wrong usage, because there are few located preachers who are not to some extent shepherds of the flock (such is the meaning of the word). There is a more accurate usage, however, and it is this that much of the religious world ignore.

It is not wrong (in truth, it is right) for any understanding Christian to preach the gospel when the occasion affords. This does not do away with the fact that there is a definite group of men set in the body of Christ who are evangelists, specially committed to the preaching of the gospel. The word "deacon" means "servant" but the church also has many servants who do not have the special qualifications given for deacons (1 Tim. 3:8-13). In other words, there are specific men with specific qualifications for being servants, and there are others who are also servants in a broader sense who, nevertheless, do not fill this office. One can observe that there are several words in New Testament usage which are sometimes used with a broad meaning. In one sense,

many Christians are charged with some responsibility for shepherding other Christians(Galatians 6:1; Hebrews 3:12-13; James 5:16), but in a more limited way God has committed responsibility for the tending the flock to men with specific qualifications. It is not wrong for a preacher to exercise many acts of pastoral concern for those under his preaching. We must admit that modern practice thrusts much of this kind of work on preachers. Some preachers reach the point where they meet the qualifications for overseers and these could be properly called pastors. The term in its more limited use, however, describes those men familiarly known to many of us as elders.

The New Testament uses six words to speak of the men specially charged with the oversight of the flock of God--presbyters or elders, bishops or overseers, and pastors or shepherds. Note that in Acts 20, Paul calls the elders (v. 17), also addresses them as bishops (v. 28), and charges them with feeding the flock (v. 28). In 1 Peter 5, Peter charges the elders (v. 1) with tending the flock (v. 2) as shepherds (v. 4). These words, then, all speak of the same office. When we examine the qualifications given for it in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, it is quite evident that many a preacher does not begin to meet them. In the limited meaning, then "pastors" are really the elders. The general use of the word "pastor" for a preacher confuses and tends to rob the elders of the responsibility which they need to feel most keenly. It places the preacher into a position for which many young men (and some older ones) are not qualified. A young preacher whose children are yet very young, however fine he may be, cannot be a pastor except in the broad sense of the word.

One can strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Proper use of a name does not, of course, necessarily guarantee all else will be in order. There is great need, though that we use words accurately so that we may be more aware of the Lord's ordering for the church.

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Bennie Hill

Cherry St. Church of Christ would like to invite you and your youth group to a Youth Rally August 14th from 3 to 6 p.m. There will be two special speakers and lots of games and laughter for all who attend. For additional information, please contact Rebecca Mellon at (812) 944-0715

Crowley, Louisiana. Bro. Paul Estes arrived in Jennings during the month of June. He will be the minister at the Cutting Ave. Church. Pray for him as he assumes the work there and pray for the congregation as they work together. Bro. Estes is a good preacher and a wonderful Christian man who is blessed with the ability to deal with people. (Bro. Val)

CYE Camp Report...We are thankful for the report of good camp weeks in the area. There were 84 campers plus the workers at CYE. This age group (Ages 8-11) requires a lot of help. CYE has operated since 1954. This would be forty-five years it has been in existence. Only eternity will reveal the good that has been done throughout the years.

Sellersburg: This year, Vacation Bible School's theme was "Son Castle Faire." Snacks & crafts were great! The lessons were really good! All the young kids loved the Bob the Tomato Pup-

pet. On Friday, we had a closing picnic. The young attending ranged from 38-50. The Lord is blessing our labors - we have seen an increase in Sunday School attendance. Upcoming meetings with Sonny Childs: Sept. 11, "Youth for Christ" seminar (Parent's Relationship with their children made stronger"). Nov. 6, Seminar on "Drugs."

Lilly Dale revival will begin Monday, July 26th at 7 p.m. through Sunday, August 1st. Bro. Nathan Burks from Louisville is the speaker.

Maple Manor: There was a fire in the home of Claudia and Robert Istre on the campus of Maple Manor. It will be 4-6 weeks before the Istres are back in their home. Both are doing well and in good spirits. Keep them in your prayers.

Southeast: VBS was a success! We enjoyed the "Treasure Hunt Bible Adventure" each night pointing to the greatest treasure of all, "Jesus." Over 35 young people attended with an additional 30+ helping as Clue Crew leaders, teachers, actors and helpers of all kinds.

Highland Church, Louisville

Each Wed. night this month, James Girdley is teaching on the theme, "Sharing the Good News."

Thanks for all your help in making our last community event such a success. It was well received by the neighborhood. It is important that this community sees who is behind the church walls. Our next event will be on Friday, July 30, at 7:30 p.m. The event will be similar to the last one. There will be music, chess tables, an information table, volleyball, and, of course, food. We are anticipating needing about 40-50 pizzas. As always, continue to pray. I am confident God will use us to reach the neighborhood.

Zimbabwe Report: One good thing we were able to complete before leaving Zimbabwe was the Shona Hymnal. Working night and day, through computer breakdowns and other interruptions, by the wonderful grace of God we finally finished the much needed song book in the Shona Language. We managed to get the essential computer printout and even some of the pages run off on the Risograph. The brethren there will now be able to complete the printing and binding of the first 1,000 copies. (Robert & Joy Garrett)

95 Years Faithful! The Garrett clan assembled in Winchester, Ky. for a 2-fold celebration: to welcome Robert & Joy, and to honor Sis. Dollie Garrett for her 95th birthday! Her 3 sons & 3 daughters & their spouses were all there, plus lots of grand- & great-grand children.

Central Louisiana Christian Fellowship is being planned for November 15-18, 1999. Theme: "God's Instructions for the 'last days' living from Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus." Speakers will include: Kenneth Istre, Keith Roberts, Nick Marsh, Julius Hovan, Glenn Baber, Robbie Bacon, David Johnson, Paul Estes, Bill Smallwood, and Antoine Valdetero. For information re: housing contact Dennis LeDoux at (318) 748-4243.

Buechel. . . has become a multi-racial congregation. We have worshipping with us African-Americans, Indians, and Hispanics. We are reaching out to the community in this area. Since coming to Buechel two years ago, we have grown from an average of 18 to 45. Our Sunday evening and Wednesday evening meetings have more than doubled in attendance. The folks here have a desire to do some work in evangelism. We have set a goal of 12 new families in 1999. There are now 8 new families worshipping with us thus far. (Bud Ridgeway)

Amy Writing Awards: The Amy Foundation Writing Awards program is designed to recognize creative, skillful writing that presents in a sensitive, thought-provoking manner the biblical position of issues affecting the world today. To be eligible, submitted articles must be published in a secular, non-religious publication. 1st prize is awarded \$10,000; 2nd, \$5,000,

etc. Mary Alan Woodward's article in the May WW won \$1,000 since it first appeared in Louisville's Courier-Journal. The Amy Foundation's aim is to encourage Christians to penetrate the secular media. For more info, write P.O. Box 16091 Lansing MI 48901.

A Christian View Of The News

My dad began reading Time magazine the 1st year it came out, back in the '20s. But when Time-Warner published Madonna's book of nude pictures, he quit in protest (& told them why!). If you want a Biblical perspective on world events, with critiques of books, movies, etc., you might like World magazine. You won't agree with all it says, but what's new? World is 48 pages long & has 50 issues yearly for \$49.95. It's been published for 14 years now. Ask for a sample copy: P.O. Box 2330, Asheville, NC 28802. --avw

An OUTSTANDING Christian Video: *Candle In The Dark* is the true story of a missionary so outstanding that Bro. Boll said reading his biography was "a shrinking experience." It made you feel small by comparison. William Carey sailed to India in 1793 with a reluctant wife & 4 children, to bring good news about Jesus. He encountered so much hardship it's amazing he didn't quit and go home. But he stayed over 40 years, directing more translations of the Bible than had been done in all previous church history combined.

This video shows his struggle & mistakes, his growth & persistence & victories.

It's 100 min. long, uses professional actors & was filmed in India. You probably can order it or rent it at Christian bookstores; or from Vision Video, P.O. Box 540, Worcester, PA 19490. We highly recommend it (though one scene showing a widow being burned on her husband's pyre requires parental discretion.) it would be great for camp. --avw

India NOW: In India a veteran missionary and his two sons, 6 and 11 years old, were burned to death by a large mob of militant Hindu extremists. We usually hear of Muslim fanatics, but in recent years violent sects have mushroomed within Hinduism too. (Of course most Muslims and Hindus are not like this.)

It is suspected that the killers in India have links with the ruling political party there. In fact, before this party took over power 2 years ago, there were only 40 cases of violence against Christians in 30 years. However, in 1998 alone there were 120 incidents and so far during 1999 scores of church buildings and Christian schools have been attacked.

Thanks for Letters to the editor, but often my schedule does not provide time for me to answer! Sorry. Just recently I'm grateful for correspondence from John May, & W. T. out west, & Gary

Pearson. Many thanks to Gary especially, for giving WW subs to men in his church & overseas as well! He also suggested to Bro. Mac Lynn that "PM not be used in his directory of Churches

of Christ to designate premill congregations. Gary feels this has a sectarian effect, though Bro. Lynn may not intend it that way. I agree. --avw

9th Annual Ladies Overnight Retreat

Sept. 24-25, 1999

Crestwood, Kentucky, near Louisville

The Friday night session starts at 6:30. Bring a covered dish for that night. The fee is \$20 which covers overnight accommodations, breakfast, and lunch on Saturday. The retreat ends about 3:00.

Speakers include Joy Garrett (back from Zimbabwe), Patty Patterson Martin, Gloria Oldfield, and others to be announced. There will also be testimonies, singing, and wonderful fellowship.

For more information call Jackie Gill (502-259-4031), Sherry Marsh (606-744-3021), Melanie Mitchell (812-967-4861) or Ruth Wilson (502-897-2831).

DAY by DAY

Day by day, dear Lord, of Thee three things I pray:

To see Thee more clearly,

Love Thee more dearly,

Follow Thee more nearly,

Day by day.

-- Richard of Chicester, 1197-1253

PERSISTENCE PAYS

“I press on,” wrote Paul the persistent. He set a great example of perseverance for all the following generations of Christian workers. But he was only imitating his divine Captain, who let nothing hinder Him from carrying out His assigned purpose.

Throughout church history those who were the most outstanding were those who pressed on at all costs. When William Carey went from England to India he labored for six years without even one convert. Yet by the end of his life he established 19 mission stations and 100 rural schools. He and two co-workers translated God’s Word into 34 Asian languages also. What if he had gone home after six years?

Adoniram Judson went from the U.S. to Burma (now Myanmar). Like Carey, it was not until his seventh year there that he baptized his first convert. Then for the next five years there were no more. Only one conversion in 12 years of hard work and persecution. But he and his family pressed on. Before he died he translated the Old and New Testaments into Burmese, and saw 63 churches established with 7,000 converts. What if he had gone home after six years, or even twelve.

May we press on, as they did. The president of a Bible college used to say, “The main test of your character is this: What does it take to make you quit?”