

"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The *Word and Work*



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

June 2007

A *Crisis* for Magazines

* * *

"I have now disposed of all my property to my family. *There is one thing more I wish I could give them and that is faith in Jesus Christ. If they had that and I had not given them a single shilling, they would have been rich; and if they had not that [faith in Christ], and I had given them all the world, they would be poor indeed.*" --Patrick Henry

* * *

"Innocent" but Devastating

"It seems so innocent to pay close attention to our business [and] seek our happiness in this world, so long as we keep away from open sins. Yet here is a rock on which many people make shipwreck for all eternity. They 'lay up treasure on earth,' and forget to 'lay up treasure in heaven.'

"May we all remember this! Where are our hearts? What do we love best? Are our chief affections on things in earth or things in heaven? Life or Death depends on the answer we give to these questions.

"Oh let us all beware.... *Open transgression of God's law slays its thousands, but worldliness its tens of thousands.*" --J. C. Ryle

60th Annual Kentucky / Indiana Fellowship

July 30 - August 2, 2007

Theme: **Falling in Love with Jesus . . . Again**

Monday Evening, July 30

6:50 - 7:20 pm Woodland Bible Camp Singers Concert
7:30 pm Loving Jesus means Looking for His Return Don McGee

Tuesday, July 31 Theme: Jesus and the Future

9:00 Prayer Time
9:20 Different Views, Proper Attitudes David Tapp
10:20 Jesus and the Future for Islam Don McGee
11:20 Exposition #1 of Matthew 24 Robert Garrett
1:15 Jesus and the Future for Israel Don McGee
7:30 Loving Jesus means Living for Him Dale Offutt

Wednesday, August 1 Theme: Living for Jesus

9:00 Prayer Time
9:20 Living for Jesus in the USA Jerry Stephenson
10:20 Living for Jesus in Russia Cecil Garrett
11:20 Exposition #2 of Matthew 24 Robert Garrett
1:15 Influencing Our Families to Live for Jesus Dennis Kaufman
7:30 Sharing Jesus in the Home and Community Sonny Childs

Thursday, August 2 Theme: Sharing Jesus with Others

9:00 Prayer Time
9:20 Looking for His Return is Personal Bennie Hill
10:20 Sharing Jesus While It Is Day Sonny Childs
11:20 Exposition #3 of Matthew 24 Robert Garrett
1:15 Jesus and America's Future Don McGee
7:30 Remaining in Love with Jesus Julius Hovan

Nursery facilities for babies/toddlers are available at both churches.

Children's Classes: grades K-2, 3-4, 5-6 nightly, 8:00-8:45.

Tim Parrot will teach grades 7-12 nightly, 8:00-8:45.

There will be a missions offering Wed. night; make checks to Ky/Ind Cn. Fellowship.

Housing Committee: Bud Ridgeway, (502) 499-0724; Clint Dorman (812) 246-2600

DAY SESSIONS: Portland Church of Christ,
2500 Portland Ave., Louisville, KY

NIGHT SESSIONS: Sellersburg Church of Christ,
211 South New Albany St., Sellersburg IN 47172

For CD's and DVD's of the messages, contact Don Stump: (502) 477-2252.

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

Dennis L. Allen, Missions

Bennie Hill, News & Notes

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The Old Order Passes, Giving Place to "OUCH"!

Alex V. Wilson

Some recent far-reaching changes will have drastic effects on *Word and Work* and most if not all other periodicals. The Postal Department has struck again! I have not personally digested the details of the changes, but here's what I learned via *The Christian Chronicle*. Its editor, Lynn McMillon, wrote in the June 1 edition:

We were shocked recently to learn that as of May 14 new postal rates--initiated and implemented nationwide in only 57 days — mean a whopping \$5,605 *monthly increase in our postage costs*. Because of Omnibus Rate Case R2006-1, almost overnight, the postage rate for the *Chronicle* has skyrocketed to an annual total of about \$260,000! That is a 33 percent hike.

Of course the *Chronicle's* circulation (some 200,000 readers) and postage expenses dwarf ours at *W&W* (under 1,000 subscribers now, alas). But we, they and all magazines are facing a gigantic crunch. Brother McMillon went on to explain that by shrinking their page size by two inches they will be in a different postal category and save some money. But their additional postage costs just for June and July (before they can switch to that new format) will add up to \$11,400 in *additional* (not total!) postage.

In our case too, we'll lose some writing space. We may no longer run any articles, news items, etc. on our back cover. But though our contents must shrink, our costs (as mentioned above) will soar.

The Chronicle went on to give the government's basis for this drastic increase:

The Postal Regulatory Commission recently determined that small publications and nonprofits that send mass mail weren't paying their share of mailing costs. While such groups have paid *some* of the cost of their mail in the past, the balance has been subsidized--largely by magazines such as *Time* and *Sports Illustrated*, according to reports. Postal representatives say that the new regulations will balance the scales. As a result, many faith-based publications face increases.

It seems that *international mailing rates have skyrocketed the most*. A ministry that till now was sending Spanish-language Chris-

tian literature from the U.S. to Ecuador for \$38 monthly now must pay \$150, almost a fourfold increase!

This escalation in overseas rates will no doubt affect us most of all, for we mail 98 W&Ws overseas. 26 of those are paid for, and 72 of them are complimentary. We subsidize them because some go to missionaries and others go to national believers --many of whom are church leaders or Bible school students. In general, believers overseas do not have access to a lot of the written resources that are easily available to us in our favored land. And in many cases they face financial difficulties greater than we do. We have been sending 55 copies to Zimbabwe, and 30 to the Philippines. In addition, there are scattered individual readers in India, South Korea, Russia, Romania, South Africa, Israel, the Solomon Islands, Australia, Japan, Mexico and Canada.

It seems--perhaps due to W&W's smaller size--that our postal costs will double, rather than quadruple like the case mentioned above. But we cannot afford to pay even that, at least not for more than a few months. (And the latter is possible only because of a generous donation a few months ago.)

It is ironic that our theme for this month is "Are You RICH?" Yes, in so many ways we here are rich. But thanks to the Postal Department, a lot of us will be far less so before long, and lots of small magazines will probably go belly-up. Yet God is able to meet our needs so long as He chooses. Please pray with us that He will guide and provide, for His glory.

Sermon on the Mount--

This through page 168 used

ARE YOU RICH?? *on Nov. 2011*

*web edition
SKN*

Perspectives on wealth

A. V. W.

Patrick Henry, an outstanding patriot during our colonial era, and Governor of Virginia, was also a man of strong Christian faith. He not only said, "Give me liberty or give me death." He also said, later on: "I have now disposed of all my property to my family. *There is one thing more I wish I could give them and that is faith in Jesus Christ. If they had that and I had not given them a single shilling, they would have been rich; and if they had not that [faith in Christ], and I had given them all the world, they would be poor indeed.*" That's true.

The billionaire, H. Bunker Hunt, said, "A billion dollars ain't what it used to be. You can lose it no matter how much you make. No matter what kind of job you've got, you could break a leg, get sick, the economy can turn around, the place can burn down. *In order to have security, you've got to put your security in something that cannot be taken away from you.*"

Long ago, in the Sermon on the Mount, the Son of God said, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy [your clothes or coins], and where thieves break in and steal [your other valuables]. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also...." (Matt. 6:19-21.)

There are two key terms there. The first is "treasure": that which you cherish, value, prize, take pleasure in; or that which you trust in and thus hoard, accumulate, stockpile. Matthew makes a play on words here, which John Wycliffe in the 1300s translated, "*Do not treasure to you treasures.*" If you let your belongings become your treasures, then they possess you rather than you possess them.

The second key term is "heart": the center of your being; your love, your loyalty, your attention and delight. The bumper sticker sums up the world's viewpoint very well--"He who dies with the most toys wins." But disciples of Jesus--he who didn't even own a home of his own--can't agree.

Our Lord continued, "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money" (24). We find two more key terms there. "Master": that which owns you, which controls your life. That to which you are enslaved or addicted. Christ's point is, materialism robs us of freedom, holds us in its grip. Related to that is the word "Serve": to be a slave of, to work for and even obey. Matthew Henry observed that while 2 slave-owners walk along together--followed by one slave -- other folks may not be able to tell whose slave he is. But when they come to a parting of the ways, you will discover to which one he belongs.

Some folks think they *can* serve 2 different masters: They serve Christ on *Sunday* (or claim to) but Wealth the *other 6 days*. They serve Christ with *half their heart*, and Wealth with the other half. Jesus said, Not possible.

No doubt James (the Lord's half-brother) had Jesus' statement in mind when later he wrote, "*Purify your heart, you double-minded.*"

Don't let anything *dilute your devotion* to Jesus. Whom or what do we serve? Whose slave am I? Some seem to say, "God owes me *prosperity*. I'll serve Him as long as He gives me health and wealth – but not otherwise." Those who take that attitude desperately need to repent, and ask not only what God can do for them but mainly what they can do for God.

Yet, having said all that, we do need to clarify a point here. So be sure to read the next article.

Did Jesus Prohibit Saving Money?

Should Christians not have savings accounts and follow savings plans? After all, Jesus said, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth" (Matt. 6:19).

Yes, He said that. But what exactly did He *mean*? In the book *Real Discipleship*, missionary leader Oswald Sanders wrote, "The key words of the passage are, '*for yourselves*.' Jesus does not say, as many wrongly read, 'Lay not up treasure on earth,' a general command to save no money. It would then be wrong to provide for old age, or to put aside for the education of one's children; but this would be in conflict with such passages as 2 Cor. 12:14 or 1 Tim. 5:8. The disciple is not to lay up treasure on earth *for himself*, hoarding money merely for his own indulgence and enjoyment."

2 Cor. 12:14, which Sanders refers to, tells us that *parents have a responsibility to save up money for their children's needs*. The other verse is quoted below. Here is John Stott's explanation of Christ's teaching:

To "lay up treasure on earth" (which Jesus forbids) does not mean to make provision for the future. It means to be **covetous, to be a materialist or a miser**. Jesus is not prohibiting saving for a rainy day. On the contrary, the Bible says that a man who does not provide for his own family has "disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Tim. 5:8). You must interpret Scripture with Scripture. **What Jesus is prohibiting is the selfish accumulation of treasure**. He is prohibiting the **foolish fantasy that a man's life consists in the abundance of what he possesses**. He is prohibiting **extravagance and luxurious living, the materialism that binds our hearts to this earth, and the hard heartedness that ignores the colossal need of the underprivileged in this world**." (*Keswick Week*, 1972.)

Another passage related to this subject is Proverbs 6:6-8. "Lazy people should learn a lesson from the way ants live....They **store up their food during the summer, getting ready for winter.**" (*Good News Bible*) He's telling us to copy them.

Here are a couple of present-day applications of those verses in 2 Cor. 12, 1 Tim. 5 and Prov. 6. It is better to *save up [store up] money so you can pay with cash* for costly necessities like furniture or a car, instead of paying *more money through costly installment-buying* which overloads your budget with monthly payments and is also far more expensive in the long run due to the interest charged.

Don't be enslaved by your Credit-Card!

Again, sometimes it is wiser and cheaper in the long run to *buy a more expensive, higher-quality product which will last much longer* than a cheaper product. For example, a well-to-do Christian man I know bought a *very high-priced suit*. After wearing it for some years, he gave it—still in good shape—to his brother who later handed it down – still in good condition! – to his son, who has worn it for years.

But let's not explain away or ignore the challenge of this passage. We must remember and personally apply Jesus' teaching. We should **distinguish between necessities and luxuries, and learn to cut back on our spending so as to increase our giving to others who are starving for food and the Gospel.** Discriminate between important possessions on the one hand, and an extravagant attitude which just must keep up with the Joneses and have the newest, most impressive name-brand clothes, jewelry, appliances, houses, gadgets, cars, boats, toys, sports equipment, computer-games, ipods, iphones, etc. etc.

And remember--our Lord not only said, "Do *not* store up for yourselves treasures on earth," but just as importantly told us that we *should* "store up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

How Can We Make Deposits in Heaven?

Jesus told the rich young Ruler, and later on told the apostles also: *Give to the poor* and you'll have treasure in heaven. (Luke 18:22; 12:33). Again, Paul wrote, "Be rich in *good works*, willing to *share*: thus you will lay up treasure for yourself as a firm foundation" for the future age (1 Tim. 6). That is, *We lay up treasures in heaven when we lay down treasures on earth.*

In this grossly materialistic era we need to underline and highlight that point, so ponder various other ways the principle has been

set forth: "The riches you *impart* form the only wealth you will *always retain*." (Matthew Henry.) "You can't take it with you." "Shrouds have no pockets." "I've never seen a hearse pulling a U-Haul." "You can't take it with you, but *you can send it on ahead*."

John Stott elaborates: "To lay up treasure in heaven is to do anything on earth whose effect lasts for eternity -- temporal activities with eternal consequences. For example, development of *Christian character*, increasing in *faith, hope and love*--all of which Paul said 'abide.' And the endeavor to *introduce others to Christ*; and the *use of our money for Christian causes*."

Yes, "treasure in heaven" surely is a synonym for the *rewards* which our Father in heaven offers His children. Christ mentions "reward" nine times in this Sermon on the Mount alone. So those who believe "the health and wealth gospel" or "prosperity teaching" are partly right: God does offer His people incentives, rewards, blessings. But the health/wealth teachers are mainly wrong. For instance, note Matt 5:11-12, Jesus' first mention of reward: "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven." That's very different from offering to make His followers healthy, wealthy and successful in this life. I doubt that the prosperity teachers very often quote those verses about persecution, insults and lies.

Our Father in Heaven will reward His children—sometimes in this life, often only in the next—for humbly, sacrificially Giving to other people. Such giving includes not only dollars but kind deeds, comforting words, teaching God's good news, praying, fasting, providing repairs or transportation or calls of encouragement. And Father also will reward all who endure persecution for Jesus' sake. It *Costs* to serve Him, but it *Pays* – and the pay exceeds the cost.

Back to the main subject of these verses: Riches

John Stott has ministered not only in his native England, but very often in poverty-stricken 3rd-world countries as well. He challenges us: "This topic [of wealth] confronts us with fresh urgency in our generation. As the world's population continues to mushroom and the economic problems of the nations become more complex, the rich are still getting richer and the poor poorer. We can no longer turn a blind eye to the facts. The sleepy social conscience of many [disciples of Jesus] has been stabbed awake. There has been a fresh discovery that *the God of the Bible is on the side of the poor and deprived*."

If you doubt that last statement, listen to these scriptures: "Every seventh year let the land lie unplowed and unused. Then the poor among your people may get food from it." "Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the alien." "When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and the alien." "I command you to be openhanded toward the poor and needy in your land." (Ex. 23:11; Lev. 19:10; 23:22; Duet. 15: 11.) The book of Proverbs has 19 verses about the poor, most of them related to helping them. Isaiah the prophet speaks of this duty 11 times, often condemning the rich for hardheartedness. In the 9 chapters of the prophet Amos he addresses this issue 6 times, lambasting the rich for mistreating the poor. In the New Covenant scriptures see Acts 10:4, 31; 24:17; Rom. 15:26-27; Gal. 2:10.

Oh I know that not all rich people are greedy and selfish. And I know that many (not all) poor people are lazy and abuse the welfare system. Etc. Obviously we should oppose abuses from both sides, for Scripture also says that if someone can work but won't, don't give him food (2 Thes. 3:10-12). Yet the Lord says in Jer 5:28-29, "They do not plead the case of the fatherless, they do not defend the rights of the poor. *Shall I not punish them for this?*"

Now here is the conclusion to the earlier quotation from Stott, written in 1978:

"There has been a fresh discovery that the God of the Bible is on the side of the poor and the deprived. Responsible Christians are uneasy about affluence and are seeking to develop a simple life-style which is appropriate both in face of **world need** and out of loyalty to **their Master's teaching and example.**"

Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear.

“Why WORRY? DON’T Worry!”

A famous writer and radio speaker who was both a psychologist and spiritual advisor returned from an extended vacation to find on his desk 1,633 requests for prayer or counsel! He analyzed them and discovered that over two-thirds of the writers were afraid and/or worried. What were they worried about? #1. Money—inflation, bills, taxes, home-financing. #2. Health. #3. Another person—a spouse, child, parent or other loved one.

Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount is truly relevant, isn’t it? In this month’s passage He says, “Do not worry....Why do you worry?....Do not worry....Do not worry....”

As we saw in our preceding study, a few sentences earlier He had said, “Don’t store up for yourselves treasures on earth.” Such insatiable hoarding is a constant temptation of those who have lots of money and find it easy to make more. But if greedy stockpiling of wealth is a common sin of the rich, anxiety concerning material things is a major temptation especially of the poor. In other words, *the rich man worries over what he has, the poor man worries over what he has not.*

But our Lord also gave a positive word, not merely a negative one. He said that we can and should store up treasure in heaven by serving others with love. In addition to love for others, Jesus now calls us to faith—to rely on our Father. Listen to His well-known words in Matt. 6:25-34.

“Therefore I tell you, *Do not worry* about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

28 “And *why do you worry* about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 So *do not worry*, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

33 "But seek first His kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore *do not worry* about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

As we think about *worry*, it will help if we **distinguish between it on the one hand, and concern on the other**. They are near neighbors to each other, and they may overlap, yet we need to make a distinction between them.

To worry is to *fret over problems, to be troubled, to agonize*. As a noun worry means *anxiety, disquiet, uneasiness, vexation of mind*.

Concern is distress, a burdened state of mind due to one's interest or affection. Paul tells us that "members of the body [church] should care" or "have concern for one another" (1 Cor. 12:25). He said of himself, "I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches" (2 Cor. 11:28).

Worry pulls us apart, wears us out. Let's shun it, reject it, expel it, renounce it. As Jesus said repeatedly, "Do not worry." But concern is good, valuable, commendable: We should have concern for one another in the church, and a deep concern for the unconverted who are on the road to destruction, and for the honor and glory of God.

The opposite of worry is peace and contentment, while the opposite of concern is apathy, indifference, negligence. May God give us wisdom and strength to distinguish between these two look-alikes, and reject the one while embracing the other.

Now back to our text. Notice how *Jesus reasons with us*, verse by verse.

25 "...Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life *more important* than food, and the body *more important* than clothes?" His point here is that Worry is **Senseless**: He who gave life will give food to sustain it. He who created our body with all its intricate marvels will provide clothes for it. In the field of logic, this is called *an argument from the greater to the lesser*. If God did the harder acts of creating life and making our bodies, don't you think He is capable of supplying what we need to sustain them?

26 "Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not *much more valuable* than they?"

Now Jesus stresses that Worry is **Needless**: God is not just our *Creator* but our *Father*.

Said the robin to the sparrow, "I should really like to know
Why those restless human beings rush around and worry so?"
Said the sparrow to the robin, "I was wondering – can it be
That they have no Heavenly Father such as cares for you and
me?"

Matthew Henry said, "The *heirs* of heaven are much better off than the *birds* of heaven. God is their Maker, but He is your Father. He that feeds His *birds* surely will not starve His *babes*." In logic, this is called an *argument from the lesser to the greater*.

27 "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?" Jesus now reminds us that Worry is **Useless**: What good does it do to worry over matters we can't control? Of course *being careful* may lengthen our life--look both ways before you cross the street. But *finger-nail-biting worry* won't extend our life. In fact we now know that constant stressful worry often leads to shorter lifespan.

The serenity prayer is sensible: "God, give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

28-30, "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire [for many peasants in Judah used dried grass as fuel in their small clay ovens], will he not much more clothe you, *O you of little faith?*" Here Christ confronts us with the fact that Worry is not only senseless, needless and useless; it is also **Faithless**.

On 5 different occasions Matthew records Jesus saying those sad words, "You men of little faith!" or "You have so little faith." [6:30; 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; 17:20] Worry is an insult to God. That's serious! If He exercises such wisdom and power for lower creatures, can't we trust Him to meet our needs—for us His children?

Sometimes I look in the mirror and say, "O you of little faith! Won't you ever learn that you can trust your Father-God?" I'm sure all of us need to pray often, "Lord, increase our confidence in You."

31 "So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'" 32 For *the pagans run after all these things*, and your heavenly *Father* knows that you need them."

Worry is **Godless**, says our Lord. It's a form of "practical atheism." It's *living as though there is no true, living, loving, powerful God*. It's living as though either there is no God at all or else just those puny, powerless pagan gods – the dead, deaf and dumb deities of heathen people.

To anxiously worry, fret and stew over food, drink and clothes is to act not only as though we are *Pagans*, but also as *Orphans*. But we're not! We have a Heavenly *Father* who knows and cares about us and our needs. In the three chapters of this sermon alone, Jesus refers to God as our Father *17 times!*

33 "But seek first His Kingdom and his Righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." We observed before that for us to pray "*Your Kingdom come*" means to say "*My kingdom go*." And to Seek First his Righteousness means we'll seek to live by his commands, such as those demanding orders He taught in chapter 5.

"...And all these things will be given to you as well." Worry is **CURABLE!** It can be cured, **IF we remember the truths and principles Jesus has presented so far, and as a result we put Him first and obey His commands.**

We should realize this: Pagans--non-Christians--who neither trust nor obey the real God, a-r-e **orphans** in a spiritual sense. Oh, they are God's *creatures*, and He loves them, but in their unbelief and lack of obedience they are *not* His children. No one is born again into God's family unless they commit themselves to Jesus as Lord and Savior. Only **THEN** do they have God as their Father.

So unbelievers truly are orphans spiritually. Thus they feel insecure, anxious and worried. Thus they seek "these things"--food, drink, clothes plus life's luxuries too--and they anxiously seek them first. It's natural for unbelievers to be worried in this way.

But we believers in Christ have a **Father** (thus He loves us), in **Heaven** (thus He is all-wise), who is also a **King** (He has a kingdom, thus He is powerful). So we should be free from worry--set free to put His interests first. Princes and princesses need not fret over where their next meal is coming from. So they can concentrate

on Kingdom-business, their Father's business--His will, His rulership, His desires.

Three Applications

1. Let's trust our Father. 2. Let's obey and serve Him *first*: He is King. 3. Let's *live one day at a time*.

You ask, "Where did you get that third application?" It's in verse 34, where Jesus added, "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." Many of us would agree with the French philosopher Montaigne who wrote, "My life has been full of terrible misfortunes, most of which never happened." And some modern wise man said, "Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday."

So let's remember, and remind ourselves often: 1st, Do not worry.... 2nd, Do not worry.... 3rd, Again He says unto us: Do not worry. Let's trust our God, our Father, the King.

Anxieties Start to Shrive! If we put our Lord First

Matthew 6:33, Seek first His Kingdom. J. C. Macauley said: "The finger that points the way is part of the hand that will provide." That means there's not only an unfailing provision but also an unavoidable condition: "If we want the hand's provision we must go where the finger points." Where God *guides*, He provides.

* * *

GREAT GRACE

Annie Johnson Flint

His grace is great enough to meet the **great things**,
The crashing waves that overwhelm the soul,
The roaring winds that leave us stunned and breathless,
The sudden storms beyond our life's control.
His grace is great enough to meet the **small things**,
The little pin-prick troubles that annoy,
The insect worries, buzzing and persistent,
The squeaking wheels that grate upon our joy.

ONE DAY AT A TIME

Annie Johnson Flint

One day at a time, with its failures and fears,
With its hurts and mistakes, with its weakness and tears,
With its portion of pain and its burden of care;
One day at a time we must meet and must bear.

One day at a time to be patient and strong;
To be calm under trial and sweet under wrong;
Then its toiling shall pass and its sorrow shall cease;
It shall darken and die, and the night shall bring peace.

One day at a time – but the day is so long,
And the heart is not brave, and the soul is not strong.
O Thou pitiful Christ, be Thou near all the way;
Give courage and patience and strength for the day.

Swift cometh His answer, so clear and so sweet:
“Yea, I will be with thee, thy troubles to meet;
I will not forget thee, nor fail thee, nor grieve;
I will not forsake thee; I never will leave.”

Not yesterday's load are we called on to bear,
Nor the morrow's uncertain and shadowy care.
Why should we look forward or back with dismay?
Our needs, as our mercies, are but for the day.

One day at a time, and the day is His day;
He hath numbered its hours, though they haste or delay.
His grace is sufficient; we walk not alone;
As the day, so the strength that He giveth His own.

The Needs of *Others*

We have sought to analyze carefully our Master's teaching, Do not worry about *your life*, what you will eat or drink; or about *your body*, what *you* will wear. But maybe we should also think about what He does *not* say: "Don't worry about what *others* need—what *they* will eat, drink and wear!" Why didn't He say that?

Again, as earlier, we share some valuable insights from John Stott in his book *Christian Counter-Culture: The Message of the Sermon on the Mount* (InterVarsity Press):

Several "big problems arise in our minds from our Lord's basic premise that our heavenly Father can be trusted to feed and clothe us."

1. God's promises to meet our material needs do not exempt us from Working for Our Living. How does God feed the birds? Answer: They feed themselves! God feeds birds, 1st, by providing in nature the seeds, bugs, worms, fish, etc. which they feed upon; and 2nd, by giving them the instinctive abilities to find and feed upon them.

Someone said, "God feeds the birds but He doesn't throw the food into their nests." In the same way, Paul instructed Christians about some fellow church-members who didn't work (though they could have) but merely sponged off other people. Paul bluntly told them that if a man would not work they should not give him food.

2. God's promises to meet our needs "do not exempt us from Responsibility for Other People," whose severe needs are due to circumstances beyond their control. Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan and Zimbabwe come to mind, as well as in the U.S. to a lesser extent.

It is always important to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture. Matt. 6 does not contradict Matt. 25. In chapter 6 Jesus says our heavenly Father feeds and clothes us. In chapter 25 He says that He will judge people according to whether *they* (including *us!*) fed the hungry and clothed the naked.

"If God promises to feed His children, a thoughtful person will ask: 'How is it that there are so many who are under-nourished and ill-clad in the world—yes, even Christian people?'"

"The cause of their under-nourishment and lack of clothing is not an inadequate divine provision, but an inequitable human distribution. God has provided ample resources, but men hoard

them and squander them and don't share them." Someone put it this way: *There is enough for man's Need, but not for man's Greed.*

One out of every 6 people on earth suffers from severe hunger. But we should not blame God, but human error and evil. For example, rats and cows in India destroy a high proportion of their crops. Why? Because according to Hindu belief in reincarnation, such animals may be your relatives suffering for sin in a prior life! So you must not poison them nor even prevent them from eating your crops. Also in some very needy African lands food rots on the docks because armies won't quit fighting long enough to distribute it or even let it pass through to the masses. We must do what we can to fight famine, but the existence of starvation does not disprove Jesus' words.

3. God's promises to meet our needs do "not exempt us from Experiencing Trouble." We need not worry; we should not worry. But that is not the same as to be free from trouble, problems, and opposition. He commands us not to be anxious, but He does not promise us freedom from all misfortune.

"Although, as Jesus said, God clothes the grass, it *is* cut down and burned. And although God feeds the birds, some *do* die of starvation in the winter." In the same way, Jesus has already mentioned two times earlier in this very sermon that His followers would be *scorned and mistreated*. For example, there was the beatitude, "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me." (5:11; also 5:44-45.) But even in such trials, we should reject unbelieving worry and put our trust in the Lord.

4. God's promises to meet our material needs do not exempt us from Needing to Pray for Such Needs. The Lord's Prayer in Matt. 5 includes the request, "Give us today our daily bread."

In Manila there was a wonderful lady in the church who had trouble making ends meet for her children and herself—though she worked hard as a school teacher. She was very prayerful, but she remarked that she never prayed for material needs—"I just trust God for them and He supplies." Yes, He did. Nevertheless, she could and should have prayed for this, for Jesus himself said so. Her needs would doubtless have decreased.

So we see that Christ's disciples are *not* promised exemption from needing to **work**, nor needing to **pray**, nor from **responsibility for others**, nor from **trouble**.

But we *are* promised God's continuing care, and told that we *need* not and *should* not worry nor be unbelieving and anxious--because the great God and King is our compassionate Father. *Worry is incompatible with faith in Him.*

'TIS THE GIFT TO BE SIMPLE

Sent by Wayne Newland

God made man simple; man's complex problems are of his own devising. (Eccles. 7:29)

Contemporary culture lacks both the inward reality and the outward life-style of simplicity.... We are trapped in a maze of competing attachments.

Because we lack a divine Center, our need for security has led us into an insane attachment to things. We really must understand that the lust for affluence in contemporary society is psychotic. It is psychotic because it has completely lost touch with reality. We crave things we neither need nor enjoy. **"We buy things we do not want to impress people we do not like"** (*said Arthur Gish in Beyond the Rat Race*). Where planned obsolescence leaves off, psychological obsolescence takes over. We are made to feel ashamed to keep on wearing clothes or driving cars until they are worn out. The mass media have convinced us that to be out of step with fashion is to be out of step with reality. It is time we awaken to the fact that **conformity to a sick society is to be sick**. Until we see how unbalanced our culture has become at this point, we will not be able to deal with the mammon spirit within ourselves nor will we desire Christian simplicity.

This psychosis permeates even our mythology. The modern hero is the poor boy who purposefully becomes rich rather than the rich boy who voluntarily becomes poor.

-- Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, pp. 80, 81.

Reflection: No matter how modestly we live, we have so much more than do 80% of the world's population. The discipline of Simplicity is relative, but worthy of our consideration.

More Nuggets from Various Teachers Regarding the Lord's Prayer

Part 2 (see last month for Part 1)

"Give us this day our daily bread"

"Some early commentators could not believe that Jesus intended our first request to be for literal bread, bread for the body. It seemed to them improper, especially after the noble opening petitions relating to God's glory, that we should abruptly descend to so mundane a concern. So they allegorized the petition to mean spiritual bread: either the "bread" of the Word of God, or of the Lord's Supper." — John Stott

* * *

"This petition for bread precedes the petition for forgiveness. A person can only stand when one has had enough bread. Then one can only stand straight when one has been forgiven. It is of central importance that persons be able to stand straight; it is of first importance that people be able to stand at all." —Dale Bruner, *The Christbook*

* * *

The early church leader Cyprian observed that the *our* (not *my*) in this request teaches us to pray for other people's bread and not just our own. "This petition should stick in the throat when prayed by full Christians; it reminds us of the wretched of the earth." — Bruner

* * *

"The danger with the prayer for bread is that we go there too soon. We come to prayer, aware of urgent needs, or at least wants. It's tempting to race through the Lord's Prayer as far as 'on earth as it is in heaven,' so that we can take a deep breath and say 'Now look here: when it comes to daily bread [material things] there are some things I simply must have.' And then off we go into a shopping list. To do this is to let greed get in the way of grace." —N. T. Wright, *The Lord and His Prayer*

* * *

"Forgive us our debts..."

"Scripture presents sins [in different ways:] as lawbreaking, deviation, short-coming, rebellion, pollution (dirt), and missing one's target. But the special angle from which the Lord's Prayer views it is that of *unpaid debts*. We owe God total zealous loyalty, all day and every day—and our sin is basically failure to pay...."

[In order to pray this request profitably,] "Christians must be willing to examine themselves. From one standpoint, Christians' shortcomings offend most of all, just because they have most reason (the love of God) and most resources (the indwelling Holy Spirit) for avoiding sinful ways. As it upsets a man more to learn that his wife is sleeping around than that the girl next door is doing it, so God is most deeply outraged when his own people are unfaithful." -J. I. Packer, *I Want to Be a Christian*

* * *

"Forgive us...as we forgive our debtors."

"He asks for eternal vengeance on himself, who offers this prayer with hatred in his heart." --Quesnel

* * *

"In no way can your enemy hurt you so much by his violence, as you hurt yourself if you do not love him." -Augustine

* * *

Unforgiving? Then Unforgiven!

"Forgive our sins as we forgive,"

You taught us, Lord, to pray;
but You alone can grant us grace
to *live* the words we say.

How can your pardon reach and bless
the unforgiving heart
that broods on wrongs, and will not let
old bitterness depart?

In blazing light your Cross reveals
the truth we dimly knew:
how small the debts men owe to us,
how great our debt to You.

Lord, cleanse the depths within our souls,
and bid resentment cease;
then, reconciled to God and man,
our lives will spread your peace.
--author unknown

* * *

“If Christ’s death atoned for all sins, past, present, and future (as it did)...why need the Christian mention his daily sins to God at all? The answer lies in *distinguishing between God as Judge and as Father, and also between being a justified sinner and an adopted son*. In the Lord’s Prayer God’s adopted children address their Father, and though their daily failures do not overthrow their justification, things will not be right between them and their Father till they have said ‘sorry’ and asked him to overlook the ways that they have let him down.” --Packer

* * *

“In the fully developed doctrine of Christian salvation there are two areas of divine forgiveness. The first area is that of the forgiveness that comes to the sinner at the time of **justification** and deals with the guilt of his sins in a total sense (Eph. 1:7). To this forgiveness there is attached but one condition, i.e. to receive it once for all by faith in Christ (Rom. 4:5-8). The second area of forgiveness covers the relation of the divine Father to those who have become His children and deals specifically with the matter of **fellowship** whenever it is broken by sin. To obtain such forgiveness we must confess and forsake the sin (1 John 1:9; compare Psa. 66:18 and Prov. 28:13). The forgiveness mentioned here in Matt. 6:12 belongs in this second area, because it occurs in a prayer given to disciples of Christ (5:2) who could call upon God as their Father (6:9, 26). The ultimate motive for forgiving our debtors is based upon the grace of God, and appears later in the progress of revelation (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13).” --Note in the New Scofield Bible

* * *

**“Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil—the evil one.”**

Notice that the following quotes use the term “*evil*” in three different ways—for it has *three differing meanings or aspects*: 1)harm or trouble (such as, “evil came upon them”); 2) the moral wickedness that dwells within our hearts; 3)Satan, “the Evil One.” --avw

* * *

John Crysostom lived from 349-407 A.D. and was both an outstanding preacher and sufferer. He was loved by many and hated by many. About this petition he wrote, “We should not try to teach Him *how* to help us. When we hand our case to a lawyer who represents us before secular courts, we only tell him the situation. But we leave to him the manner of how to defend us. Even more should we behave like this with God. Tell Him your desire, but do not dare to teach Him *how* to help you. He knows best what is useful for you.”

* * *

Insights from Richard Wurmbrand, a man who was imprisoned and tortured by the Communists for 14 years. He wrote, "We may ask God for deliverance, but we must carefully avoid prescribing to God the time, place, or mode of action in coming to our rescue. We must set no conditions but leave it entirely to Him to adopt whatever course of action seems best. For thousands of years the Church has prayed, 'Deliver us from evil,' and yet communists and Muslims slaughter Christians...."

"We are a complex of selves: the outward man and the inner man. The outward man wishes to be freed from the troubles and evils of life. The inner man wishes to be freed from the dangers of traveling any other road than the way of the cross. He feels safe only when he is close to the Man of Sorrows...."

"The prayer, 'Deliver us from evil' need not mean to be detached from its physical presence but rather from its mental and spiritual pollution. We live in a sinful world, but it is possible for a Christian nevertheless to have joy and inner peace." -Wurmbrand, *Praying for God*

* * *

"Temptation is always in the way: Wherefore we pray, not that it may not exist, but that it may not overpower us. Matt. 26:41; 1 Cor. 10:13." -J. A. Bengel

* * *

"The picture in this petition is of a people walking through something like a mine-field; we pray that we will not be led into a mine of overwhelming temptation. 'But snatch us from the evil one.' *The word for snatch is the very strong, even violent word for rescue or seize. It suggests that the evil one is constantly luring us toward his pits and that only the Father's constant and more powerful snatching, seizing, and rescuing can free us from destruction.*

"*Temptation is a pit into which we fall, the evil one is the power whose influence draws us into the pit and dominates us in it. In this petition we are asking, 'Dear Father, please lead us in such a way that we will be able to resist the temptations that both consciously and unconsciously surround us; please constantly swoop down and rescue us from all the wiles of the evil one and all his evil works—we need your help'*" --Bruner

* * *

"Evils flow spontaneously from the fallen human heart. Satan may be their ringmaster, deciding in what order they shall come on for their performance, but he does not have to inject them into our

system; they are already there.... Pride and uncharitableness will masquerade as zeal for God, his truth and his church—and other moral and spiritual evils will regularly creep in unnoticed while our attention is on something else. This is the ‘deceitfulness of sin’ (Heb. 3:13).” --Packer

NEWS from the FIELDS, especially regarding health

Rhoda Perozzi has a very rare form of tumor on her pancreas, and has received conflicting advice from various medical personnel. On July 5th, we learned that it seems she will fairly soon undergo the less severe of the 2 kinds of surgery recommended. Some mention was made of a 90% chance of her condition recurring. Pray for God to overrule and bring healing, and to guide her and Ed regarding their future location and ministry.

Candy Garrett and her daughter Kathryn are in the U.S. due to Kathryn’s bad back. In mid-July they plan for her to have 2 weeks’ treatment in Wisconsin. In her case too, doctors’ opinions are divided. Pray for the Lord to guide and heal. Meanwhile **Mark Garrett** and the other children are in Senegal, moving from their home and Mark’s office in Thies to another home and office in Dakar, and missing Candy and Kathryn very much!

Cecil Garrett (missionary to Russia, and Mark’s dad) still has problems with eczema; in fact it has recently gotten worse.

Dan Wilson is presently on a trip to Russia, where some teams from the U.S. are ministering in youth camps. He will also visit Hungary--a school for Gypsies, plus the European headquarters of Association of Christian Schools International. He writes, “I continue to have difficulties in sleeping at night and staying alert during the day. I will be driving in St. Petersburg, and although I don’t have much problem staying alert while driving here in the U.S. (it’s trying to stay alert while sitting at a computer that’s a trial), I am a little concerned about staying alert while navigating the exciting world of Russian traffic.”

Tim Yates in Australia is hoping to help the congregation where he and Dawn have been ministering to plant a daughter-church not too far away. The plan also calls for some younger minister to work alongside Tim for awhile at the present church, then succeed him there as he spearheads the new one. But no such person is yet in sight! Pray that the Lord of Harvest will raise up more workers everywhere. In other words, pray for revival among God’s people!

The Front Yard

Janis Preston Spicer

When we were kids walking back and forth to school, the lady who lived on the corner used to stand in her doorway watching for us to cut the corner too close and get on her grass. When we did, she opened the door and yelled at us to stay out of her yard. We kids lived in terror of that woman.

Daddy liked a neat yard, but Mama always said there would be time enough to grow grass after the kids were gone. So the yard was never off-limits at our house. We wore paths in the front yard playing baseball and kickball, we dug holes for playing golf, we cut branches out of the lilac tree to make bouquets for Mama, we picked hundreds of her four-o'clocks. There were tricycles and bikes in the driveway, Kool-Aid stands on the sidewalk, and popsicle puddles on the front porch. Every kid in the neighborhood was always at our house.

Mama always had time and room for all of us kids. She was never too busy to stop and play or so concerned with the order of her household that she couldn't make space for the chaos of childhood. She gave us her old dresses and shoes so we could play dress-up. She saved empty food boxes so we could play grocery-store. On rainy days, she dragged all the dining room chairs into the living room and hung blankets over them to make tents so we could "camp out." I didn't learn how to play hop-scotch from the other kids - I learned it from my Mama. In Mama's kingdom, every child was a noble of the realm.

The disciples tried to stop the children from bothering Jesus once. "But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, 'Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it at all.' And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands upon them." (Mark 10:14-16). Those disciples were a lot like the lady on the corner; they thought they were protecting Jesus from the nuisance of dealing with the kids. But Jesus wanted those children near Him. He had more than enough time to hug them and play with them. They were all His kids.

What a wonderful thought, that when we get to heaven, Jesus will be waiting with open arms and will welcome us into His house just the way Mama welcomed all the neighborhood kids into our house. And if Jesus has a front yard in heaven, I won't be a bit surprised to find baseball paths in His grass, too.

SATAN'S MEETING

(Read even if you're busy)

Satan called a worldwide convention of demons. In his opening address he said, "We can't keep Christians from going to church. We can't keep them from reading their Bibles and knowing the truth. We can't even keep them from forming an intimate relationship with their Savior. Once they gain that connection with Jesus, our power over them is broken.

"So let them go to their churches; let them have their covered dish dinners, **BUT steal their time**, so they don't have time to develop a relationship with Jesus Christ.

"This is what I want you to do," said the devil: "Distract them from gaining hold of their Savior and maintaining that vital connection throughout their day!"

"How shall we do this?" his demons shouted.

"Keep them busy in the non-essentials of life and invent innumerable schemes to occupy their minds," he answered.

"Tempt them to spend, spend, spend, and borrow, borrow, borrow. Persuade the wives to go to work for long hours and the husbands to work 6-7 days each week, 10-12 hours a day, so they can afford their empty lifestyles.

"Keep them from spending time with their children. As their families fragment, soon their homes will offer no escape from the pressures of work!

"Over-stimulate their minds so that they cannot hear that still, small voice. Entice them to play the radio or cassette player whenever they drive. To keep the TV, VCR, CDs and their PCs going constantly in their home and see to it that every store and restaurant in the world plays non-biblical music constantly. This will jam their minds and break that union with Christ.

"Fill the coffee tables with magazines and newspapers. Pound their minds with the news 24 hours a day. Invade their driving moments with billboards. Flood their mailboxes with junk mail, mail order catalogs, sweepstakes, and every kind of newsletter and promotional offering free products, services and false hopes.

"Keep skinny, beautiful models on the magazines and TV so their husbands will believe that outward beauty is what's important, and they'll become dissatisfied with their wives. Keep the wives too

tired to love their husbands at night. Give them headaches too! If they don't give their husbands the love they need, they will begin to look elsewhere. That will fragment their families quickly!

"Give them Santa Claus to distract them from teaching their children the real meaning of Christmas. Give them an Easter bunny so they won't talk about his resurrection and power over sin and death.

"Even in their recreation, let them be excessive. Have them return from their recreation exhausted. Keep them too busy to go out in nature and reflect on God's creation. Send them to amusement parks, sporting events, plays, concerts, and movies instead.

"Keep them busy, busy, busy! And when they meet for spiritual fellowship, involve them in gossip and small talk so that they leave with troubled consciences.

"Crowd their lives with so many good causes they have no time to seek power from Jesus. Soon they will be working in their own strength, sacrificing their health and family for the good of the cause.

"It will work! It will work!"

It was quite a plan! The demons went eagerly to their assignments causing Christians everywhere to get busier and more rushed, going here and there. Having little time for their God or their families. Having no time to tell others about the power of Jesus to change lives.

I guess the question is, has the devil been successful in his schemes? Do I see myself here? You be the judge! Does "BUSY" mean:

B-eing U-nder S-atan's Y-oke?

Please pass this on (if you aren't too busy).

Reflections on My Citizenship

by Rubel Shelly

I am an American citizen, and I cherish the tarnished history of my country. Yes, I said "tarnished." This is not a perfect country. At various times in our history, we have tolerated slavery, bullied nations with our "big stick," and been overly selfish with resources we must share. There are other flaws in my nation's history -- as in my family's history. Just as I love my family in spite of its flaws, so do I love my country.

It is easy for me to pray for this country's leaders, institutions, and citizens. We are a nation of freedom, noble principles, and decent people. Our principles and people work incessantly to right our society's wrongs.

Racism, arrogance, greed are still with us. So are the constant reforms we seek via social justice projects, the checks-and-balances of a political system that seeks broad citizen participation, and national and personal generosity far surpassing that of any other nation.

The majority of the world envies America and would love to be here -- even those who burn our flag, protest our policies, or call us "the Great Satan." They know full well that they and their children would have opportunities here they can never have in their places of poverty, oppression, and meager hope.

I am a world citizen, and I owe it to the people of Iraq, North Korea, and every other country to see them as my neighbors. Their lives are as valuable as ours. Their rights are as precious. Their autonomy as worthy of respect. We have an obligation to one another. We must share Planet Earth and its limited resources. We must not be blind to one another in crisis times. We owe it to one another to respect our differences.

And on occasion we are obliged to protect and liberate persons who are vulnerable to tyrants such as Adolf Hitler, Pol Pot, Idi Amin, Osama bin Laden, or Saddam Hussein. For the lack of unanimous sentiment on how to oppose certain evils, we are not entitled to avert our eyes, pretend not to see what is staring us in the face, and leave oppressed people to suffer. That would not only be cowardice but a vile failure to love our neighbors.

I am a kingdom citizen, and my ultimate loyalty is to the kingdom of God and his righteousness. God alone has answers to our imponderables. He alone sees the end from the beginning. He alone can bring righteousness out of chaos and make the desert of the human heart bloom with fruits of peace and joy and love.

In this time of crisis for America and the world, let us pray for the establishment of a just peace. Let us obey the biblical mandate to pray not only for ourselves and our country's leaders but for our enemies as well. And may our essential and controlling sentiment be that of King David: "Some take pride in chariots, and some in horses, but our pride is in the name of the Lord our God" (Psalm 20:7, NRSV).

[Reprinted from Rubel Shelly's "FAX of Life." To see back issues of the FAX, surf: www.RubelShelly.com]

PERSPECTIVES: How Do You SEE Things?

What Noah Found

Max Lucado tells of visiting a black congregation which was ministering to a number of Katrina evacuees who were in attendance. A local minister, Pastor L. A. Williams gave a message on this one verse: "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord..." (Gen. 6:8).

"The minister helped us see all the things Noah could not find because of the flood. He could not find his neighborhood. He could not find his house. He could not find the comforts of home--there was much he could not find. But what he could find made all the difference. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. If you have everything and no grace, you have *nothing*. If you have nothing but grace, you have *everything*."

* * *

What Do You Do for FUN?

Several years ago a very sweet Christian girl told me about an incident with a young man who had been asking to date her. He was not a member of the church and they just didn't have anything in common. She had turned him down twice and now she had said "no" to attending a rock concert with him.

In a kind of mock exasperation the young man asked, "What do you do for fun? You don't dance, you don't drink, you don't attend rock concerts.... What do you do for fun?"

Though she related her answer to me in a way that made it seem as though it was a simple response, it was actually a classic message from all Christians with conviction.

To the young man she had replied, "For fun, I get up in the morning without feeling embarrassed, ashamed and guilty about what I did the night before." The young man had nothing more to say.

It is true. That is fun! Come to think of it, there are many things in her life that are fun. She is married now to a fine Christian man. They have a little girl and are building an outstanding Christian home together. I am thrilled thinking about the fun she is having.

She is having fun every day living without the affliction of deep scars and regrets from her past. It's fun getting all prettied up each afternoon to receive a husband home from work, knowing that he won't be stopping off at a local bar for a few with the boys.

It's fun knowing that while he is away from her, his Christian conduct won't allow infidelity or even flirting. It's fun watching him hold his little girl on his lap with loving protecting arms.

It's fun knowing that her little girl will never see her father in a drunken stupor or experimenting with drugs. It's fun living with the assurance that the home will be led by a spiritual leader who will guide each family member toward heaven.

The list of fun things for Christians is endless.... What do you do for fun?

[--Writer unknown. Via Linton, Ind. Church of Christ bulletin]

The above item makes a very valid point. So many popular "fun things" which people pursue have a sting to them. They are like a time bomb. In contrast, "God...richly furnishes us with everything [good] to enjoy" (1 Tim. 6:17). Wholesome music, art, literature, drama, nature, family, friendships, sports, food and drink, study, travel, history, science, pets. On and on the list could go. Of course some forms of them are depraved. And even innocent things can become gods and lead us astray; let us beware. Yet Robert Louis Stephenson was correct:

The world is so full of a number of things

I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

And our list of pleasures can and should include things most people would not consider "fun" at all: work, sacrificially serving others, worship, and fellowship with the God of the universe and His people.

So there are joys that result from sacrifice and from avoiding things which often are detrimental—the "fun" of "living without the affliction of deep scars and regrets from [the] past." And there are many positive joys as well. The committed Christian can truly say, "In Your presence there is fullness of joy." And His presence pervades the universe.

CHRISTIAN DIFFERENCES AND THE GOSPEL

Edward Fudge, GracEmail

A gracEmail subscriber writes: "I am concerned that people who claim to follow Jesus Christ do not understand the Bible alike on many topics. Are we right and others wrong, or vice-versa? Whoever is wrong cannot be saved."

* * *

What makes you think that our salvation depends on infallible understanding? If that were the case, not one of us would ever be saved. The best we can say is that all Christian believers are right and all are wrong -- just on different topics. Since that is true we will sometimes disagree on how best to please Christ. And Scripture shows us, in Romans chapter 14, how to apply gospel principles when that happens. Unfortunately, we often have ignored the guidance provided there, and strife, division and judgmentalism have been the result.

Some have supposed that Romans 14 has to do only with incidental matters of no importance. Whoever said that didn't appreciate the seriousness with which the original readers of Romans 14 held their various convictions which that chapter discusses. Paul's original audience in the Roman church included Jews and Gentiles. Although they were one in professing faith in Jesus, their vastly different backgrounds, experiences and understandings regarding the role of the Hebrew Torah led them to strongly-held conclusions about some very down-to-earth subjects -- practical conclusions that collided head-on and which seemingly could never be reconciled.

Part 2

We may turn to Romans chapter 14 when we encounter differences among Christians regarding how best to please the Lord. Believers in the first-century Roman house-churches sharply disagreed concerning vegetarianism (illustrative of issues of personal piety) and the observance or non-observance of special days (illustrative of issues of congregational practice). Paul does not simply take sides in these issues. Instead, he points to three fundamental gospel truths which all Christians believe. Those truths are that Jesus died, that he rose, and that he is coming again. These three truths remind us in turn of three truths about Jesus himself. And those truths about Jesus Christ determine how believers ought to think and act when they reach honest but different convictions about how to please Christ.

Jesus DIED for us, Paul says first -- and he is therefore our SAVIOR. He can (and will) save all who trust in him, no matter which opinions they reach on the matters about which believers in Christ will honestly differ. Second, Jesus ROSE for us -- and he is therefore our LORD. Each true believer must try to please him as best one knows and is able at any time. Third, Jesus is COMING for us -- and he will be our JUDGE. We must live each day knowing we will give account to him. We must also leave the judging of others to him and not try to do it ourselves. "Who are you that judges another man's servant?" Paul asks. "To his own master he stands or falls."

The good news is that God "is able to make [the person] stand" who is wrong in his doctrinal conclusions but who is trusting in Jesus Christ for salvation. That is the only hope any of us has, since not one of us has figured out the truth on every subject and none of us ever will on this earth. Any religious system which speaks otherwise is contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ and ought to be rejected.

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Personal Expressions

JOYce Broyles (written in 2001)

As an educator, I feel strongly about teaching. I not only want to teach subject content, but also character, values, and things not found in books. Because of that, I was very impressed by this selection from a friend.

TO BE EDUCATED

If I learn my ABC's, can read 600 words per minute, and can write with perfect penmanship, but have not been shown how to communicate with the Designer of all language, I have not been educated.

If I can deliver an eloquent speech and persuade you with my stunning logic, but have not been instructed in God's wisdom, I have not been educated.

If I have read Shakespeare and John Locke and can discuss their writings with keen insight, but have not read the greatest of all books -- the Bible -- and have no knowledge of its personal importance, I have not been educated.

If I have memorized addition facts, multiplication tables, and chemical formulas, but have never been disciplined to keep God's Word in my heart, I have not been educated.

If I can explain the law of gravity and Einstein's theory of relativity, but have never been instructed in the unchangeable laws of the One Who orders our universe, I have not been educated.

If I can classify animals by their family, genus, and species, and can write a lengthy scientific paper that wins an award, but have not been introduced to the Maker's purpose for all creation, I have not been educated.

If I can recite the Gettysburg Address and the Preamble to the Constitution, but have not been informed of the Hand of God in the history of our country, I have not been educated.

If I can play the piano, the violin, six other instruments, and can write music that moves men to tears, but have not been taught to listen to the Director of the Universe and worship Him, I have not been educated.

If I run cross-country races, star in basketball and do 100 push-ups without stopping, but have never been shown how to bend my spirit to do God's will, I have not been educated.

If I can identify a Picasso, describe the style of da Vinci, and even paint a portrait that earns an A+, but have not learned that all harmony and beauty comes from a relationship with God, I have not been educated.

If I graduate with a perfect 4.0 and am accepted at the best university with a full scholarship, but have not been guided into a career of God's choosing for me, I have not been educated.

If I become a good citizen, voting at each election and fighting for what is moral and right, but have not been told of the sinfulness of man and his hopelessness without Christ, I have not been educated.

However, if one day I see the world as God sees it, and come to know Him, Whom to know is Life Eternal, and glorify God by fulfilling His purpose for me, then, I have been educated!

We are all teachers, because someone is watching and imitating each of us. Let us be sure to make those imitations educated personal expressions!

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Bennie Hill, BHill40482@aol.com

Pray for our Missionary Editor-- Brother Dennis Allen has recently had several spells of irregular heart-beat. A few times he even fainted. As we go to press he is starting to wear a heart monitor so the doctors can keep tabs on his condition better. In addition, he's now back in the hospital with pneumonia as well.

Good News from Maple Manor Senior-Citizens' Home, Sellersburg, IN -- Steve Cunningham accepted the position of administrator and began his 6 month internship in early June. Steve has been at M.M. children's home (now called Kingsfield) for 7 years as a house parent for the boys, and was/is a Christian Church minister. He is a fine Christian man and considers Maple Manor a work for the Lord. Longtime administrator Ray Naugle is very thankful that Steve will succeed him. Please pray that his internship can be completed and he can pass state and federal tests and become licensed early next year.

Please keep Brother Ray in your prayers as he has been having some health issues. And praise God for equipping Steve and bringing him to this important ministry.

Married 60 Years, and still Happy! Dale and Mary Lee Jorgenson celebrated 6 decades of marital bliss. She writes, "We had a wonderful turnout of family and friends from 12 states, lots of music AM and PM, and a little teasing!" Backed by his good wife, Dr. Dale enriched the lives of many through the years as he taught music and led the choir at Southeastern Christian College plus several other schools. He and Mary Lee plan to be at

Woodland Camp's Senior-Citizen week, Sept. 10-14 (6:00 PM Mon. through noon Fri. Call 812: 847-7831 for more info.)

A Great Opportunity at Ebenezer Church, Salvisa, KY From Oct. 5-7 (Fri.-Sun.) David Reagan will hold a meeting there. Take advantage of it. Check with John Kesel (859-873-9429), Dalton Hendren (502-734-0432) or Hughes Jones (859-734-7197) for the time and other details.

"Lessons from the Farm" by Bob M. Yarbrough is no longer just a memory of spiritual reflections and parables that ran in the past 10 W&Ws. Just recently it was promoted into a 74-page booklet with an additional "Bonus" on the end. A good gift for your Christian or non-believing friends. I suppose you may order these from Bob at 972-524-8671 or bmyjrpoetry@juno.com

July 29th - 5th Sunday Singspiration in your area: Cherry St. Church of Christ (Southern Indiana-Louisville area)- 6:00 p.m.

Parksville Church of Christ (Central Kentucky) - 6:30 p.m.

Pleasant Grove (Indiana) - 6:00 p.m.

Woodland Bible Camp: Jerry Carmichael reports Junior week is now history.

If all our numbers are correct we had the largest week the camp has known in years. Our total for the week was 114 including staff, campers (grades 2-6), and "wee" campers (children of staff) Our patriotic theme was a special time

to emphasize the faith and godliness in the building of our country and the need for it today. Thanks again for all those who have supported the camp program in any way.

Julius & Claudia Hovan of Bohon will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary with an open house hosted by their children on Sunday, July 22, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at the Anderson Dean Community Park (1501 Louisville Rd. - US 127) Harrodsburg, KY. Everyone is invited. The couple requests no gifts.

Craig & Kara Garrison, missionaries currently serving in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma), shared in both morning and evening services at Ebenezer on July 8.

Music Week at Woodland Bible Camp will be July 22 through July 30. The directors will be James Embree and Paul Denny. The singers will present a concert the opening night of the KY-IND Fellowship at Sellersburg Church of Christ July 30th at 6:50 p.m.

The **Annual Ladies Retreat** will be held September 28-29, 2007 at Camp Kavanaugh, Crestwood, KY. Learn more about spiritual gifts--yours and others. Be sure to register early, ladies. Contact Ruth Wilson (209 S. Galt Ave., Louisville, KY 40206 or call 502-897-2831) if you need more information.

Revival Meeting with Bro. Bennie Hill will be conducted at the Parksville Church of Christ on September 23-26, 2007. Theme: "The Second Coming of Christ." Sunday School begins at 10:00 a.m. Morning Worship at 11:00 a.m. and followed by a pot-luck dinner at the church. Night services begin at 7:00 p.m.

Voice of the Martyrs is a non-profit, interdenominational ministry working worldwide to help Christians who are persecuted for their faith, and to educate the world about that persecution. Its headquarters are in Bartlesville, Okla., and it has 30 affiliated international offices.

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Fall Schedule

<u>Classes Offered</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Instructor</u>	<u>Time</u>
Romans / Galatians	3	Bud Ridgeway	Mon. 9:00 - 12:00
Daniel / Revelation	3	Jerry Carmichael	Mon. 1:00 - 4:00
Prison Epistles (Eph, Phil, Col. & Philemon)	3	Joe Stone	Mon. 6:30 - 9:30
New Test. Church	2	Ervin Denkins	Tues. 7:00 - 9:00
Roles of Women	2	Ruth Wilson	Tues. 6:30 - 8:30
[The above will be held at Portland Church, not Buechel.]			
Prison Epistles	3	Julius Hovan	Tues. 6:30 - 9:30

[The above class will be held in the Harrodsburg, Ky. area]

Please Note: The above classes will be taught at the hours when needed the most by crediting students. Times may therefore be adjusted.