

THE WORD AND WORK

(VOLUME XXXVIII, AUGUST, 1944,)

WHAT WE LOOK FOR

“It is not for a sign we are watching—
For wonders above and below,
The pouring of vials and judgment,
The sounding of trumpets of woe.

“It is not for a Day we are looking,
Not even the time yet to be
When the earth shall be filled with God’s glory
As the waters cover the sea.

“It is not for a King we are longing
To make the world-kingdom His own;
It is not for a Judge who shall summon
The nations of earth to His throne.

“Not for these, though we know they are coming;
For they are but adjuncts of Him
Before whom all glory is clouded,
Before whom all splendor grows dim.

“We wait for the Lord, our Beloved,
Our Comforter, Master and Friend,
The substance of all that we hope for,
Beginning of faith and its end.

“We watch for our Savior and Bridegroom,
Who loved us and made us His own;
For Him we are looking and longing:
For Jesus, and Jesus alone.”

—Annie Johnson Flint.

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

THE SECOND-COMING DOCTRINE

The doctrine of the Lord’s second coming held a very prominent and important place in the apostolic teaching, as even a cursory examination of the New Testament will show. It was strongly emphasized in those days. It represented the goal of the Christian’s hope. It occupied an essential position in the scheme of Christian doctrine. Today, among us, it is not so. It is not frequently mentioned; it is not at all emphasized; and it seems to some a negligible and unimportant point,

while to others it is a white-elephant sort of doctrine that hardly fits into any place in their faith and teaching and certainly holds no logical and necessary place in the plan. But to the early Christians it was an essential point, much taught, and the logical culmination of their faith. If it is not so with us, it is simply an evidence that our theology is out of plumb. We must go back to the word, and study to learn what place the second coming of Christ occupied in the first Christian teaching, and why it was so greatly emphasized. Since it is intimately bound up with the Christian's hope, and, in fact, constituted that hope, the whole Christian life must be profoundly affected by our conception of it and the attitude we assume toward it.

"ELIMINATION BY SUBSTITUTION"

The latter-day teaching on the second coming practically eliminates it. Death, we are told, is to the Christian the same thing in effect as the coming of the Lord—a statement which one would in vain look for in God's book, and which one is surprised to hear from those who in other matters stand rigidly on the "Thus saith the Lord." If God had wanted to say that, he could easily have done so. The fact in the case is that God neither said it nor meant to say it, and that death was not the object of the Christian's hope in the apostles' day. Neither do we read that the apostles ever taught the necessity of preparing to die. All of which surely looks strange. They say today: "If you are ready to die, you are ready to meet the Lord when He comes." The cart is before the horse. Much more certain is it that if you are ready and prepared for the imminent return of the Lord, as the word of God commands you to be, you will assuredly be prepared for death, if death should come first. And if you are not ready for Christ's return, death will most likely find you in a false attitude. And again they say that "if you only do your duty, it will be all right about the second coming: you won't have to trouble about it." But they did not talk of it in that fashion in the days of inspired teachers. Contrariwise, the doctrine of Christ's return was set before the new converts from the first, as an inspiration to do their duty and to accomplish their work, and a joyful motive to every Christian virtue and sacrifice. Some of the indifference so prevalent in these days may, no doubt, be traced to the neglect of the mainspring of the Christian's hope, the second coming of Christ.

THE HARM AND BENEFIT

Two telltale marks attend the get-ready-to-die doctrine—one in its effects, the other in its reception. First, any number of Christians who are confessedly unprepared at the present moment to die, yet *hope to be* by the time death comes around. It is a serious point. Thousands delude themselves thus, and it is certain that death will catch many of them as they have lived—lukewarm, unprepared Christians. It is evident that

such an attitude could not be so general if the scriptural teaching of Christ's imminent return and the necessity of being constantly prepared for it, as the Lord taught, had been impressed upon the minds of men. The second mark is that the worldliest kind of churches and Christians do not mind a few sermons on the preparation for death. They even like it. The secret of it is that death is a fairly calculable event. Sudden deaths are the exception. As aforesaid, they hope to be ready by *that* time. But under the incisive and insistent demand for present consecration and unworldliness which is involved in the doctrine of Christ's coming, they are apt to wince and fret, and call it "extreme," "speculative," and why not—only that they may not be disturbed in their easy-going way of living. I do not say that many have not been in the right attitude when death found them, but that that motive is neither true nor safe. The teaching of Christ's return which rouses up the self-complacent and enforces a present and joyful readiness is vindicated by its results as well as by the Scriptures. And never in the past has there been so much good reason to expect the Lord's return as even now. "Therefore he ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh."

* * *

OUR RIGHTS

When a Christian becomes absorbed in what is due to him and occupied with his rights, he loses much of his usefulness. He is hard to get along with, for no one can predict just what he will imagine next his rights are, and his friends are always a bit uneasy lest inadvertently they step on some of those rights and prerogatives of his. Then, a man certainly assumes a very unlovely attitude when he draws a line and insists that he get all that is coming to him. A Christlike Christian is magnanimous. He can pass over a matter. He thinks more of others than of himself—more of how he can be a blessing to some one else than of what is due to himself. Besides, whatever rights he has are with God; God is the adjuster of those matters, the while his business is to serve and please and glorify God, and hold up for God's rights and God's honor.

A certain writer, recounting an epoch in her life when she had made a big discovery in the teachings of the Bible, and in her enthusiasm went about telling it to all her friends and acquaintances, says that she met with snubs and reproaches and unkindnesses on every hand. "The especial advantage I gained from the disapproval I met with," she writes, "was that it took a great deal of conceit out of me.... In fact, I got into the habit of never expecting anything else, and ceased to think I had any rights that others ought not to trample on. This habit of mind has given me the greatest liberty of spirit through all my life since, as I have never been obliged, as so many people seem to be, to stand up for my rights, and have,

in fact, scarcely ever had the sense to see when I have been slighted. If one has no 'rights,' their rights cannot be trampled on; and if one has no 'feelings,' their feelings cannot be hurt. So deeply was this lesson engraven upon my soul by what I went through at the time of which I am speaking that to this day I am always surprised at any kindness that is shown me, as at something entirely unexpected and undeserved. I do not know any lesson I have ever learned that has been so practically helpful as this lesson."

It is notable that, far from regretting her humble, self-forgetful attitude, this writer thinks it was a blessing and a gain to her. And so it is. Oh, the misery of self-seeking, of watching out for one's rights, of taking care of one's honor and reputation! And what a relief and release, what happiness and freedom it is to forget one's self and "rights" and "feelings," and address oneself to the work in hand! "For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that we should follow his steps: . . . who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree; . . . by whose stripes ye were healed."

* * *

REVIVALS

Said a certain preacher, who had the knack of hitting the nail on the head: "Stagnation is the last station this side of damnation. I say we believe in revivals. We go for them. But revivals are not the best things in the world. Rather, the need of a revival is a proof that we are not right. It is an abnormal state of things that makes revivals necessary. I want to be understood. So long as churches work on the plan they now work on, revivals are a necessity. What would become of us without them?" This testimony is true. The periodical, not to say spasmodical, stir of the protracted meeting and revival is the best thing when you have not the *best*. In other words, it is the second best, and indispensable when the first best is lacking. What is the "first best" then? Listen: "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly." (Acts 6:7.) "So the church . . . had peace, being edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied." (Acts 9:31.) That was the normal, quiet, steady, healthful growth of the church. It will come again when all or a sufficient number of the members make the kingdom of God and the salvation of souls the chief thing of life.

What one does in his spare time is the acid test of his character.

It takes a lifetime to build up a good reputation; it may be lost in a moment.

NEWS AND NOTES

Seffner, Fla.: "The Word and Work is very helpful to us. It seems that war news has a priority in most people's minds over everything else, and that a hatred for the Axis is cherished. With many that hatred is allowed to extend to brethren who differ with them in some way. The forbearance and long-suffering taught in the Bible seems to be little heeded. I am glad that we have a paper that tries to build up rather than tear down."—H. C. Hinton.

Henning, Tenn.: "The Henning church was fortunate to have had Brother Boll conduct our meeting, not only for our good, but also because it gave an opportunity to members from Memphis, Brownsville, Covington, Ripley, and other places to hear him. The very studious and devoted membership of the church thoroughly enjoyed the daily study of Revelation. Brother Elrod says, 'he makes us want to be good.'"—Mrs. Daisy S. Oldham.

Lexington, Ky.: "The two congregations here released their preachers (Rutherford and Overman) for a tent meeting at West Irvine, Ky. We received this invitation from a good and faithful sister residing in West Irvine, who wishes to establish a congregation there after the simple New Testament order.

"We are glad to report a most excellent meeting so far as attendance, interest and attention are concerned. Crowds have run from 75 the first night to around 125 or 130 for most of the nights. There has been no outward response as yet."—Orell D. Overman.

Dugger, Ind.: "Local forces have plans completed to start a protracted preaching effort in the Dugger Park tonight. Tent benches will be placed on the band stand platform which is large enough to accommodate a large number of people. This provides shelter overhead with the open-air effect of a tent without the use of a tent. A young people's Bible drill will be conducted in the afternoons while the meeting is in progress.

"Our protracted meeting at the church building will begin the third Sunday of August. Bro. J. Scott

Greer of Detroit, Michigan, will do the preaching.

"Brother Hoar of Linton begins a meeting with the Pleasant Grove brethren next Sunday night. The meeting at Cass begins the first Sunday of August."—Maurice Clymore.

Davis City, Iowa: The churches in these parts will assemble at the Davis City park for the yearly general meeting, Wednesday, August 16, 11 A. M. to 4 P. M. Subject, 'First His Kingdom.' All in reach are invited to come and have part in the meeting. We expect our usual helpful time together."—Wm. J. Campbell.

Johnson City, Tenn.: "Our tent meeting in Johnson City, with J. E. Blansett of Dallas, Texas, preaching, closed Sunday night, July 9. Brother Blansett did plain, loving preaching on needed topics. On the last Sunday of the meeting we broke all previous Sunday School attendance records, with 131 present. During the course of the meeting four resounded to the invitation. Two placed membership and two were baptized.

"The Pekin, Ind., tent meeting closed Sunday night, July 23. Five were baptized, and one came to confess sin, and to place membership. Bro. E. L. Jorgenson began the meeting on July 9, preaching twice on that date, and also the following night. I began my part of the meeting July 11. Bro. F. S. Spaulding, minister of the Borden congregation, was a definite blessing in the meeting.

"Lord willing, I go to Mackville, Ky., August 6. Following the Mackville meeting, we plan to pitch the tent near Johnson City and conduct a revival with local forces. We are praying to establish another congregation."—Robert B. Boyd.

Linton, Ind.: "I am preaching at Pleasant Grove church in a meeting now, which is to continue for two weeks. One was restored the first night. We are having a fine class of children."—Waldo S. Hoar.

Borden, Ind.: "There were two baptisms here on Sunday, July 23. Attendance and interest are showing an increase, and progress is evident in every respect."—F. S. Spaulding.

Brother Earnest Lyon of Louisville has taken up regular work with the Ormsby Avenue church in Louisville.

Howard Marsh is assisting Brother Elmer Ringer in a meeting at the Gatchel, (near Tell City) Ind., congregation.

Jennings, La.: "Brother and Sister Stanford Chambers of Louisville, Ky., are with us for the summer. We are receiving great blessings in the Bible classes which this faithful servant of God is conducting. We thank God for sending him in our midst.

"Since my last report, I was privileged to be in a revival meeting with the Oak Grove church of Christ near Independence, La. There were seven baptized and two came forward for reconsecration. Brother A. K. Ramsey of Amite, La., ministers to this fine group of Christians who love and serve the Lord.

"May the Lord continue to bless you richly in the good work which you are doing."—Ivy J. Istre.

Louisville, Ky.: "The tent meeting at 25 and Portland Ave., Bro. Boll preaching, is now in its second week. The ban, due to the polio epidemic, against the assembly of all under 14 years of age, has reduced our attendance somewhat. One baptism and three reconsecrations so far."—Tona Covey.

Report of the Lord's Work in Upper South Carolina.

Greenville, S. C.: "The churches of upper South Carolina have been especially blessed with about nine weeks of evangelistic preaching by Brother J. E. Blansett of the Fair Park Church of Christ, Dallas, Tex. This work began April 21, when the faithful elders of the Duncan, S. C. church called Bro. Blansett to begin the work at

DUNCAN, S. C. This was a two weeks meeting and the church had a spiritual feast. The church was greatly strengthened and encouraged. From there Bro. Blansett moved on to

GREER, S. C. This too was a good meeting, with the Duncan church co-operating. Two souls were restored in this meeting. From here Bro. Blansett was called to begin a meeting at

GREENVILLE, S. C. At the Judson church of Christ. This was a

two weeks meeting. It was a success from the start. This meeting resulted in thirteen restorations, and five baptisms, as well as a spiritual feast such as the church has not enjoyed in a number of years. From here Bro. Blansett was called to

GREENVILLE, S. C. Church of Christ, which meets in the city of Greenville. This was a good meeting resulting in one baptism, and two restorations and much spiritual encouragement. From here Bro. Blansett was called to

ANDERSON, S. C. for a short meeting. This was a good meeting, but the lack of time made it entirely too short. Thus ended this series of evangelistic meetings in upper South Carolina.

"For these spiritual blessings we are indebted first of all to our heavenly Father. We are also indebted to the Fair Park Church of Dallas, Texas, for their noble sacrifice to make this work possible. We are indebted to the elders Rogers and Eggleston, and Bro. Earl Burch for courageously beginning this great work. We are indebted to Brother Homer A. Craft and family for the meeting at Greer, S. C. We are indebted to Brother J. A. Hall, J. J. Sparks, James T. Morris, U. A. Hall, R. G. Moreland, and a number of the faithful sisters of the Judson church for the meeting. We are indebted to Sister Reynolds, Sister Askew, Bro. Camp, and Bro. U. O. Dover for the meeting in the city of Greenville, and we are indebted to Bro. Henry M. Dodson, and Bro. B. W. Reid for the meeting at Anderson, S. C.

"We are thankful for the seventeen souls restored, and for the six souls baptized into Christ: a total of twenty-three. And we want to thank every soul throughout the land that has been praying for us. May the Lord bless every one of them, and lead them and us all safely into that heavenly kingdom some day."—Brady M. Green, R. 1, Box 336, Greenville, S. C.

Tracts Available

We can supply a limited number of the following tracts: "Concerning Carnal Warfare" by R. H. Boll, and "Shall the Christian Dance," compiled and arranged by E. L. Jorgenson. Special price, 100 for \$1.00.

A LETTER FROM THE FRONT

(We are glad to publish extracts from a letter received by Brother Dent Owens of Camp Taylor, Ky., from a friend of one of his five boys, all of whom are in the service.)

"We were under a barrage of artillery fire. Shells were falling all around us and only one was injured. Brother Owens and I were praying and most of the boys near were also praying. There were three or four duds which landed within four or five feet of us and if they had gone off we would have had several casualties. God surely did answer our prayers and we are happy to give Him the praise.

"God said, 'If my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.' That is just what we need today. If every one would do that we would have a heaven on earth. I am so glad I woke up one day and accepted the Lord. I have had good things to happen to me in life, but nothing compared to the happiness and satisfaction that I find in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Ten million dollars would not purchase my love and experience in Christ. Some day I am going home with Jesus to occupy that mansion which He went away to prepare for me.

"Brother Owens, I know you people are praying for us and I am glad. Keep praying, and when you pray for Marvin, pray for me also."

Word from Pvt. Bruce Chowning

"I have been enjoying the Word and Work very much although I don't have enough opportunity to digest it like I would like to. There is certainly a great need for the Lord among the fellows here. The hardest thing I had to get used to was the talk that goes on around me. I guess I am a little hardened to it now, or something, because I don't notice it nearly so much. I hope, though, I will never get to the place that it won't hurt me when I hear my Lord's name taken in vain. It is very hard to know how to be used under such circumstances. All you can do, it seems, is wait for opportunities to talk to individuals, and to try to live an 'influence' before them. I know from what they say occasionally that my saying 'No' to most of the things they all do is noticed, and I believe most of them respect me for it.

"I have a lot of friends in different sections of the country who might be interested in knowing where I am. There are so many dear people in so many different places that I would love so much to see and talk to that I can't help but long for that day when we shall all be together in that home where will be no more wars to separate us from those we love. I would be very glad to hear from any of my friends and brothers in Christ. More than your letters I want and need your prayers. It is only through the strength prayers of God's people give us that we are able to carry on." Pvt. Bruce Chowning, A. S. N. 35827186, Co. D, 67th Med. Tng. Bn. ASFTC, Camp Barkeley, Texas.

Cpl. Ernest M. Edds, who is stationed at San Francisco, California, writes, "I receive the Word and Work each month. I am very glad to receive it and to read it from cover to cover and then pass it on to others."

JAMES ROBERT TAYLOR

The sad news comes of the death of James Robert Taylor on the second day of the invasion in France. James Robert was the son of Ernest and Ruth Taylor, faithful members of the Dugger, Indiana, church of Christ. James Robert was also a member of the Dugger church, and while stationed near home had the opportunity of returning to Dugger and of attending church many Lord's days. He won honors as a radio operator, seeing service on many fronts in this war. Brother James Robert was a talented young man and was brought up in the church by his good parents. We take this means of extending to them our heartfelt sympathy and sincere love in Christ Jesus.

J. R. Clark, former Dugger minister.

PROPER USE OF THAT GOOD NAME CHRISTIAN

Stanford Chambers

Christians are Christ's ones, of whom it is written, "He is not ashamed to call them brethren," for He saith, "Behold I and the children whom thou hast given me." One who is in Christ is a Christian, is properly so called, is not to be ashamed to suffer as one, is the rather to "glorify God in this name." So instructs Peter. Christian is a "worthy name by the which ye are called." To be ashamed of that name is to be ashamed of Him after whom the Christian is named. Christians are His namesake.

"Ashamed of Jesus? sooner far
Might evening blush to own a star!"

Proper names become proper adjectives. Hence we enjoy that way of life which is Christian. There is the Christian life and the Christian character corresponding therewith. So there are Christian men and Christian women. There are Christian hymns, Christian worship, Christian service, Christian warfare, the Christian race. There are Christian faith, Christian hope, Christian baptism, the Christian spirit, Christian graces, Christian fellowship, the Christian congregation, Christian growth, Christian triumph. This is our common speech.

Why not Christian church? Some who use the terms given above object to this use of the term Christian. And why? "Because the name Christian church is not found in the Bible." "Because it sets the church forth as belonging to Christians whereas it belongs to Christ." What about Paul's expression "churches of the saints"? "Well, that means the churches are made up of saints." And a Christian church is a church made up of Christians, a church Christian in its character. If there can be properly a Christian man there can be a Christian group, a Christian company. Who is the authority to say that an adjective is properly used to modify a noun in the singular, but cannot be properly used to modify a collective noun?

A church of Christ is a church of Christians, a Christian church, else it is not a church of Christ. A Christian church is a church of Christ, else it is not a Christian church; it is only so called. If any denominationalized body appropriates the term and calls itself the Christian Church, it does so, even as such a body exists, without divine authority; such use is unscriptural, improper. But that argues not at all against the proper use of the term Christian. Moreover, that the term church of Christ has been capitalized and denominationalized, no one will deny; likewise church of God. When any one Scriptural appellation begins to be capitalized and used exclusively, to the same extent the denominationalizing process has already set in. That some have gone far in this direction

cannot be denied, but it is to be deplored. Nevertheless, abuse of a Bible term does not argue its disuse, else must every Bible term be relegated to non-use. Many are the puerile arguments offered both pro and con, such as have made thinking people look down their noses. Truth gains nothing from loud arguments based-upon false premises. Men speaking as the oracles of God do not argue in such fashion.

Our exhortation, therefore, is that unafraid we keep right on endeavoring to make Scriptural and proper use of Scriptural terms, giving to them their full Scriptural content and meaning, never using one of them in any sectarian sense, never condoning such use. And as to the sweet name Christian, let us, as the Scriptures exhort, "glorify God in this name." Let us refuse to denominationalize, but let us so live and so instruct that our fellow-man may be not only almost, but altogether, persuaded to be a Christian, and every church not only almost but altogether Christian.

BEN'S BUDGET

Ben J. Elston

My dear Flavil Hall and wife take note if "Ben" fails to "Budget." Thank you!

But we are all debtors to God that Brother Boll gave us such a helpful presentation of the *point* in James' speech in the Jerusalem Conference. I think since reading that article I now see far more clearly through it all. Thanks to Brother Boll. Would that all honest-hearted people could *hear* and *read* Brother Boll, instead of "hearing about him." I sometimes wonder, if my brief were not to appear again, if the space would not be better filled.

Seems to me I have always been quite serious about the possible appearance of Jesus at any time. It is more gravely needed with each passing hour. And surely I have never seen such nearly universal, practical disregard of the thought. "Trash," whether from tongue or press, fills the ordinary mind. I study and pray to do a better job of getting a clearer, more genuinely appealing view of Jesus—His cross, resurrection, ascension, coming—to the very hearts of the poor, lost, shepherdless people. Too bad that, as some do their best to keep vital truth before the church and world, others must all too diligently seek to destroy such influence. "Speaking truth in love" is *good copy*.

No diet is sufficient for the health of the soul that does not contain at least one portion of daily prayer, one of meditation on God's Word, one of praise to Him, and one of service to mankind.—Charles H. Spurgeon.

FOR SERIOUS CONSIDERATION

Robert B. Boyd

"The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few." (Matt. 9:37.) Our Lord made this statement, and I, for one, accept it as the truth. Of course, it is true that the last days will be characterized by indifference and lukewarmness, and many will not only neglect but will actually reject the truth. But even so, I fear there will always be more harvest than laborers! Today, preachers may find themselves "cut off" from the large, established churches as a whole, and on that basis claim that there is a harvest shortage rather than a labor shortage. But that conclusion arises from a wrong viewpoint. The bounty of the harvest was an established truth before there ever were any large, established churches—before there ever was such a thing as a Christian brotherhood. Christ said, "the field is the world"—not the established churches of Christ and the brotherhood. So as long as there is a world, there is a field; and as long as there is such a vast field as the world, "the harvest indeed is plenteous." True then, when our Lord made the utterance, and true now, some more than 1900 years later. He who denies is likely not a laborer, but a preacher who simply wants to get fat on that which someone else has reaped!

But our Lord did not intend that we should do nothing about the labor shortage. He said, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers into his harvest." (Matt. 9:38.) Wherever I go, I try to get brethren to start praying that prayer. Surely, if the Lord is ready to answer any prayer at all, it would be that prayer that He has asked us to pray! And recent experiences and observations have increased my appreciation of the need of this prayer. In recent months, great fields, already white unto harvest, have opened up. Men who would manifest the spirit of Christ, and who would declare the whole counsel of God, were diligently sought for, but not found. And great opportunities were lost—yes actually *lost*, and perhaps not only for the time, but forever. Now just suppose our Lord should point His finger at you and me, and say, "Those opportunities were lost simply because you failed to pray. This isn't a very pleasant contemplation, is it?"

However, there yet remains another danger—and it is also one of neglect. Suppose the Lord begins to work a work in our day, and prospective laborers are raised up—laborers that are off to a good start already! They have the right attitude, the spirit of Christ, and want to declare the whole counsel of God. And then suppose we fail to give them the proper encouragement, what will the result be? Well, in many instances, the laborers that are now in view in answer to prayer, will be lost to the cause that is so dear to our hearts.

And whose fault will it be? The answer is obvious. And already, I fear we are guilty.

However, at long last, a congregation with vision and zeal has awakened to the great need. That congregation is the Fair Park church of Christ in Dallas, Texas, where J. E. Blansett is the minister. These brethren have recently secured the services of Brother LaVern Houtz of Harding College as assistant minister. They expect that he will be a blessing to them, and so he will be. But their purpose in making this arrangement is more far-reaching than that. The brethren also have in mind to bless Brother Houtz in giving him experience in every phase of the work, proper association and companionship with such a congregation as Fair Park, and such a man as J. E. Blansett, that he may be encouraged in the work of our Lord.

But the matter doesn't stop even yet. These brethren plan, when the time is ripe, to send Brother Houtz out into other fields, or allow him the liberty of choosing a field as God directs, and then to secure another young man to serve as assistant. And that program is to be continued indefinitely, according to present plans.

Brethren, this may be the dawn of a better day in regards to this matter of laborers. Why can't 10 or 15 other congregations follow the example of the Fair Park church? Maybe you can get along without an assistant minister, yes—but what about the importance of giving fair minded young people the proper encouragement? Can such a matter be safely neglected?

TO THE POINT

Attitudes! Without respect for the viewpoint of the other person and without greater human understanding, how can I expect to teach others the truths which I find in Jesus the Christ? In the majority, the man who differs with me in his thinking is just as honest and sincere as I. There must be an understanding on my part of the background and environment of an individual if I expect to lead that person to Christ.

Humility! Truth is not within myself, and neither am I smart enough to have a grasp of all which is truth. I must search the Scriptures to find all truth. If I leave the impression on one whom I am trying to teach the Christ way that I and my understanding is authority, I usually fail in my efforts to lead that one into the fellowship of what God has to say. Boldly must I proclaim the Word, but with such humility that I show the picture of Christ with all authority—not an impression that I am right and you are wrong. Christ only is right.—Tom W. Phillips, in *Firm Foundation*.

WARNING: Beware of a family by the name of McQuarry, going the rounds of Kentucky and Indiana churches; in an old Dodge car.—E. L. J.

NOTES ON REVELATION 20:1-3

E. L. J.

The following paragraph, taken from an exchange, is used here, not with intent to criticize the author of it, but for introductory and background purposes.

"That this [the overthrow of Satan] was done through the death of Christ is stated in the Hebrew letter: 'that through death he [Christ] might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.' What more could be done with the devil than to destroy him, or bring him to naught? Well, the inspired writer declares this was done through the death of Christ. It cannot be said, then, that it is something yet to be accomplished in a supposed age, in a material kingdom, following the age in which we now live. . . . From such as accept this atonement through obedience to the gospel the devil is effectively bound. He can deceive them no more—sin is his power of deception and sin has been blotted out by the blood of Christ."

QUESTIONS

1. Is it "stated in the Hebrew letter" that "this *was done*"—that is, to a finish, for those who accept the atonement? The text reads, "that through death *he might* bring to naught him that had the power of death." (Heb. 2:14.)

2. Has Satan no longer the power of death over those who accept the atonement? Is that done to a finish, for them?

3. Did not Peter say (to persons who had accepted the atonement "through obedience to the gospel"), long after Christ's death, and long after Pentecost—"Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour"? (1 Peter 5:8.)

4. Does not the text in question (Rev. 20:1-3) plainly declare, in simple, indicative language, that it is *the nations* (not alone those who accept the atonement) that Satan shall deceive no more, "until the thousand years should be finished"?

5. If Satan is bound now, through the death of Christ, how could he ever "be loosed for a little season," after the thousand years? Will the death of Christ be abrogated for a little while?

6. Finally, what is there, after all, in the vocabulary of this text (Rev. 20:1-3) that any humble reader should fail to understand? What language is there *in this portion* (though there is much *elsewhere* in Revelation) that is so "highly metaphorical and symbolical"?

The plain truth is, there are *no symbols* in Rev. 20:1-3 (except "dragon," immediately interpreted as "the devil"); there are two simple figures of speech, "key" and "chain"—so simple and so fitting in this context that a child may understand. Nor is there any difference among us in our understanding of these two words: the "key" is simply something suitable for locking and unlocking the abyss; the "chain" is simply something suitable for binding a great and powerful spirit being. No one—that I know of—denies that these are

figures; but some of us think they are figures of *something*! None of us insist that "key" and "chain" are literal, iron implements, but some of us believe they really lock and bind what God says they lock and bind! In other words, no careful student insists on the *literal sense*; but only on the plain *grammatical sense*. And a child, I think, can understand the grammatical sense here.

No, there are no great difficulties of language in Revelation 20:1-3; the difficulty is not in the text—it is in us! There are *no dark symbols*, and *no difficult figures* in this paragraph. Try it for yourself by the following child-like test on this text:

"I saw an angel"—what is an angel? Is that a dark symbol or a difficult figure?

"Coming down out of heaven"—do you know what "heaven" means?

"Having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand"—what is the evident meaning, in this context, of the simple figures, "key" and "chain"?

"And he laid hold on the dragon, the old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan"—Is this not clear enough? If not, why not?

"And bound him for a thousand years"—Is there anything difficult here? Do you know what the English phrase, "thousand years" means? Does "bound" mean "loose"? Does "bound" mean "walking about, seeking whom he may devour"?

"And cast him into the abyss, and shut it, and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished"—Is there anything too hard in this third verse? Are there any "symbols" here? Is it not written in plain, indicative, declarative English, faithfully translated out of the original Greek?

Paul tells us (Eph. 2:2) that Satan is "the spirit that *now* worketh in the sons of disobedience" ("now," that is, through the course of this age"); and Peter says that Satan walks about "seeking whom he may devour": is all this one and the same in meaning as to be "bound," "cast into the abyss," "shut" and "sealed" in that place, in order that "he should deceive the nations no more . . ."! If so, there is indeed an end to any signification of inspired language, and we may as well give up the search for truth!

It is all very odd and unnatural! Those who believe Rev. 20:1-3 in its *plain grammatical sense* are called "speculators," unsound and unworthy; but those "prelates, priests and preachers who 'have taken away the key of knowledge' and tell the common people that the Bible must be 'spiritualized' before it can be understood" (quoting again from the same journal)—these are the safe and sound ones in our day!

Those who believe Rev. 20:1-3 in its plain, grammatical sense are sometimes called "Adventists"; but it is those who call them that who, in truth, espouse the Adventist position, at least as to Satan. *The Watchman* (Adventist journal) of June, 1944 states it thus:

"To speak figuratively, his hands [Satan's] will be tied, bound by a great chain of circumstances. The chain in the angel's hand surely is not a literal chain. If Satan were literally bound, his work could be carried

on by his angels. (1 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 12:9.) He will be bound by a symbolic chain."

It seems to me the issues have been stated in reverse: they ask, can they bear with us, can they tolerate us, can they fellowship us, who believe the simple, grammatical statements of the word of God? And to this they answer, No. But the question ought to be, can we bear with them, can we tolerate them, can we fellowship them, who spiritualize, who evaporate, who darken, and explain away, what God has said? and to this,—unless in the case of the extremely factious—we have always answered, Yes!

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

The people who started out to restore the New Testament church and who adopted the maxims, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent"; and, "Bible names for Bible things, and Bible thoughts in Bible terms," have fallen into the error of using Bible terms in a sectarian sense. When we used Bible designations in their proper sense, we could with no amount of persuasion induce our friends among the sects to apply these terms to us. They would concede that we were Christians, but they vehemently insisted that we were "Campbellites"—that is, that we belonged to a sect of Christians. Our fundamental proposition was to destroy all sects and induce all followers of Christ to be *Christians only*, and this was the one point that brought the bitterest opposition from all sectarians. They would allow us to differ with them on any special point of doctrine and still be friendly with us, but they would never endure the idea that we were not a sect in the same way that they are sects. They might even concede that we had more truth than any of them, if only we would agree to make our portion of the truth the creed of a sect. They did not care what we contended for, if only we would make the contention as a sect. That is why our opposition has grown so weak in these days. We have, in spite of ourselves, become a sect whose special purpose is to contend against sectarianism. The word "Campbellite" has about disappeared from the vocabulary of our neighbors. Why? Because they are willing for us to have a scriptural name if we will give it sectarian limitations. They are ready to concede us the right to form a sect and then to name that sect whatever we choose. They scruple not nor hesitate to call us "Disciples of Christ," using the capital "D" for disciple, and thus making a proper name out of the expression. That denotes a sect, and all *sectdom* is ready to facilitate the newcomer. Or the terms "Christian Church" and the "Church of Christ," using the capital "C" for church in each case, are thus made proper names, and they are entirely acceptable to our opponents. They become the name of a sect. They desig-

nate a special band of professed Christians, and that is all any sect is.

But some brother whose feelings are deeper than his thinking is ready to rise and vociferate that the expression "church of Christ" is scriptural. *Of course it is.* That could never be denied. So is also the expression "disciples of Christ." It is not the expression that is questioned; it is the *use* of the expression that is wrong.

It is never wrong to speak of the church as the church of Christ, or the church of God, or the church of the saints, or the church of the firstborn; but, to repeat what has been said before, to exalt any one of these into *the patented name of the church* is to sectarianize that expression. If we have not done that very thing with the expression "church of Christ," then why do we not vary our terms in speaking of the church? Why is every deed made to the church of Christ? Why is "church of Christ" put upon every cornerstone or in front of every meeting-house? Why does the "church of Christ" have a literature series? So fixed and uniform is this designation that if we should insert the name "Jesus" in the expression it would cause confusion. If a disciple were in a strange city and while looking for the meeting place of the saints he should come upon a house with this inscription, "The Church of Jesus Christ," if he did not pass it up, he would hesitate and make further inquiry before he entered that house. He is looking for a church of the Lord, but he is not looking for this particular one. He is looking for the one that wears the stabilized, invariable name "church of Christ"—a name which, therefore distinguishes it from *the church of Jesus Christ*, or *the church of God*, or *the church of the saints*, and all other of the Lord's churches—implying, of course, that he has several. To use the term "church of Christ" to include any limited number of saints or to make it the *name* of the church is to sectarianize the expression.—G. C. Brewer, in *Gospel Advocate*.

THE DOWNWARD PULL

"Why is it," said a young man during the Sunday morning lesson, "that it is so much harder to break a bad habit than a good one? I smoke; and I do believe that I could more easily quit coming to church than stop smoking." Perhaps we cannot satisfactorily explain the "why" of it; but such is the perversity of human nature that it is evidently true. It is easier to drift down than to row up-stream; and to climb a mountain requires greater effort than to roll down. So to fall into evil ways and continue therein is easier than to walk the upward path of righteousness. And experience teaches us that it is more difficult to get out of a bad situation than to get in.—From *The Torch*.

WHY MEROZ WAS CURSED

The fifth chapter of Judges is a song of rejoicing and praise for the victory which the Lord had given Israel over Sisera and his hosts. Credit is given the leaders and the people who "offered themselves willingly"; but primarily it is a song of thanksgiving to Jehovah. And it is in the midst of this paean of praise that we find this discordant note—a bitter denunciation of an obscure village in Israel:

"Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of Jehovah,
Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof,
Because they came not to the help of Jehovah,
To the help of Jehovah against the mighty."

Now we are not told what reason or excuse these people had for not responding to the call of duty; but we may be sure they had one. (For do not people always have an excuse for not doing what they ought to do?) Perhaps it was that they were so few in number and had such little power that their help would make no difference—that the Lord would give the victory anyway. Or possibly they thought it of no use—that Israel could not win over such a powerful foe; so why should they trouble themselves? Now it is quite true that their aid was unnecessary, for the Lord did give a glorious victory without them. Their failure did not affect the outcome of the battle or the welfare of the nation (although they could not know beforehand); but it did greatly affect their own standing before the Lord. Theirs had been a responsibility as great, according to their ability, as that of anyone else; and they had made no attempt to meet it. Hence the severe denunciation of the Lord.

What meaning has this for us? "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." (Rom. 15: 4.) Many a Christian feels that he has little influence or power for the Lord: he can't preach or lead in prayer; he has little to contribute; indeed there is so little that he can do that it scarcely matters whether he goes to church, attends regularly the protracted meeting, or makes any other effort to help in the work. Now he may be very much mistaken; the Lord can, and sometimes does, use the very little power a man has to accomplish a great work, when that power is wholly consecrated to His service. But even if it does not matter in so far as the progress of the work is concerned, let him take note that it does matter very much in so far as his own standing before the Lord is concerned. The one-talent man would indeed have added little to his lord's wealth by investing the one talent entrusted to him; but he was cast out nevertheless; for it was not required of him that he gain much but that he put forth a faithful effort with what he had.—J. Edward Boyd, in *The Torch*.

REAL REPENTANCE

R. H. B.

Through all the Bible—in the Old Testament, in the New Testament—we hear God's call to repentance. It was the chief appeal of the Old Testament prophets. And at the gate of the New Testament sounds John the Baptist's—the fore-runner's—cry, "Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Then the Lord Jesus Himself began with the same call—"Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," and He preached repentance with great urgency throughout the days of His ministry. When after His death on the cross the risen Lord gave the great commission to His disciples, it was that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem. When the Holy Spirit had come, and the apostle Peter (to whom it pertained) preached the opening sermon of the new dispensation (Acts 2) the convicted hearers cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter, by the Holy Spirit answered, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38.) In his next recorded sermon Peter said again, "Repent ye therefore and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out." (Acts 3:19.) Paul also, the great apostle to the Gentiles, after he had been called, "declared to them at Damascus first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judæa, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance." (Acts 26:20.) To the idolaters of Athens he declared that God now "commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent" (Acts 17:30). And down to the last book, the Revelation, we hear God's gracious call to repentance. It is clear from all the stress placed upon it in the word of God that this is a matter of first importance. It is indeed so important that without it there can be no salvation. God would have to change—He would have to cease being the God He is—before He could save an unrepentant sinner.

The Lord Jesus laid down three outstanding "excepts": "Except ye believe that I am He, ye shall die in your sins"; and "Except one be born anew he cannot see the kingdom of God"; and "Except ye repent ye shall all in like manner perish." These are things that cannot be waived: they are essentials to salvation. The only alternative to repentance is perdition: "Except ye repent ye shall . . . perish." "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to youward, not wishing that any should *perish*, but that all should *come to repentance*." (2 Peter 3: 9.) But it is the one or the other.

The necessity then of a real and sincere turning from

sin unto God (for that is what repentance means) is so plain that it needs not to be argued. Yet, if one knew how many people are trying to get by without repentance—at least without a *real* repentance—he would probably be astonished. In the old days of the prophets, when God called to repentance, how He had to exhort them to make it genuine and real! “Yet even now,” He says in Joel—even while judgment was already under way—“even now turn ye unto me with *all your heart* ... and rend your heart and not your garments, and turn unto Jehovah your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness.” (Joel 2:12, 13.) Ah, how much easier it is for some to rend their garments than their hearts! There was a great revival in Judah in king Josiah’s time, and it looked as if the nation had repented; but here is God’s disappointment: “Judah hath not returned to me with her whole heart but feignedly, saith Jehovah.” (Jeremiah 3:10.) It was not real—it was a make-believe; just as much religion and repentance is today—for as your repentance is, so is your religion. There was plenty of outward demonstration; but, as He complained in Hosea, “They have not cried to me with their heart, but they howl upon their beds.” (Hosea 7:14.) Their pretended goodness was “as a morning-cloud that goeth early away.” Israel made many pious prayers, but “they flattered Him with their mouth, and lied unto Him with their tongue; for their heart was not right with Him, neither were they faithful in His covenant.” (Psalm 78:36, 37.) Why anyone should undertake to fool God is a mystery—for does not He know the heart and search the mind; and can there be anything hid from Him? Are not all things naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do? And He looks for sincerity and uprightness as of a precious jewel. Oh, why should not a man get right with God, when God opens the way for him to do so?

There are many who will half-way repent. They come across—almost, not wholly. Something rouses them out of their sinful slumber—they are troubled—they feel the pangs of conscience and become alarmed—they make good resolutions; then relapse into their old ways. Now repentance, to be worth anything, must be real. God’s call is to “break up your fallow ground, sow not among thorns.” Your salvation is at stake in this matter. When you really turn, when you really come, your God stands ready to receive you. Yea, He will see you when you are yet a great way off, and run to meet you.

The marks of a true repentance are simple and unmistakable. 1. As to purpose of heart—there is a clean turning from sin and idols unto God; without if or but, without compromise or mental reservation. There may or may not be a show of tears or sorrow for “godly sorrow worketh repentance not

to be repented of"; but the essence of true repentance lies in the turning. All the sorrow in the world is worthless if it does not lead to turning; and if a man turns he need not worry about the sorrow.

2. Repentance is always humble; so much so that the two things (repentance and humbling) are spoken of interchangeably. "Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me?" said the Lord to Elijah—"because he humbleth himself before me I will not bring the evil upon him in his days." It is pride that prevents men from acknowledging their sins, and from turning openly and whole-heartedly to God. And pride and repentance cannot be in the same heart. But a broken and a contrite heart the Lord will not despise.

3. A truly repenting man never makes excuses or tries to justify himself. If there are mitigating circumstances God will plead them for you. But your confession must be excuseless. In the parable of the Prodigal Son we have a wonderful picture of simple and genuine repentance. When the Prodigal in the far country "came to himself" he said, "How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger: I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight; I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants." And thus, with that honest and excuseless confession upon his lips he came to his father. Imagine what it would have been if he had said, "Father, you know how young folks are—you were young yourself once; and like most young fellows I was rash and foolish, but I didn't mean any harm," etc. That would have been the best proof of a false and insincere repentance. But he came not so. He told the simple truth (and God is ever looking for truth in the inward parts) and stated the case as it was. And there was a welcome for him, and the best robe, and a joyful feast in the father's home—for "there is joy in heaven among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

4. True repentance will make full restoration, where restoration can be made. "Lord, half of my goods I give to the poor," said Zaccheus the publican, overcome by Christ's loving condescension toward him—"and if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man I restore fourfold." Instantly the Lord Jesus acknowledged the man's action and attitude, and said, "Today is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which is lost." (Luke 19:9, 10.) There are, alas, many sins and wrongs for which no reparation can be made. But where it is possible true repentance will always make it. If you have slandered your fellow-man, fear not to correct the false statement you have made about him,

lest you should be looked on as a liar in the sight of men. It is better to save your soul than to save your face. If you have stolen or defrauded, return what you have wrongfully taken; and don't stand back on what people will think. There are far worse things than man's reproach. And those who have done so will tell you greatly it pays in joy and inward peace and deep satisfaction.

5. True repentance, moreover, is always unto God. Paul preached "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Since all sin is sin against God, repentance must be toward God. It will not do to say, "I am going to turn over a new leaf—I will quit my evil habits, and be a better man, as often we hear people say. That is not repentance. If the Prodigal Son in the far country had said—"I see I have made a mess of things; I will now try to retrieve myself, and go here or there or yonder, and start life over again"—that would not have been a picture of repentance. Some of the proudest self-will and fiercest rebellion against God wears the guise of moral reform. But it was from his father that he had departed; against his father's love he had sinned; back to his father he must go with humble confession. Says the prophet of God, "Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God for he will abundantly pardon." (Isaiah 55: 6, 7.) It is not only that to God you must return, but with Him only can you find mercy, forgiveness, help, sustenance, and the enabling to a new and worthy life.

6. Finally, in connection with that first great sermon which was preached "by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven" on the day of Pentecost, Peter said, "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Baptism, therefore, is the God-appointed expression of the sinner's repentance, as also of his faith. "And they that received his word were baptized, and there were added unto them the same day about 3000 souls." But if already you have been baptized and have fallen into sinful ways, repent and return to your Father in heaven who alone can and will forgive and restore to you the peace which you have lost.

The spot where God's triumph is achieved, God's victory over sin, over lawlessness, is the cross of Calvary, the cross on which the Son of God died. In that cross and through the cross the works of the devil were destroyed, and the One who conquered him, is yet to bruise the serpent's head in the final triumph when He comes again, as recorded in prophecy."

—A. C. Gaebelein.

THOUGHTS WORTH WHILE

D. H. F.

INCOMPATIBLE

It is said that an old Negro, in reading a well-known hymn which contains the line, "Judge not the Lord by feeble sense," mistook the word "sense" and gave this odd version: "Judge not the Lord by feeble saints." What a pity that people will judge the Lord that way!—*Christian Herald*.

STAYING FAR OFF

"Yes, I always go and help Mamma when she calls me—if I hear her," answered a small but honest maiden when questioned concerning her obedience. But sometimes I like to play pretty far off, where I can't hear her." Many older ones obey God's call to service in much the same way.—*The Continent*.

MORE TRUTH THAN FICTION

In a certain town there was a cemetery close beside which stood a saloon. The gate was kept locked, but a sign on the corner of the saloon read: "*The key to the cemetery within.*" There is more truth in that sign than one would realize upon first reading it.—W. G. Partridge.

PRETENSE

A judge of Chicago fined a man \$100 and costs and sentenced him to jail for ninety days for impersonating a doctor and practicing medicine without a license. I wonder how many professing Christians, ministers, and laymen would be "hit" by a law fining those who pretend to be Christians and were not. Are we leading or misleading people by our pretensions?—*Expositor*.

MUST THE HYMN BE CHANGED?

We sing "Faith of Our Fathers," and remember our parents' religious devotion. But can our children honestly sing that? Do they see evidence of our faith? Or will they have to sing, "Faith of our grandfathers, living faith"?—*Moody Monthly*.

WHICH WAY DO YOU PULL?

They knew each other intimately. Said one, "I've been in the harness in this church for twenty-two years." "Yes," said the other, "and during that time you've worn out fifteen holding-back straps and only one collar."—*Watchman-Examiner*.

DEWEY'S GOOD HEALTH RECIPE

Admiral Dewey, when complimented on his superb health on his seventy-fifth birthday, smiled and said: "I attribute my good condition to plenty of exercise and no ban-

quets. We eat too much. One-third of what a man eats is all he needs in order to live." "In that case," said a Washington report, "what becomes of the other two-thirds?" "Oh, that enables the doctor to live," Admiral Dewey replied.—*Youth's Companion*.

LOOKED LIKE HARD WORK

"Neither did we eat bread for nought at any man's hand, but in labor and travail, working night and day" (2 Thess. 3:8).

A neighbor knocked at the lazy man's door and told him of a position he could get by going after it. "Um," said the man, "it appears that considerable effort will be involved." "Oh, yes," said the neighbor, "you will pass many sleepless nights and toilsome days, but it is good pay, and a chance for advancement." "Um," said the man, "and who are you?" "I am called opportunity." "Um. You call yourself opportunity, but you look like hard work to me." And he slammed the door.—*The New Success*.

THE TWELVE SPIES

The difference between the two spies, Joshua and Caleb, and the other ten of the twelve Moses sent into Canaan was that the ten looked at God through the difficulties, as when you look at the sun through a reversed telescope, and it seems indefinitely distant and shorn of its glory; while the two looked at difficulties through God.

Unbelief never gets beyond the difficulties—the cities, the walls, the giants. It is always picturing them, dwelling on them, pitting them against its own resources. Faith, on the other hand, though it never minimizes the difficulties, looks them steadily in the face, turns from them, and looks up into the face of God, and counts on Him.—F. B. Meyer.

STEPS IN JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Parental Indifference, no Sunday School attendance, No Church Affiliation, Bad Company, Bad Habits, Cigarettes, Drinking, Gambling, Juvenile Crime, Despair.—*Moody Monthly*.

According to Dr. Alfred Cahen, only eight per cent of American couples who possess children end in the divorce court, while seventy-one per cent of the childless marriages end in divorce. Each additional child cuts in half the chances of divorce. Thus birth control is one cause of divorce. The root cause, of course, is sin.

INNER WEALTH

Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick speaking in a Sunday broadcast: "If people wish to escape from the type of religion that invokes fear, gloom and self-torturing asceticism, they must turn to the inner wealth of New Testament Christianity." A Fundamentalist couldn't have said it better.—*Prophecy*.

BAPTISM, THE LORD'S SUPPER, AND THE 1,000 YEARS REIGN

WERE THEY PARTS OF THE FAITH OF CHRISTIANS IN THE EARLY CENTURIES?

Flavil Hall

Whatever we find in the early creeds may be accepted as a common article of faith of the professed believers of that time, whether it is scriptural or not. What do the early creeds say about **baptism** and the **Lord's supper**? Do they mention **these**? We shall see?

THE APOSTLES' CREED. This is commonly regarded as the oldest creed. Whatever its exact date, it was written at a time when some would have us believe **baptism** and the **Lord's supper** were prevalent. . . . Not a word [in this creed] about **these ordinances**. If such a doctrine [concerning them] was common faith at that time, how can we account for this silence?

Now isn't that a smashing argument? It is presented in the exact words of the editor of a southern octogenarian paper, except that I have substituted baptism and the Lord's supper black type where he wrote "premillennialism." Baptism is not in the Apostles' Creed, nor is the Lord's supper, this is meant by "the communion of saints," but these words were interpolated into the "Creed" long after it was formulated, and were not a part of the original.

The editor follows the above with **The Nicene Creed** and **The Athanasian Creed**, with the same unwarranted proclivity (concerning pre-"1000 years" teaching) as that of the former creed. Baptism is not in the Nicene Creed of 325, nor the Lord's supper in any direct unequivocal way. In its enlargement fifty-six years later, baptism is mentioned, but not the Lord's supper. Neither was it in this creed originally. The point made against premillennial teaching on The Athanasian creed bears the same weakness and self-refutation as those based on the other creeds. The fact is they were all too late by far to make any such use of them. They ranged from the early stage of the great apostasy down to the sixth century.

The afore-quoted words concerning The Apostles' Creed is sadly incorrect: "It was written at a time when some would have us believe premillennialism was prevalent." The most ancient account of it was when the church was going into apostate corruption, and yet there is nothing in it that premillennial brethren deny.

Baptism, the Lord's supper, and the premillennial view (the coming of Christ before the thousand years, cf. Rev. 20:1-6) are found in the first centuries' history of the church and in the "Apostolic Fathers" earlier than the creeds. I am writing under a careful consultation of "Creeds of Christendom," Vol. 1, by Dr. Philip Schaff, and "The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge," which the above editor had before him when writing as quoted from him. In the later work the writer of the millennial article, Dr. C. A. Beckwith, though strangely rejecting the conviction of the church in the "first centuries" and accepting the mystic interpretations of the Alexandrian school (chief of whom was Origen) under early apostasy in the second half of the third century—Dr. Beckwith says: "In the first centuries it [premillennial teaching] formed a constant, though not an unquestioned, part of the church's doctrine, until a radical change in external circumstances and attitude forced it into a position of heresy." (The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was not "unquestioned," but Paul had to deal with some in the church who said there was to be no resurrection.) (1 Cor. 15.) Further on Dr. Beckwith says: "Of Paul, it may at least be said that by his doctrine of a limited reign of Christ (1 Cor. 15:25ff) he gave a foothold in the church for chiliastic [millennial] expectations. . . . It is found in . . . the orthodox writers of the post-apostolic age, in the epistle of Barnabas (XV), and in fragments of Papias (in Irenæus, Haer., V. xxxiii). Echoes of it are to be found also in the epistle of Clement (1:3), in the Shepherd of Hermas (3) in the Didache (x, xvi), in the epistle of Clement, the Apoca-

lypse of Peter. . . . Irenæus (Har. V., xxxii), like Papias, founded his belief in it on the words of those who had been taught by the apostles themselves."

How Dr. Beckwith could turn from such testimony and accept the opposition (when infant baptism and other corruptions had taken root) of Origen and other Alexandrians is hard to understand. None of our anti-millennial brethren would listen to that Alexandrian school in their apostasies on baptism; but the former have honored the latter in crediting them with smashing premillennial teaching! Who, fifty years ago, could have believed that leaders among us would ever come to this, and blacklist all who would not line up with them in marking and "casting out of the church" those who hold the position ascribed to the church in the first centuries, even by Dr. Beckwith? Such a course, in relation to baptism and the Lord's supper, would strip them of their cherished historic argument in debating with Methodists and Adventists.

Again, Dr. Beckwith says: "With the cessation of presecution, and still more with the conversion to Christianity of the secular powers, there was no more point in looking forward to a period of earthly triumph over the foes of the faith." Indeed!—With the "conversion" of the Emperor Constantine (who would not be baptized until he saw he could no longer hold on to the life here), and with piety, consecration and scriptural devotion almost gone, men, with few exceptions, did not continue to live in the spirit of the last prayer of the Bible, "Even so come, Lord Jesus."

Finally, Dr. Beckwith says: "With the reformation began the second period of the history of Millennialism. The **interest in scripture** and the belief that the Apocalypse contained in type the whole history of God's kingdom on earth, caused men to seek in it the explanation of the signs of troubled times." (Emphasis mine.)

Thus Dr. Beckwith, while dissenting from premillennial teaching, does the greatest honor possible thereto in attributing it to the church preceding the apostasy, when there was heart-service; and to the reformation, when **real interest** in scripture teaching was revived and there was soulful yearning in relation thereto; and he dishonors himself in turning from the conviction of such ages and following the great apostasy and the dark ages. All standard church histories, the encyclopedias and Gibbon coincide eminently with Dr. Beckwith. Is it not an insult to the early martyrs for the faith to disfellowship and execrate brethren now for teaching that which was dearly held by the former?

In the Restoration Movement in the 19th century the premillennial view was outstanding in shining lights therein—Dr. Barclay; H. T. Anderson; Moses E. Lard; Dr. T. W. Brents; J. A. Harding; (yea, and David Lipscomb, according to the rantings of some editors against what they quote from his Commentary on Ephesians at 4:9, 10) and still others.

It is sad, that some have held millennial views that border on gross, sensual materialism, and thus counterfeited the genuine, as every truth has been counterfeited; but not so with the faithful and true, who are not "ism" devotees, but Bible-believing, consecrated Christians only. They teach no such things as a future, carnal reign of Christ on a "musty and dusty throne in Jerusalem"; or that the church is "an accident," the restoration by Christ of the Mosaic order, that He is not reigning now, a chance for salvation beyond death, and other outlandish charges against Bible believers.

Since then, as proved above, in all periods of awakening zeal in Bible research and in consecration, the hope of the Coming of Christ to reign during the thousand years, was a propelling power, is not any one who entertains the hope, justified in doing something for its promotion while living, and post-humously also, as Brother Don Carlos Janes did? Pine Apple, Ala.

A lot of people have ability, but lack of stability.

The serene, silent beauty of a holy life is the most powerful influence in the world, next to the might of God.—Pascal.