

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLIII, May, 1949)

They Have No Need to Go Away

Lord Jesus, when beside the sea
Thou spakest of the multitude,
Who had not with them any food,
Thy word was even unto me.

"They have no need to go away."
Why should they go to seek elsewhere
When Thou the Bread of heaven wert there,
As Thou art here, my Lord, today.

My love to Thee, my thanks to Thee;
For now Thy child is comforted.
Thou art my Home, who art my bread,
And every place is Galilee.

—Selected.

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

ONESIMUS

"The faithful and beloved brother who is one of you." So Paul speaks of him in his epistle to the Colossians. (4:9.) Now those who would like to know the background of this Onesimus must read Paul's letter to Philemon. Briefly, Onesimus was a run-away slave. Slaves were as a rule a low class, not only in position but in character; for slavery has always tended to destroy that which was best and noblest in men. For a slave to run away from his master was counted a serious offense in those old Roman times, punishable by any punishment the master might choose to inflict, even unto death. In the course of his escapade Onesimus landed in Rome and by some chance came in contact with Paul, who was then a prisoner in the Imperial City. Paul had time for him. No doubt he told Paul his story; and just as certainly Paul told him the story of the grace of God—of God's love, of Christ's sacrifice, of His power to save; and the upshot of it all was that Onesimus was converted, and we meet him now as a new man in Christ Jesus.

CONVERSION?

Many today would raise their eyebrows at such a tale. That a fellow brought up in slavery—a wicked, worthless renegade slave should so quickly and utterly be changed into "a faithful and beloved brother" in Christ does not accord with psychology. It smacks of the supernatural—and science has no place for anything supernatural. Never having been converted themselves they do not

believe that anybody else can be. Old habits are as second nature, and cannot be broken in a minute. It takes long discipline and culture to change the evil current of a man's life. But did not Charles Darwin marvel greatly at the suddenness of the change that came over the degraded Patagonians through the devoted work of Allen Gardiner and Thomas Bridges? He thought it would have required centuries of civilization and civilizing influence (he said) to accomplish such a renovation. And on the strength of that Darwin became a life-long contributor to Christian missions.

THE NEW ONESIMUS

But Onesimus was now a new man—a brother in Christ, faithful and beloved. The dignity which the gospel bestows upon one who receives it is the most powerful incentive and safeguard of a true Christian life. Whatever his past may have been, he is now a child of God. A negro quartet I heard sang a "spiritual," the impressive refrain of which was as follows:

"God is my Father, Jesus Christ is my brother
And the devil ain't no relation at all."

And that is truth, not poetry, in the case of every one who is born of God. And God's children are His heirs: "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ." (Rom. 8:16). The Christian is told that he belongs to Christ—that he was purchased, "bought with a price" (and how great a price!) and is therefore precious to Him; that he is a temple in which the Holy Spirit dwells (1 Cor. 6:19, 20); that he belongs to that company of which the apostle Peter says: "Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession; that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Peter 2:9). Old things have passed away—behold all things are new. (2 Cor. 5:16). Why should not the Christian accept and believe these words and think of himself accordingly? Why should we not *be* what we *are*? It would soon tell in our life and work.

DESPISE NOT ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES

Onesimus was converted. There was love and confidence and high regard for this once worthless man, in Paul's good word concerning him—"Onesimus, the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you." What help and comfort this must have been to the friendless slave! Not rarely does it happen that Christians look askance at the new convert, especially if he is one who was drawn from the depths. He finds himself, if not in an atmosphere of out-and-out suspicion, at least looked upon with a little doubt, and treated with some friendly reservation. If he should fail or fall, we are ready to say "I thought so"; and "I never had much confidence in him when he came." But the babe in Christ needs the fellowship of the saints, and their confidence, and the tender nursing of that Christian love, that "believeth all things and hopeth all things." So is he helped to walk in newness of life. See that ye despise not one of these little ones." (Matt. 18:10).

NO LONGER A SERVANT, BUT A BROTHER

Onesimus was converted. Now he must go back to his master. What will his master say and do? Leave that to Paul. But no matter what the outcome, he *must* go back. According to the laws and standards of the time he was his master's property. Such is the stern integrity of the gospel. Go back then, he must; but Christ will go with him for life or death as the case may be. But this master was also a Christian. Nothing could exceed the exquisite courtesy and tact of Paul's letter to Philemon. In it Paul expresses his fervent love for Onesimus. "I send him back to thee—as it were my very heart." With other words—if you hurt him you will hurt my heart. Moreover, I send him back "that thou shouldest have him for ever—no longer as a servant, but more than a servant: a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much rather to thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord." (Philemon 12, 16.) Thus does Christ level all inequalities among His own, whether social or racial. All the distinctions of race or wealth or station are wiped out in Him. We know no man after the flesh. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond, or free; but Christ is all and in all." (Col. 3:11.) "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in his high estate," writes James, "and the rich in that he is made low." (Jas. 1:9, 10.) "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond or free, there can be no male or female; for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:28.)

NEVERTHELESS

But to this a "nevertheless" is attached. Although it is true that we are all one and equal in Christ, yet the earthly relationships, and our relative positions in the world with their respective duties and obligations abide. There is no male or female—nevertheless the man is given his position, and the woman the place which she must take. (1 Cor. 11:3-12; 14:33-35; 1 Tim. 2:8-15.) The husband and the wife have their respective places and duties toward each other and in the home. (Eph. 5:22-25; Col. 3:18, 19.) Masters are masters still, and servants servants. Onesimus, because he is a brother beloved in the Lord to Philemon, his Christian master, must not exalt himself or presume on this new relationship: he will be all the more humble and ready to do his master's bidding. "Let as many as are servants under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and the doctrine be not blasphemed." For Christians are not revolutionaries or Bolsheviks, nor fomenters of social or industrial discontent and rebellions. "And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren; but let them serve them the rather, because they that partake of the benefit are believing and beloved." (1 Tim. 6:1, 2. See also 1 Pet. 2:18-20.) This is God's corrective and safeguard against the ultra-democratic ideas of human equality and lawless human freedoms, which are so loudly agitated in the world today.

Good and wonderful are the ways of God, and great beyond the power of human speech to express is His great salvation and the promise in Christ Jesus.

NEWS AND NOTES

Greenville, S. C.: "By the grace of God the little church here is slowly building in attendance. Easter Sunday our attendance reached forty-two. Our collection reached \$69.00. We want and need a new building. We are working and praying to that end. Our meeting begins May 22. Brother Boyd will be with us some during the meeting. We are praying that many will be led to Christ. Please pray with us that this little work will become a big work to the glory of the Master's name."—Henry Harding.

Jennings, La.: "We are in the midst of a very good meeting with Brother Boll doing the preaching. His messages are scriptural, spiritual and uplifting to all who hear. We are having good attendance and a fine spirit is manifested. There have been two responses thus far."—Ivy J. Istre.

Oakdale, La.: "The work in Oakdale is still going in a good way. All have a mind to work. New seats have been built and water has been piped to the church house. A new floor mat has been laid in the aisle, and a friend has made a donation of 18 new song books needed for our meeting with Brother Istre, which began April 4. Attendance has been increasing as the meeting continues. A group of singers from Jennings were present one night and rendered special numbers.

"The work at Upper Pine Prairie is doing better; another person came to the Lord at our last meeting there on the third Lord's day in March. There is a great opening for the word of the Lord in that section. Pray that the Lord may supply the needs of this mission field."—Sidney Mayeux.

Dallas, Texas: "We praise the Lord for His rich blessings of fellowship in the E. Jackson meeting at Sullivan, Ind. Brother and Sister Hardison are doing a splendid work by His grace there. This church assuredly has a great future. It has never been my privilege to be with a group more receptive to God's word. Satan will see to it that many obstacles are put in the way, but God will see to it that victory shall be theirs.

The splendid cooperation of the many congregations round about was a great blessing and help to the meeting. The townspeople visited in larger numbers than ever before. There was some response to the gospel invitation.

"April 3rd was an enjoyable day at Mt. Auburn; three young men from Harding College visited us: Doug Lawyer, Stephen Eckstein, Jr. and Kenneth Istre. The evening service was turned over to them and to the young people.—Frank M. Mullins.

The Sellersburg, Ind., church is planning to begin a Vacation Bible School May 31. Their youth revival is scheduled for June 5-12. Brother Elmer Ringer of Tell City, Ind., is to be the evangelist.

There has been an increase in interest and attendance at the Sellersburg church this year. Last week three were baptized and one placed membership with the congregation.

See the picture of the children at the Sellersburg Home on the inside back cover.

Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, Canada: "Through the rigors of this sub zero, northwestern winter the Lord has kept me pressing on with the work into which He has called me. I arrived in Portage la Prairie on the 15th of January in a blizzard. The Lord has provided me a place in a worthy Christian home. He has been using us in persistent ministries in the Sioux Village and Long Plain Reserve, also two weeks on Oak Lake Reserve north of Pipestone, finding the boarding place he had for me in a farm home about a mile from the Reservation. It was good to be made of our Lord a blessing to parents and children in that home and in homes on the Reservation. Services day after day or night after night were held in Indian homes and there were responses to Grace, some turning from Roman Catholicism to be free Christians.

"If you could see the difference now in Sioux Village compared with 1943 when the Lord directed our way to work among them, you would rejoice with me. Night after night some twenty to thirty meet

for worship in clean homes shining with extra oil lights, singing in two tongues, memorizing books of the Bible, and selected passages, and then periods of Bible studies in Genesis and Matthew with quiz sheets. A half-hour is given to Indian brethren for expositions and heart messages in Sioux. You would have been gripped and thrilled last Sunday night with the moving message one of these presented to his own people.

"This work is enlarging and the Lord is providing assistants."—H. L. Richardson.

Phillips Arrive in Africa

The Phillips family arrived safely at Cape Town April 21. According to the last report, they were planning to spend a few days there before going to Northern Rhodesia. Let us not fail to back them with spiritual and material support. (1 Sam. 12:23.)

Abilene, Texas: "At the service last Sunday night, three responded to the invitation—two for baptism, one for restoration. Many hearts were made glad by the Lord's blessings upon us and upon those who made life's greatest decision.

"Our meeting is to begin the first of June with Brother Robert Boyd bringing the messages. Our prayers are that this will be one of the greatest meetings South Side has known. The concluding message will be on June 12. We look forward to being with the Boyds.

"The Lord willing, the wife and I will be in Johnson City for a few days the first of May. Brother John May will be preaching here. He finishes work at ACC this spring and will be working at Ada, Ohio."—Carl Kitzmiller.

New Albany, Ind., "The Cherry Street Church of Christ plans a meeting and Daily Vacation Bible School—the school to begin June 6th and the meeting June 12th. Brother Wilson Burks was well received last year and has been asked to be with us again. Work at Cherry Street goes along in a good way with four additions since last month's report: one for baptism, two from the Christian Church and one from the Adventist. We hope for a good revival. Remember our work in your prayers."—E. E. Kranz.

Wigan, Lancs., Great Britain: "We in Hindley are a small church and support two evangelists, who commence a Bible Campaign tomorrow evening (Lord's Day) in a small town called Ince, which is situated about two miles from Hindley. It is a scattered area of about twenty thousand souls. The sectarians and the High Church have a good hold upon the people there. We ask your earnest prayers for this effort."—H. Kemp.

(Brother Kemp is glad to correspond with American brethren. His address is: 389, Atherton Rd., Hindley Green, Wigan, Lancs.)

School News

Progress is being made on the new school building at Portland. The walls are now beginning to go up, and with the advent of warm spring weather progress should be rapid. Plans are also going ahead for the opening of the Junior College this fall and applications are coming in.

"God is adding His blessings to our labor at the Parkland church. For more than six months we have worked almost day and night in remodeling our church house and in the addition of eight more rooms to our building. Our Sunday school attendance has grown steadily, and this in the midst of the most highly denominationalized section of Louisville. However, the thing that brings us greater joy is the fact that our Spiritual growth has kept pace with our material progress. Thus far during 1949 we have had 30 responses to the gospel invitation. Twelve persons have been baptized during the past month. To God goes all the glory and to Him we look for greater blessings."—J. L. Addams.

Spring Meetings

Brother Hall C. Crowder is to begin a meeting at the Highland church of Christ May 8. These special services are to continue through May 15. A children's class will be conducted at 7:45 each evening preceding the services.

Brother J. R. Clark is now in a meeting at Fair Park church of Christ, Dallas, Texas, which commenced May 1.

His latest report reads: "Meeting started off well with two good crowds and a good spirit. The

church had a picnic dinner after morning service. Bro. Mullins and Family present at dinner.

"Bro. Mullins has just returned from meeting at Glenmora, La. He reports 4 baptisms and 1 restoration. Unusually good crowds throughout meeting."—J. R. Clark.

Remember the mission effort which Jesse Bibb is planning at Jeffersontown, Ky. The meetings are to be conducted in a gospel tent.

Fort Lauderdale, Fla.: "It seems that the long struggle to establish a simple New Testament Church of Christ here in South Florida is about to become a reality. Recently the little congregation succeeded in getting a \$2000.00 loan to complete the church building to where we may begin using it for a house of worship. We expect in the near future, if God wills, to move into our own house of worship. We also rejoice in the increase of interest and attendance at our services lately. Last Lord's day our attendance was 48. At the morning service a fine lady came forward to confess faith in Christ, and was buried with her Lord in baptism that same afternoon. We rejoice in the new addition to our little congregation. We are happy in the knowledge that our young folk are making good progress in learning the scriptures. Their knowledge of the books of the Bible, how to rightly divide the word of truth, and the

committing to memory of certain basic scriptures that go to make the foundation of a fine Christian character, are evident even to outsiders. We are also deeply grateful to our many friends here who have shown us so many kindnesses, and who are in sympathy with our work. We are also thankful for our brethren and sisters abroad who have so nobly stood by us in this work. God will not forget their unfaltering devotion to the cause of Christ here on the South Florida field. May they receive a full reward. So with renewed courage we press on toward the victory in this great struggle for which our Lord and Savior gave his precious life. Pray for us."—Brady M. Green.

Evolution tract now out. See back cover.

The time is drawing near for the UNION YOUTH REVIVAL, at Ormsby Avenue Church, 622 East Ormsby Avenue, Louisville, from May 22-29, each evening at 7:45. John A. Addams of Jacksonville, Fla., is to be the evangelist. Twelve churches are participating in this effort.

The Word and Work office has received a request for the following back issues of the **Word and Work**: Jan. 1931, Jan., Feb. 1935, Feb. 1937, August 1945. Any issues previous to 1935 will be welcomed as we often receive requests for them.

HOMOGENIZED CHRISTIANS

Homogenized milk reminds one of many professing Christians who cannot be identified as being separate from the world. You cannot distinguish between them and their worldly friends. They are so mixed in with the world that they no longer manifest the cream of the glory of God and the power of God in their lives.

After God saves a sinner, He gives him the command to be separate from the world. Here is His Word:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15.)

"Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing." (2 Cor. 6:17.)

—Brethren Missionary Herald.

YOUR SPIRITUAL INCOME

J. R. Clark

"What is your spiritual income?" These challenging words greeted passers-by from an outdoor church bulletin board on a busy corner. It was the time of year when many were filling their income tax reports; perhaps it had not occurred to them to check their spiritual income, if indeed they had such. All know how vital it is to life and health to have material income. Could it be that our souls need also a regular spiritual income to prosper and be in health? Why do not we have the same earnest care for the inner man as we do for the outer man? My brother or sister, what is *your* spiritual income?

From this higher viewpoint, the apostle Paul was a man of means. He said of himself "as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. 6:10.) To these, his children at Corinth, he declared, "And I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls." (2 Cor. 12:15.) Indeed, the Christian keeps and increases his spiritual wealth in proportion as he gives it away! We cannot live for God, feed the saints, and bring a soul-saving testimony to the lost without adequate spiritual income. He who breathes out must first breathe in. It would be folly to attempt to keep on expelling the breath without equal intake, even so one cannot continue to expend spiritually if his soul is famished.

Apart from Christ and salvation man is totally destitute, having no hope and without God in the world, without mercy, without the cleansing blood, without saving faith, without the promises, without access to the throne, without the indwelling Spirit; yea, destitute of every spiritual blessing.

But after hearing and accepting the Gospel something wonderful takes place in the life of the sinner. God makes an initial deposit to his account. "That good thing (Gr., The good deposit) which was committed unto thee guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us." (2 Tim. 1:14.) "O Timothy, guard that (Gr., the deposit) which is committed unto thee, . . . (1 Tim. 6:20.) Suddenly the redeemed sinner awakes to the fact that all which he before did not have he now has in Christ: salvation, the precious blood, the Holy Spirit, the promises, hope, access to the throne of grace, the right to every spiritual blessing in Christ.

But at this early period in our Christian life we are like Joshua when he stood on the edge of the promised land. We have been lifted up and placed in the midst of untold wealth which, we are told, is all ours—yet it is not all actually ours, not in Christian experience.

A great principle of the Christian life is that we must possess our possessions. The spiritual warfare of the Book of Ephesians answers to the Canaan conquests set forth in the Book of Joshua. Even from the days of Abraham God had promised that He would give Israel the land of Canaan. As Joshua and the host of Israel stand on the edge of this prize God renews His promise. The angel

of Jehovah appears to Joshua and announces that as prince of the host of Jehovah had he come. Nevertheless Joshua was told to drive out the inhabitants and take the land city by city. "Every place whercon the sole of your foot shall tread shall be yours: . . . There shall no man be able to stand before you: Jehovah your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath spoken." (Deut. 11:24, 25.)

So it is in the Christian life. It is quite possible that the Christian, amidst all the glories which have been reckoned unto him, may eke out a meager existence in dire spiritual poverty, when he might live a full, rich Christian life. The child of God must put on the whole armor of God and fight the good fight of faith. We must desire the blessings of God, claim them through prayer and in daily Christian experience, being willing to work and to sacrifice to obtain them. What is your spiritual income? Are you content to live in poverty in this higher realm?

Paul says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God." (Col. 3:16.) By prayerfully reading God's holy Book, diligent Bible study at home and in public classes, memorizing favorite passages, giving close attention to Gospel sermons—in this way can we enjoy the wonderful experience of being filled with the word of God. All of this is important to our spiritual growth and well-being, but many think lightly of it. As a result the little heavenly Manna that they have goes stale and they long for the fleshpots of the world.

"And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit"; says Paul in Ephesians 5:18. Many Christian lives are poor and unadorned because they have not appreciated, nor responded to this plain command. Stephen, as we learn in Acts 6, was full of the Spirit, and in turn he was full of wisdom, full of faith, full of grace and power. Paul prays that the Ephesians may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man. (Eph. 3:16.) And in Galatians 5:22, 23: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law." Those with a legalistic turn of mind are likely to pass by these and other beautiful passages without stopping to drink from their cooling stream. As a result the Church has suffered in character, in power, in service, in unity. Someone has said that the greatest unused power in the world is the Holy Spirit. Here is a veritable gold mine of spiritual income and it is ours for the taking.

Jesus said, "No longer do I call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known unto you." Servants receive and carry out orders only, while friends are taken into confidence. To them the Lord makes known the innermost secrets of His heart. A Christian can know more about the future than the greatest statesman. Some there are who are satisfied to be servants only, when they might be friends. "We should be

content with simply knowing what He wants us to do and doing it," say they. But why not also let Him tell you "all things that I heard from the Father"? He wants to tell His friends about the judgments laid up for the world, and the glories awaiting the saints.

We too can drive out the Canaanites of temptation and sin and possess the land; we can let the word of Christ dwell in us richly; we can be filled with the Spirit; our lives can be mellowed and sweetened by contact with the Lord so that living the Christian life will be a joy to us and a benediction to others. Why do we continue living a meager, destitute, bankrupt Christian life with little or no Christian growth, content as beggars to live in a shack with bare spiritual necessities, when we could have a rich spiritual income and live, as is our right, like children of a King? My brother, why not resolve to increase your spiritual income?

TABITHA

Stephen D. Eckstein

Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. (Acts 9:36.)

A great storm of persecution broke upon the early Christians through Saul of Tarsus. Many were scattered, and many yielded to the compulsion to defame the Name of Jesus. Not a few Christians were cast into prison, and were even condemned to death on account of the blind hatred for Jesus, till the Lord Jesus in loving kindness and matchless grace conquered Saul on the way to Damascus, and he became His disciple, Paul. This is the most remarkable of all changes that a man undergoes. Peter went around to places in Judea, in order to ascertain the havoc caused by the terrible persecution and to reassemble the brethren, encouraging them and strengthening those "*walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit.*" There were those then as now who were determined to serve their Lord, even at the cost of dear ones, relatives and friends, yea, even of life itself!

Peter also went to Joppa. "*Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha.*" She was very beautiful, and her life and character deeply impressed souls. It was ten years after the resurrection of our Lord, that this is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. We could perceive, and accept that such a wonderful energetic soul as Tabitha was, must have gone to Jerusalem in order to know and learn of that renowned Prophet of Nazareth. She "*heard His word*" as Mary did, and it found lodgment in her heart, and gave her light. She was a disciple, one that had embraced the faith of Christ and was baptized. The atmosphere was tense with apprehension, as the persecution of the disciples was intensified. Hence it was very dangerous to be a follower of Christ, and certainly required great boldness and fortitude to be His disciple. Christ Himself was the object of wrath from the religious groups who slandered Him, hated

and crucified Him. But Tabitha was not intimidated, and was prepared to follow Jesus regardless of the consequences. She, like Peter, could say to Jesus, "*Behold we have forsaken all, and followed thee.*" Tabitha was a Christ-like personality and full of the Holy Spirit. This union with God, is the outgrowth of a surrendered life so identified with Him as to be completely His in life and purpose. The Holy Spirit says that "*Tabitha was full of good works.*" Her soul was full of love to God and men, hence her time was filled with works of piety. She had faith, living faith!

Tabitha "*fell sick and died.*" There in that house of holiness and in the midst of all this usefulness, service and sacrifice and heavenly light, came sickness, pain and death. So also to other of God's dear children comes sickness, suffering, pain and death. Here we walk by faith, not by sight! While in our bodies of humiliation we should also figure that sickness, pain and death can come. As blood-bought Christians we endure, and are stedfast in our faith, and trust in the Lord. This is one of the magnificent things about a Christian, that he remains fixed, firm and flaming in facing tomorrow! He knows that "*we shall not all sleep!*" Hence he finds his satisfaction in the fact that he is now a child of God through Jesus Christ, and that then he will be changed to that state of incorruptibility and immortality that will be his for eternity. Our life is something of great value, something precious! It was bought at a great price! The Eternal God, our Father, who loved us enough to give His only begotten Son to shed His blood for us! Though Tabitha was a devoted, active person in that town of Joppa, we do not find there a monument for her, neither a street named after her. God has a monument for her in His Eternal Book; her name is emblazoned upon the escutcheon of the Almighty. There are many Tabithas today whose lives are like wells of life, whose inspiring energy, spiritual fire, radiates light far and wide. They are a joy to the Lord and a blessing to others! May blessings radiate from us also that it may be said of us, as the enemies of Jesus said of Him when He went to the cross, "He saved others." He will recognize us as the fruit of His soul's travail!

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

YOUTH: Too happy to think. There is plenty of time yet.

MANHOOD: Too busy to think. I must get more money.

PRIME: Too anxious to think. I am overburdened with worry.

DECLINING YEARS: Too old to think. The years are fast slipping away.

DYING BED: Too ill to think. I am weak, suffering, and all alone.

ETERNITY: Forever now to think. God's mercy past.

—Selected.

Which would you rather have, a smooth path, or a path so rough that the Lord is compelled to show His face to you every step of the way?

LEADERS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Dennis Allen

(This is the fifth in a series of articles on the educational system of the New Testament Church.)

ELDERS

The fourth class of officers in the church are variously called elders, bishops, overseers, shepherds, or pastors and teachers (Acts 20:17, 28; Tit. 1:5; 1 Peter 2:25; Eph. 4:11). A careful study of these and related passages will show that these terms are used interchangeably to designate the same office. They indicate the various functions of the office.

They are called Elders on account of their superior age and implied wisdom and experience. They are called Bishops or Overseers, because it is their duty to watch over and superintend all that pertains to the edification and welfare of their respective congregations. They are called Pastors or Shepherds, because they are all required to have a shepherd's care over their several flocks: they are to watch for souls as those who must finally give an account to God. They are called Teachers because it is a part of their duty to instruct all who are under their charge. (Robert Milligan, *Scheme of Redemption*, p. 325).

The elders were the primary leaders of the local congregations. In this capacity they were to maintain an oversight of the congregation, direct the program of teaching, and exercise discipline.

How did they come into office? Paul tells the Ephesian elders that they were appointed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28). How then was the appointment made known to the men who were called to this office and to the congregation in whose midst they were to labor? First, there must be the holy desire within the individual for the office which is evidently planted there by the Holy Spirit (1 Tim. 3:1). Second, he must have the needed qualifications (1 Tim. 3:2-7; Tit. 1:6-9). Third, he must be publicly appointed to the office (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5). How were the elders appointed? The New Testament examples indicate that the first elders in a congregation were appointed by an apostle or an evangelist. However it seems clear that he did not appoint them on his own initiative, relying upon his own private judgment. First of all, it is emphasized that the elders must be men of "good report" (1 Tim. 3:2, 7). The evangelist would not be in a position to judge accurately concerning this and would have to find out the mind of the congregation. This is confirmed by the Greek word translated "appointed" in Acts 14:23, which means "to stretch out the hands," "to constitute by voting." Evidently the congregation had some say in the appointment.

The primary duty of the elders was to exercise oversight or government, yet it is also clear that the teaching ministry of each local congregation was the responsibility of its elders. So important was this aspect of their work that they are called "Shepherd-Teachers" (Eph. 4:11). When Paul exhorts the Ephesian elders to "feed the church of the Lord," (Acts 20:28) he gives a picture of the care and responsibility placed in the elders' hands. Each elder is to be

“apt to teach” (1 Tim. 3:2), “holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers.” (Tit. 1:9.) This teaching was to be not only by word but also by deed. (1 Pet. 5:3).

It is worthy of note that in the New Testament the churches are always spoken of as having a plurality of elders (Acts 14:23; 15:2; 20:17; Jas. 5:14). Titus was instructed by Paul to appoint *elders*, in every city.” (Titus 1:5.) This was a safeguard against the concentration of authority in the hands of one man. Responsibility was thus divided, and the church was not dependent upon one individual for its spiritual sustenance. The office of the modern pastor is unknown in the New Testament.

The importance of this office is indicated by the fact that specific qualifications are given for those who aspire to it. (1 Tim. 3:2-7; Tit. 1:6-9.) It is significant that these qualifications are primarily *moral* rather than *intellectual*. They were not young men, but men of experience and reputation. It is also significant that the elders must first prove themselves in successfully managing their own homes before they were to be trusted with the oversight of the church. The father who gathered his wife and children around him morning and evening to study the Word and to unite their hearts in prayer to the throne of grace would certainly feel a holy responsibility to live in accordance with his exhortation if he would keep the love and respect of his family. The elder's personal home life was thus in a sense a training school preparing him for the oversight of the local church. Could a more effective method of training have been devised? Furthermore, the elders were chosen from the membership of the local church. This was a two-fold advantage; they knew their flock and were known by them. Thus the bond between them was extremely close.

The congregation was to respect and honor its elders and to imitate their faith (1 Thess. 5:12, 13; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:7). They were taught to consider them as worthy of financial support (1 Tim. 5:17, 18); though there is no indication that they had a regular salary; and Paul encouraged the Ephesian elders to support themselves (Acts 20:33-35). Needless to say, their manner of life was to be worthy of the honor accorded them.

DEACONS

The deacons constituted the second class of officers in the local church. Their work was not primarily of an educational nature except as they shared the common responsibility of every Christian to teach (Heb. 5:12). They were, however, an important part of the total educational program, in that they were to be a light in the community by their godly life and ministry to the physical needs of the church and those who were without. Their service faithfully done gave them “great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (1 Tim. 3:13.) It is significant that two of the seven chosen to this office in the Jerusalem church, Philip and Stephen, became leading evangelists. Deacons were also required to have high spiritual qualifications (1 Tim. 3:8-10; Acts 6:3).

TEACHERS

Paul emphasized the presence of this group when he said that God has set in the Church "*thirdly* teachers." (1 Cor. 12:28). As has been pointed out previously, the apostles, evangelists, elders and even the prophets all had a definite teaching function. The apostle Paul refers to himself as a teacher (1 Tim. 2:7). The teaching function was present in a greater or less degree in all the offices of the church, for each one had a definite place in the educational program. It is also likely that others who had this special gift, though not appointed as officers in the church, yet served in this capacity under the supervision of the elders.

The women also had an active place in the educational work of the New Testament church; although the sphere of their service was given certain proper limitations (1 Cor. 11:2-16; 14:34-36). Philip had four virgin daughters who prophesied (Acts 21:8-10), which fact indicates that the prophetic gift was not confined to the men. Phoebe, who delivered Paul's letter to the Romans, is referred to as a "deaconess" (Rom. 16:1, ASV, margin). Paul may also be referring to this office when, in the midst of his enumeration of the qualifications of deacons, he says: "Women in like manner must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things." (1 Tim. 3:11.) Prisca, was a teacher of Apollos and is referred to by Paul as a fellow-worker (Acts 18:1-3; Rom. 16:3). Paul refers to Euodia and Syntyche as laboring with him in the gospel (Phil. 4:2, 3).

Though the sphere of the work of the younger women was primarily in the home, the older women are expressly instructed to be "teachers of that which is good, that they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." (Tit. 2:3-5.)

These are the leaders that God set in the local church for the mutual edification and training of the membership. Each local congregation thus became a training school in Christian living and development with Christ as the Head directing and vitalizing it all.

To be continued.

BEN'S BUDGET

Ben J. Elston

We court danger in more ways than one, if we "set the time." The coming of the Son of man is to be in "an hour that you think not." So we may fix a date too late, as well as too early. There has been hurtful heat generated over a forbidden contention. We are assuredly and seriously admonished to be always ready. That is the point of most common and disastrous unconcern. Our experiences confirm that. Perpetual preparedness is the easiest, the only certain, and the only way to be genuinely respectful to Him who bade us watch and pray. Pray for ourselves and "for all men." May God increase the good of "Word and Work."

CHRIST'S TEACHING ON PRAYER

R. H. B.

IN MARK'S GOSPEL

The instances of Christ's own personal praying we mean to take up later in a special study; but one instance given us in Mark is so much a direct lesson on prayer that we must notice it here. It is found in Mark 1:35.

"And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed." Here let us note (1) the circumstances; (2) the time and occasion; and (3) the place of this praying.

1. It had been a full and busy day at Capernaum. At the synagogue (for it was the sabbath) He had taught and cast out an evil spirit from one who was possessed. Then, with James and John, He went into the house of Simon Peter and Andrew. There He healed Simon's wife's mother who lay sick of a fever. The word of his healing power spread over the countryside, and at even, when the sun was set, they brought to Him all who were sick and all the demoniacs from all the neighborhood. "And the whole city was gathered together at the door. And He healed many that were sick." (Matthew tells us that He healed them all, Matt. 8:16) "and cast out many demons." How deep into the night his labor continued, and how worn and exhausted He was when finally He found a little rest, we are not told; but we can easily surmise.

2. But early in the morning, "a great while before day" He rose up and went out to pray. Clearly prayer meant more to Him than physical rest, however much the rest was needed. And why was prayer so urgent at that particular time? Prayer is always urgent, if we but knew it. But sometimes there are special reasons.

It was the rise of the first wave of popularity. "All are seeking thee," said Simon and the rest of the disciples. No doubt *they* were pleased and thrilled. But to the Lord Jesus that was an urge to prayer. On another occasion, when "great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed of their infirmities," it is written that "he withdrew himself in the deserts and prayed." (Luke 5:15, 16.) How great is the danger of popularity to the church, to the preacher, to every Christian! When a good, humble servant of the Lord sees the success of his efforts, and men and women are pressing around him, thanking him, praising him, admiring him; influential and powerful friends are rallying to his support; newspapers are taking note of him and giving him high place and commendation—unless the grace of God powerfully upholds him, that man is as good as done for. The siren voice of popular acclaim will inevitably alienate his heart from undivided loyalty to his Master. You say that Jesus was in no such danger? But was not He tempted in all things even as we are? It was but the renewal, in another form, of Satan's suggestion, "All these kingdoms will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me." If only God's servants today could recognize their peril in popularity and flee for refuge, wisdom, and strength

to the throne of grace before they are enmeshed in the blandishments of the world's favor. But the Lord Jesus "departed into a desert place and there prayed." Then He said to His disciples, "Let us go elsewhere into the next town, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth." (Mark. 1:36-39.) This was the Divine guidance that came to Him through humble prayer.

Aside from the special occasion of this prayer, we must note the time when He so prayed. It was "in the morning, a great while before day." That is a good time to pray! The mind is fresh. The work of the day is before us, with all that may come with it. And indeed we know not what a day may bring forth. We need guidance for the coming day and protection; wisdom also and strength to stand. In the morning it is well to say, "Lord, keep thou the door of my lips"; and "keep thou my feet." "O Jehovah, in the morning shalt thou hear my voice; in the morning will I order my prayer unto thee, and will keep watch." And "in the morning shall my prayer come before thee." (Ps. 5:3; 88:13.) Were not these words of the psalmist prophetic of the prayer-life of the Lord Jesus Christ?

3. Now, as for *the place* where Jesus prayed. It was in a desert place, where He could be alone with God. To His disciples He had said, "Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee" (Matt. 6:6). But He Himself had no chamber to which to retire, nor any door that He could shut. So He sought the wilderness where He might commune in solitude with His Father. "I pray all day long," say many good folk; "I pray when I am washing dishes, when I clean the floors, when I attend to my children," says a burdened mother; and "I pray at my work when I am busy in the shop and in the store," says a working man. Now that is good, and only good. We should do that, by all means. As a devout poet expressed it,

"We need not wait for the longed for peace
Till our journey is o'er and our labors cease;
We can rest in the midst of our busiest day
If the Master meets us on the way."

Very true; and certainly our Lord knew how to do that. But He found it needful to get away from the multitudes, and from His disciples, to be alone with God. And do we not need that also? Can we not find a few moments, if we have not more time, when and where in privacy we can pour out our hearts before God? Let us make time, and seek the opportunity for private, secret prayer. It will pay us richly. Yea, and we *need* it!

Lest I should faint before the race be run
Lest I should quail before the fight be won,
O heavenly Intercessor, and my Lord,
Fulfill to me Thy comfortable word —
Thy Peter's word. How can I be afraid
If Thou dost say to me, But I have prayed?
Amy Carmichael

LESSONS ON THE BOOK OF ACTS

J. Edward Boyd

WAITING FOR THE PROMISE

MANY INFALLIBLE PROOFS. Luke tells us that after His passion Jesus showed Himself alive to His apostles "by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God." (Acts 1:3.) The King James Version reads "many infallible proofs"; Weymouth, "many sure proofs"; and Thayer defines the word, "That from which something is surely and plainly known; an indubitable evidence, a proof." When Jesus was crucified the hearts of the disciples were filled with dark despair. Like the two men on the Emmaus road, they had "hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel"; but when He died that hope died also. For they had been slow of heart, not only "to believe in all that the prophets had spoken," but also to receive the things that Jesus Himself had told them concerning His death and resurrection. But now they have the proofs—the infallible proofs—that He is alive again! There was the empty tomb—how explain that? And when they were in the room with the doors shut, suddenly He appeared in the midst of them. They heard that voice which they knew so well; they heard it speaking concerning the familiar themes. And that face and form—they could not be mistaken about that. And if there were still any possibility of doubt, there were the prints of the nails in His hands and feet, and the gaping wound which the soldier's spear had made in His side. And other proofs there were besides. So hope revived in the hearts of these men; and in that hope they went forth proclaiming the good news, undaunted by hardships, persecutions, or even death.

A TIME OF WAITING. But not even yet were they ready to enter upon their great task. "He charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father." This was the promise of the Holy Spirit, who was to teach them all things and bring to their remembrance what Jesus had taught them. Within a few days it was to be fulfilled; then they would be prepared to begin that work of world-wide evangelism set forth in the "Great Commission"; "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world (the consummation of the age—R. V., marginal reading)." And this (as is pointed out in the Gospel of Luke 24:27) was to begin from Jerusalem. In the very same city where the people had cried out, "Away with Him! Crucify Him!" in the city of which He had said, "Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord'"—there it was that they were to tarry, and to those people first they were to bring the message of salvation. Marvelous is the grace of God!

A QUESTION CONCERNING THE KINGDOM. One topic of discus-

sion during those forty days was the kingdom of God. But in their minds was a question of intense interest to them; and on the last of those days they gave it utterance: "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" Note the point of the question: not the fact of the restoration, but the *time* of its realization. That to their nation the kingdom would sometime be restored they had no doubt; it was the confident expectation of every loyal Jewish heart. This hope was based upon clear predictions of their prophets, such as they could read in the description of Israel's glorious future in Isaiah 60, in which occurs this declaration: "For that nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish;" and in Solomon's picture of the Reign of the Righteous king in Psalms 72: "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him, and His enemies shall lick the dust . . . Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him." And standing there with them was the King; this they knew quite well. Yet He had made no move to deliver the nation from the Roman yoke. Besides, He had spoken of going away; was He going to leave without bringing about the long desired restoration? So with burning hearts they put the question: "Is this the time?"

But were they not mistaken in this expectation? Were not these predictions to be understood in a figurative, or spiritual, sense? Jesus did not say so. And, without His word, we dare not say so. To such suggestion there is answer, clear and decisive. Many prophecies relating to Israel's chastisement — predictions of defeat, subjugation, desolations in the land, dispersion among her enemies — had been fulfilled, and fulfilled literally and exactly, in their natural and obvious sense; by what process of reasoning can we justify ourselves in thinking otherwise concerning those which foretell of her final victory, exaltation, rehabilitation, regathering, and regeneration? But what *was* the answer to their question? "It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father has set within His own authority." No hint here of any error on their part! Only, they were not to be concerned about the time; the Father would take care of that. But there was something else of more immediate concern: "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Soon they were to begin this ministry of witnessing to the Lord — a ministry which was ultimately to extend to the Gentiles for the purpose (as James later expressed it, Acts 15:14) of taking "out of them a people for His name." This was to be the phase of the kingdom revealed in the parables of Matthew 13, in which Jesus spoke of the mysteries of the kingdom, uttering "things hidden from the foundation of the world"—a time of seed-sowing with only partial success, of tares continuing to grow amid the wheat until the harvest, the end of the age. Meanwhile Jesus remains in heaven, "until the times of restoration of all things whereof God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets that have been from of old." (Acts

3:21.) When therefore the restoration times come, Jesus will appear and those glorious expectations will be fully realized.

THE ASCENSION. "And when He had said these things, as they were looking, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight." One moment He was there with them, speaking to them; the next He was rising. With upturned faces they watched as He ascended higher and higher; and when a cloud concealed Him from their view, they continued to gaze. Suddenly two men in white were standing near. Were these angels (as commonly supposed) in the form of men, like those who visited Abraham at Mamre and Lot in Sodom; or were they actually men, perhaps (as has been suggested) Moses and Elijah appearing again, as on the Mount of Transfiguration? In any case we recognize them as divine messengers, bringing to the apostles words of comfort and encouragement. "This Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven." In that same body which hung upon the cross and came forth from the tomb, immortalized (Rom. 6:9), yet showing the prints of nails and spear, Jesus went up into heaven; and it is this same Jesus that will come again. And what was the effect of this promise to those men? In his Gospel Luke says, "And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." The thought of the return of Jesus should bring comfort and joy to all Christian hearts.

IN THE UPPER ROOM: MATTHIAS CHOSEN. From the Mount of Olives, were they last talked with Jesus, the apostles returned to Jerusalem and took up their abode in an upper room. The brethren of Jesus, who formerly had not believed on Him, were there also; evidently they too had now come to recognize Him as Israel's Messiah. And the women—those faithful women who had been so devoted to the Lord—were present, and among them was Mary, the mother of Jesus. This is the last time she is mentioned in the Scriptures. Not the slightest hint is there here of any special deference paid her; there she is as one among the rest. After this brief mention she passes from the picture, doubtless content that her glorious Son should receive all the honor. Adoration of the virgin was a development of later times, when the church was departing from the simplicity that is in Christ and gradually adopting practices from heathen religions, with their worship of the "Queen of Heaven" and other goddesses. And this little group in the upper room: how did they spend their time during those few days of waiting? "These all with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer." Soon there would be laid upon them a heavy responsibility; upon the Lord must they depend for wisdom, ability, and courage to bear it.

It was during this waiting period that a successor to Judas was chosen. Jesus had appointed twelve to "this ministry and apostleship"; and on one occasion He had said to them, ". . . in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of

Israel." (Matt. 19:28.) Now the number was incomplete; and Peter declared that of those who had been with them from the baptism of John until the ascension one must become a witness of the resurrection of Jesus. This, he pointed out, was according to prophecy; and he might have added that this qualification was in harmony with what the Lord had said concerning them: "And ye also bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." (John 15:27.) Two men possessed the required qualifications. How was the choice to be made? Peter assumed no authority to make the appointment; neither was it done by popular vote. Lots were cast; but even then the selection was not left to chance. They prayed, "Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show of these two the one whom Thou hast chosen." "And the lot fell upon Matthias."

Some expositors have questioned the authenticity of this selection, on the ground that the Holy Spirit had not yet fallen upon them. But was that necessary to make the choice valid? Peter must have had good reason for taking this step. Luke sent forth this book some thirty years after the event, and he states simply that "he was numbered with the eleven apostles," with no hint that the transaction was not considered altogether proper. In chapter 2 he says that Peter stood up "with the eleven" (not "the ten"); and in chapter 6 he calls the entire apostolic group "the twelve." But Matthias is never mentioned again. True; but neither is Andrew, or Bartholomew, or Thomas. But what about Paul? Was he not God's choice? Paul was indeed an apostle, "in nothing behind the very chiefest" of them (2 Cor. 12:11). But his was an apostleship apart; his was a special mission to the Gentiles. With these facts before us, it is our judgment that Matthias is rightly included among the twelve.

"God gave thy soul brave wings; put not those feathers
Into a bed to sleep out all ill weathers."

—George Harbert

John W. Mizell. Brother John Mizell of Forest Hill, La., passed on March 11, 1949, after a long illness. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Clara Idella Mizell, and six children: Mrs. Effie Lee Oneal of Pineville, La.; Mrs. Marguerite F. Robinson of Portland, Me.; Guy of Sulphur, La.; Fay of De Ridder, La.; James Isom and Lamar Mizell of Alexandria, La.

Internment was in Butter Cemetery near Forest Hill. Brother Sidney Mayeux was in charge of the funeral service and was assisted by Bros. J. E. Boyd and W. J. Johnson and others.

John Wesley Stephens, Jr. Thursday morning Jan. 27, 1949, my brother, Wesley Stephens, passed on. He was the son of John W. and Hattie Stephens, both deceased, of Glenmora, La. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Pearl Stephens, two sons and four daughters. They are Robert Lee Stephens, James W. Stephens and Mrs. Marie Cook of Hopston, Texas; Mrs. Audrey Pearl Tracy of Lubbock, Texas; Mrs. Helen Johnson of Alexandria, La; Hilda and Bernice Stephens of Glenmora, La. Internment was in Science Hill Cemetery near Glenmora. Brother J. E. Boyd conducted the funeral services.

Mrs. Sidney Mayeux.

OUR BLESSED DEAD

R. H. B.

Several of our dearly beloved brethren and sisters in Christ have in recent times departed from us.

Brother Marion E. Haines—our earnest, faithful brother in Christ, who in his lifetime did much work in the Lord's service as a preacher of the gospel, fell asleep in Jesus some time ago, and his departure to be with the Lord deserved special mention and notice in the Word and Work, of which, for many years he had been a friend and helper.

Sister Mershon—one of the oldest members of the Portland Avenue church, left us to be with the Lord some months ago. Before her departure she had made a few notes of her reminiscences of the early days of the Portland Avenue church, which will be prepared for publication and printed in a future issue of Word and Work. When I first came to Portland (Nov. 1903) and began my work here (Jan. 1904) Brother and Sister Mershon and their children were steadfast and faithful attendants of the meetings, though having a long way to come. Brother Mershon, who for many years held a high and responsible position in the Citizens-Union-National Bank, Louisville, departed some years ago. The bereavements and loneliness of Sister Mershon drew her ever nearer to the Lord, whom she loved devotedly unto the end. She was above eighty years old when she died; mourned by her sons of whom three remain.

Sister Boone. The first home in which I was received when I first came to Louisville, and where I lived for a long while after, was the home of Brother and Sister J. I. Boone. Brother Boone, who was the sweet singer of the little Portland church then, and an outstanding leader there for many years, departed to be with the Lord over twenty years ago. Sister Boone has followed him now, being just ninety years old. To the last, so long as her powers permitted, she found her comfort and refuge and joy in the word of God. Her Bible, marked with notes and under-scoring should be a precious heir-loom to her son Larimore, who for many years tenderly and faithfully saw to his mother's welfare. To the last Sister Boone was full of faith and love, rejoicing in hope, and looking for the blessed day of the Lord's returning.

Brother Denning. Just about half an hour before his death I was with Brother Denning. I read to him Matt. 11:25-30 and Psalm 130, and prayed with him and for him. He was suffering intensely, but we did not think the end was so near for him. On Sunday, April 10, he and Sister Denning were at their accustomed place at worship at Portland Avenue church; on Thursday evening he had left us. "Lord make me to know my end, and the measure of my days what it is: let me know how frail I am." We prayed that evening that God might send him rest and release from his suffering. Rest came to him unexpectedly soon. Yet how good it is to fall asleep in Jesus! Brother Denning obeyed the gospel when a young man at Portland, Tennessee, his birthplace. He was sixty-eight years old when the Lord called him home. He was a true and faithful brother in the Lord, and a member of the Portland Avenue church through years of his residence in Louisville.

Sister Marr. Patient, uncomplaining, our Sister Marr bore through months of failing health and painful affliction, looking for help and comfort to the Lord in whom she believed and whom she loved. And now, in her forty-eighth year, surrounded by her loved ones—her husband, her children, and dear relatives—she fell asleep in Jesus to suffer and sorrow no more, and to find in the blessed presence of the Savior how good it is to die in the Lord, and together with all the saints who have gone before, and those "who are alive, who are left" await the crowning day, the day of the coming, when all His own will rise, and together with the living, in happy reunion, be caught up to be "forever with the Lord."

"FAITH OF OUR FATHERS"

E. L. J.

BARTON STONE ON THE MILLENNIUM

INTRODUCTORY

Barton W. Stone's *Christian Messenger* was published monthly: first, for seven or eight years (beginning 1826) from Georgetown, Ky., and then for nine or ten years, from Jacksonville, Ill., where Stone had located in 1843. The numbers we have seen were of 32 pages, size about 4 x 7; subscription price \$1 per year, cash; \$1.25 on six months' time. One name was offered free with a club of eight; postage was to be paid by the subscriber: "1½¢ under 100 miles; 2½¢ over 100 miles." In order to confirm the union which had been effected between the friends of Barton Stone ("Old Christians") and the friends of Alexander Campbell (variously called "Disciples," "Reformers," or "Christians"), John T. Johnson, of the latter group, became joint editor of the *Messenger* in 1833. Stone and Johnson had already become co-elders of the united Church of Christ in Georgetown, Ky., where they lived and labored together. At the end of their first year as co-editors, they published the joint statement which we reproduce, following. Beyond this, we reproduce Stone's essay on the Millennium.

JOINT STATEMENT

"With this number we close the seventh volume of the *Christian Messenger*. * * * We have endeavored to prune off excrescences from the truth of heaven, and to present it untinselled with human wisdom, and unmixed with vain speculations. * * * We who have taken the word of God alone for our rule of faith and practice are the only people that dare to speak fearlessly. We have no name to lose—(already it is cast out as evil). We have no salaries at stake—this might be a temptation to be silent."—B. W. Stone, J. T. Johnson, Editors, *Christian Messenger*, Dec., 1833.

STONE'S "PREMILLENNIAL VIEW"

Millennium is a Latin word and signifies a thousand years. The period is spoken of in Rev. 20. Commentators are not agreed whether these are common or prophetic years. If they are prophetic years, (which are reckoned a year for a day, Ezekiel 5, 6), the millennium will measure 365,000 years. This is probable because John in Revelation makes all his calculations according to this measure.

About the commencement of this period, or just before its commencement, Babylon, the great whore, is judged and destroyed. Rev. 19:1-8.

The spurious church of Christ is called Babylon because of its pride and confusion, and is called the great whore because it has forsaken the true husband, Christ, and followed after other lovers. She is not owned as the Lamb's wife, as in the 7th verse.

About the commencement of this glorious period, the true church of Christ, or the Lamb's wife, is seen prepared for the marriage,

or marriage supper of the Lamb. Happy they who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. None but the saints of God have this privilege. Rev. 12:7, 9.

Immediately after, at the very commencement of this period, the King of Kings comes in his glory, and smites all the wicked nations of the earth, and treads them in wrath, as grapes are trodden in a winepress, and sweeps them all in death. Rev. 19:11, 21.

At the same time, the old Serpent, the Devil or Satan, is bound for a thousand years, during which time he has not one subject alive on earth. Rev. 20:1-3.

At the commencement of the thousand years, the martyrs who were beheaded or slain for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, shall rise from the dead; also the saints who had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, shall rise, live and reign with Christ 1,000 years. This is the first resurrection. Rev. 20:5, 6. Commentators generally, if not universally, limit this privilege to the martyrs only, and think that these only shall rise from the dead at the commencement of the millennium, and reign with Christ during that period; yet the text by no means limits it to them. The Apostle Paul, speaking of the resurrection, marks the particular order of it. 1 Cor. 15:23: "But every man (is made alive) in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." (1 Thess. 4:15, 18.) We are plainly taught that at the coming of Christ the saints that shall be alive on the earth shall fly up to meet the Lord in the air, they having been changed from mortality to immortality in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trump. But they shall not enjoy this privilege till the dead saints shall first rise from mortality to immortality, and then shall they all be caught up together to meet the Lord. The Lord shall descend with the trump of God; the trump shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. In all these passages of scripture, not a word is said of the resurrection of the wicked.

In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are equal to the angels. The idea of an increase of men by ordinary generation, is certainly incorrect and untrue. . . .

Some have thought that Christ would not come and reign in person on earth: that his coming and reign on earth are entirely spiritual. *How then differs his reign in the millennium from his present reign?* His first coming was in person. So shall his second be. His first coming was to save his people from their sins: his second is to save them from death and *hades*, and not from sin. His first coming was not to judge the world, but to save the world; his second coming is not to save but to judge the world. In his first coming he abode but a few years on earth; in his second he will abide 1,000 and will not leave the world till he has adjudicated on it, and assigned to each one his eternal portion in heaven or hell. For at the end of the 1,000 years, Satan is loosed and the wicked are raised from the dead—this is the 2nd resurrection. Satan is per-

mitted to collect his old armies composed of all the wicked now raised from death, and to deceive them once more with the hope of conquering the armies of Jesus. As soon as they are collected together, the judgment is set on each of them and they are condemned to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire.

One objection is offered to these views, which is that the dead, saint and sinner, are to be raised in the same hour.

"The hour is coming when all that are in their graves shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." In a few verses above the Lord said, "The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." John 5:28, 29. In this last verse the dead spoken of are such as are dead in sin—such shall hear his voice, and if they hear and believe they shall live the life of faith in the Son of God. This the context shows to be the truth. The hour of hearing the voice of Jesus in the gospel has continued 1,800 years. It yet continues. If then this hour measures 1,800 years, why not the hour spoken of in John v. 28 continue 1,000 years? These are humbly submitted to the public.—(From *Christian Messenger*, Georgetown, Kentucky, October, 1833, Pages 314-316.)

In the article quoted above, Stone had advanced the view that he did not think the human family would increase in the millennial age, and this (as we understand it) had drawn criticism. We read that "many were astonished that such a piece should drop from the pen of Elder Stone." One of his critics, a certain Brother Wm. Caldwell, of Tupper's Plains, Ohio (who thought the book of Revelation was written before the fall of Jerusalem) wrote a 5-page criticism, and Stone printed it. Caldwell either misunderstood or misinterpreted Stone, to which the latter replied:

"Had I communicated some of the ideas you have suggested, I should be astonished myself. In fact, I never thought of some of them. His second coming will be in his proper person. This is the testimony of the two glorified angels to the apostles while they were gazing at the ascending immortal Jesus." * * *

"The second resurrection is of the wicked, which shall take place after the 1,000 years are finished."

"I cannot believe that in the millennial period the human family will increase; for, said our Lord, 'In the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.' Matt. 22:30. Angels do not procreate their species." (But does anyone believe or teach that there will be procreation among angels or resurrected saints?—E.L.J.)

At one point Caldwell had argued that if Christ were to come at the beginning of the millennium, heaven would be without Him for a thousand years. To this, Stone replied that heaven was once without Him for 33 years! The exchange was carried on in fine spirit, nor did the one call the other "heretic" or "speculator," as the following quotations show:

Caldwell: "Now then, while I dissent from your opinion re-

specting the second coming of Christ, let not our love be cooled to each other; the best of men have differed on this subject."

Stone: "From my views on the millennium you dissent, and have in plain and brotherly style stated your objections, and requested my attention to them. This I will cheerfully give you in the same style. . . ."

"The second coming of Christ is at the commencement of his millennial reign on earth. Here on earth he will reign till the 1,000 years be finished; nor will he cease to reign on earth till he has raised from death the wicked, and judged them according to their works. As to the people living in a national capacity, planting, building, marrying, etc., we believe this shall be the fact at the coming of the Lord to reign on earth with his saints a thousand years. . . ."

"Difficulties, it is acknowledged, attach to the doctrine of the millennium, and such that we may not be able to solve. But shall we, therefore, conclude that nothing can be certainly known respecting it? . . ."

"How frequently people, from preconceived opinions, reject the plainest truth because it contradicts their traditionary notions. . . . Let us diligently examine the subjects by the book."—B. W. Stone, in *Christian Messenger*, December, 1933; Pages 365-367.

Apparently, Stone too, in his day, was charged with disbelief in Christ's present kingdom! In answering one, Shehane, he has this to say:

"Mr. S. [Shehane] takes much pains to prove that which I believe as firmly as he does himself, viz: that Christ has a kingdom on earth. Had he none previous to the day of Pentecost? Christ said to the Jews: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

"Now, according to prophecy, according to the promise of the Lord Almighty, and the unconquereable expectation of the Jews: Jerusalem by the sons of Abraham is to be *again*, 'safely inhabited.' See Zech. 14."—Barton W. Stone, in *Christian Messenger*, Jacksonville, Ill., Feb., 1835. Pages 31-37.

STONE'S NEW TESTAMENT POSITION

"But say some, 'Campbellism we will oppose.' In this we wish you success. But beware lest you are either beating the air, not understanding what it is; or lest you oppose the truth of God, because brother Campbell has advocated it. There is danger, and therefore you ought to be cautious. But says another, 'I am determined to oppose Stone's Arianism and Socinianism with all my might.' Amen. But be sure you fight not an image made by yourself or by others, and call it Stone's doctrine. And beware lest in your opposition you lift your arm against the truth of God and do a great injury to yourself. Campbell and Stone are but fallible men and therefore should not be followed farther than they follow Christ. Our opinions we wish no man to receive as truth, nor do we desire to impose them on any as tests of Christian fellowship."—B. W. Stone, in *Christian Messenger*, Georgetown, Ky., Sept., 1832.