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OCTOBER, 1974

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Talking Things Over

G. R. L.

PUTTING ON CHRIST

"I've tried and tried, and I just have not been able to give up my -----." (You fill in the blank: Beer, cigarettes, coffee, ice cream, temper tantrums, gossiping, etc.) For many, the Christian life is this kind of struggle—always giving up something. And many register little success.

This is not to say that some things don't need to be thrown out of our lives. The problem is that they tend to bounce right back. The harder you work at putting them out, the more intensely they assert themselves; just ask the person who is trying to get rid of a few excess pounds. However, difficulty is no excuse for failure. "Cast away the works of darkness," says Paul. "Put to death . . . fornication, uncleanness, covetness . . . Put off . . . anger, wrath, malice . . . Put off the old man with his deeds." After all this "putting off," what do you have left? A vacuum—nothing—and the spiritual life is not a vacuum. There is more to it than mere "putting off."

There is a "putting on." "Put on the new man . . . Put on tender mercies, kindness, meekness . . . Put on love, which is the bond of perfectness . . . Put on the Lord Jesus Christ." It seems obvious that the "putting off" and "putting on" go together. The new replaces the old. For every old toy that God asks us to give up, He gives in its place a sparkling new jewel. "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ." This is the ultimate, that our hearts should be enchanted with Himself. As we are filled with Him, affections for the things of earth are crowded out. "Putting off the old man with his deeds" becomes less of a struggle. The pain of giving up old habits and attitudes is offset by the joy of living in the new creation.

It should be acknowledged that some teach that one puts on Christ by being baptized—a one-time experience. The scriptures quoted above (from Rom. 13 and Col. 3) are addressed to those who have already been baptized. Therefore, the admonitions to "put off" and "put on" are directed to Christians, and may apply at various times in our Christian walk. "Put off" is the obligation whenever a fault is discovered. "Put on" is the blessed privilege of clothing our nakedness with Christ. "Putting

off" is repentance; "putting on" is coming to the Lord Jesus in faith (Acts 20:21).

MAKING IT WORK

To make this put off/put on more concrete, consider a couple of examples from Scripture. "Be not drunken with wine" (put off), but "be filled with the Spirit" (put on this alternative) (Eph. 5:18). Another, "Swear not" (put off), but "let your yea be yea and your nay, nay" (put on) (Jas. 5:12). In practice, then, when you are confronted by something that resists being put off, attack the problem by finding a scriptural alternative and put that on. The Bible may not have an explicit, ready made "put on" that fits your situation, but the general principles are there. If you have trouble finding an appropriate "put on," confide in some Christian in whom you have confidence and together you'll have success.

"Be anxious in nothing is still good counsel"

JUST DON'T WORRY

James W. Russell

The health of our nation is in a bad state of affairs. It appears that the more great hospitals we build the more we need. Doctor shortages are very pronounced. The doctor inventory has increased four-fold since the end of the 1940s, yet there are not enough skilled physicians to take care of the needs of an ailing people. Counseling by Christians skilled in this kind of endeavor is on the increase but there are not enough "listeners" to go around. Scientists, sociologists and other researchers are pointing out to us that the emotional stamina of the entire nation is not strong enough to face today's problems. This dilemma is faced, not just by the sophisticated people of the world, not just by the educated elite, but by the man on the street. It is being faced by just as big percentage of regular church attendants as by non-attendants. Why is this so?

Ministers of the Gospel have pointed out to us for generations that the principles of Jesus Christ instruct us not to worry but to stand on our own two feet because we are God's children. We have been taught that worrying and fuming about conditions is a sin. Most of us who have learned to believe this part of the teaching have apparently accepted it as a mental exercise but not as a practical one.

More than 25 years ago there was a smallpox scare in one of our largest cities. Vaccination stations were opened up in many convenient places. Campaigns were organized to get everyone in the city to protect himself from dreaded smallpox. There had been eight cases and two had died out of a population of more than eight million persons. Professional people whose business it is to instruct

people in the art of living in a world of tremendous pressures did a survey and found that there was a condition then present that was causing ten thousand times more damage than smallpox. It was the *emotional sickness of worry*. Did anyone set up a campaign to vaccinate against worry and emotional conflicts? No! Doctor Alexis Carrel, a business consultant, wrote, "Business men who do not know how to fight worry die young." It is also true that housewives, laborers, salesmen and Mr. Average American also are afflicted. Many who do not actually die from continual worry exist in a continual living death. Far more create bodily ailments due to uncontrolled concern.

A doctor in charge of the Santa Fe Railroad medical care said: "Seventy percent of all patients who come to physicians could cure themselves if they would only get rid of their *fears and worries*." He said that their ailments were real, not imaginary, but that worry was the root cause of many of the conditions. He said that he had reference particularly to such illnesses as nervous indigestion, stomach ulcers, heart disturbances, insomnia, some headaches and some types of paralysis. Not all of these, he said, but many of them are brought on by over-anxiety.

Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, said that we should not be worry-warts when he directed, "Take no thought for your life . . . tomorrow . . . what you shall eat and what you shall wear, etc." Be anxious in nothing is still good counsel.

Another doctor wrote, "You don't get ulcers from what you eat, You get ulcers from what is eating you." Dr. Alvares said that "ulcers frequently flare up and subside according to the hills and valleys of emotional stress." A survey among industrialist physicians of the case histories of 176 business executives with an average age of 44.3 years showed that more than one-third of them was afflicted with the ailments peculiar to high-tension living, heart disease, digestive tract ulcers, and high blood pressure. Imagine, more than a third of our executives wrecking their lives with those common ailments brought on by anxiety . . . and before they reach age 45. This is a huge price to pay for success, isn't it? And to think that success does not usually come after paying the price. Our Lord said, "What is a man profited if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?" It would be better to be a common worker with the bare necessities than to experience the pain and the agony of "being dead while we still live."

More hospital space is used by people with nervous disorders than with all others combined. There is nothing wrong with the nerves but with the emotions of futility, fear, defeat and despair that we put on them. It is foolish to spend fortunes trying to cure our bodies without investing in a rearranging of our *thought habits and patterns*. We need to remove the *mental blocks* that we have leaned so heavily upon and alter the habit patterns that we have developed. This becomes more easily done when we re-

ceive the promises of the Gospel of Christ and use them in our daily living.

The great men in the medical profession have arrived at a place where it is reasonably easy to deal with conditions caused by modern skills and science. What of those ailments not caused by physical germs? What of those conditions brought on by frustrations, hate and despair? Psychosomatic (mind-body) caused ailments are on the increase a hundredfold in a generation. A book written by a physician on the subject has chapter titles such as: What Worry Does to the Heart, High Blood Pressure is Fed by Worry, Rheumatism Can Be Caused by Worry, Worry Less for Your Stomach's Sake, How Worry Can Cause a Cold, Worry and the Thyroid, and The Worrying Diabetic. Dr. Menninger, a great in the field of Psychiatry tells of how we destroy our minds and our bodies by anxiety, rebellion, fear, resentment, hatred and frustration. Worry can and does make many of us ill.

Take a good look at the homes near your own. Consider how great a toll worry is taking in those homes. You won't have to look very far before you will recognize some of the damage it is doing. The former owner of the house where *Outreach* is edited destroyed herself after a life of possessing far more than the bare necessities of life due to loneliness caused by being a worrier. A researcher on the causes of arthritis concluded that much of this ailment is agitated by *Marital shipwreck, Financial disaster, Loneliness and worry, and Long-cherished resentments*. He said that these are far from being all the causes of this dread ailment but they are the commonest.

Few things can destroy the looks of a woman as does worry. It can age her and turn her sour. It curdles her expression, It causes her to scowl. Dermatologists tell us that it causes skin rashes, eruptions and pimples. It ruins complexions. Heart disease is America's number one killer. Worry and high-tension living brings much of it on the victims. Common laborers have far less of it than about any other profession because the laborer gets tired, physically, and rests and forgets. William James the famous psychologist of the past century said, "The Lord may forgive us our sins, but the nervous system never does." Praise God, Jesus can even alter the statement of the famous psychologist. He can help us to forgive ourselves. Isn't that wonderful?

What can I do about all this? What can you do? In the Amplified New Testament the apostle John and Jude both use an expression which is quite meaningful. They both wish for their Christian readers "soul peace." This, I understand, is a peace that gives release from tension and anxiety even in the midst of great turmoil. It is peace for the individual in the midst of a world of anxieties. A peace that passeth understanding. It comes from the source of life itself, from our God, Yahweh, the Father of Jesus and ours by adoption. Our God had, in effect, made a bargain with us.

It is His desire that each of us who belong to Him stand firm, act confident and demonstrate hope. His will is that we be emboldened to act like His children. When we do this we automatically create an atmosphere whereby we can receive His blessings; where we can know by experience that He does care and does act on our behalf. Our response is the determining factor. What is your response so far as the major objective of Christianity is? The major objective is to engage and do battle with the enemy with the idea in mind of winning. Do we do this as a matter of routine or do we look upon a place of assembly as so much Real Estate possessed for God? Really, how much of your time is spent in satisfying yourself because you have obtained membership? God didn't create you with the great body that you possess so that you could just half-way hope that you are His child. He wants you to amount to something . . . something beneficial to His purposes. You may reply, "Well, I go to church every Sunday." Well, do you just occupy Real Estate or do you labor diligently at the job of seeing people transferred from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God? A common obstacle that we face is that of worrying and spinning our wheels. Is what you spend your time doing accomplishing something that is pertinent to your objective of engaging and doing battle with the enemy?

Often we are overwhelmed by the circumstances that surround us. The problems that we face are just too big for us. We are not equipped for this kind of pressure. This is correct thinking . . . only if we think purely from the human point of view. There is, however, another point of view. That one is from a different perspective and by One who can, does and is overcoming problems as a matter of routine. Your problems surely do not compare with those of the apostle Paul. While being completely submerged in problems and concerns and while in prison preparing to pay the penalty of death he wrote his most encouraging epistle to his friends at Philippi. A thought that has been memorized by many comes from this essay. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." I can! Doesn't that do something for you? The statement was not just so much bragging. He had no special skill or strength of his own. It was through Christ. You have the same Christ and he makes you the same promises. The problem usually is that we believe what Christ said but we view the statements as things of beauty without practicality in our daily lives. What a mistake! Christ liveth in me, is another statement of hope. Praise Yahweh!

When, oh when, will Christians of America begin to claim God's promises and use them? Everything around us has to do with the fulfilling of the promises of God. If you haven't thought of this before, let your mind absorb it for a moment. It may just make a big difference in your life from now on. You might ask, then, what about the bad things that are happening right along? They, too, are part of God's promises. Under certain conditions in the behavior of humans, God promises certain consequences. Adam and Eve had a promise

that they would die if they ate the forbidden fruit . . . they ate it . . . they died. This was the fulfillment of a promise. The great book says that we, as Christians, have great and precious promises. These promises give us access to God's tremendous assets. The biggest question is, "do we accept the promise?" Are you claiming your share? Look for a moment at just a few of the promises that are yours. God offers eternal life. "He that believeth on me shall never perish." Do you claim that promise. Does it show in your face? Can your friends and associates witness to the fact that you are a person who belongs to God? If someone asks, "Do you have eternal life?" or "Are you going to Heaven?" and you say weakly, "I hope so," it pretty well shows that you do not sincerely believe God's promises. That is enough to make a person sick in itself. That is hypocrisy. Jesus promised that anyone who would come to Him would be received. Does your confidence demonstrate that Jesus has received you? It makes little difference what your past has been, Jesus will give you salvation when you create the condition for it. Jesus once said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden," and as a result of your responding to the invitation he promises, "and I will give you rest." Does your life show that you were relieved of your burden or do you still carry it? Jesus cares. Rest for your soul is a very good promise. It is for the now. It is not a matter of enduring to the end and then receiving rest. If you would be free, show by your confident action that you ARE free.

As a Christian, if you are a worrier, a person who is habitually up-tight, may I suggest that you lay hold on God's promises? Begin to act confident. Demonstrate radiant joy in your every moment. Be an example of health of body, soul and spirit. When faced with things that formerly caused you to be despondent do something constructive. An axiom that I have found to be very good is that "joy comes by giving joy to others," not by your getting something. Try the rule and see if it doesn't work.

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What will it be, that first transcendent moment
When faith and sight in joyful union meet,
When changed into the likeness of His glory
I fall in love and worship at His feet?

What will it be, to gaze upon His glory
While every tongue His matchless worth declares,
To hear His voice, to feel His hand upon me
And see the marks of love and grace He bears?

What will it be, to know in all its fulness
The vast unfathomed love that He has given?
But sweeter far than all the joys undreamed of,
To be at last with Him—this will be Heaven.

—Joan Suisted



Must We Divide Again?

Alex V. Wilson

It seems everyone is talking about it. About speaking in tongues, I mean. Some are effervescent in praising it. Others fear and denounce it. Many are just plain bewildered about it. Some seem to hold balanced views, avoiding extremes.

Umpteen books are being written about it, too, analyzing it Biblically, historically, psychologically, and many other ways. To visit Christian bookstores and see the many titles leaves you almost breathless. Some of the titles themselves are quite revealing. Here are just a few of the many I noticed during our year in the U.S.: *I Used To Speak in Tongues; Your Wife Came Home Speaking in Tongues? So Did Mine!; Twenty Reasons Why Christians Should Speak in Tongues; There Are Other Gifts Besides Tongues; Nineteen Gifts of the Spirit—Do You Know Yours? Are You Using Them?*

Of course lots of churches have been thrown into turmoil over this issue during the past decade. In some cases there have been harsh words, angry accusations, deep wounds, fractured friendships, broken families, split churches. All this has been unutterably sad. Sometimes the fault was mostly on the side of the so-called charismatics, sometimes on the side of the non-charismatics. In other cases, love and moderation have prevailed; in spite of differences, brethren have maintained the unity of the Spirit. But such victories have been all too rare.

Only recently I was reminded of these tensions when I read a quotation from a book entitled *Enthusiasm*, by R. A. Knox. He draws a frightening picture, based on the history of a great many spiritual movements of various kinds. Though they differed in lots of ways, all of them sought to renew, reform or revive spiritual life in one way or another. His book was written just before the so-called charismatic or neo-pentecostal movement began in 1950, so he did not have it in mind. And yet his ominous words seem to fit present conditions all too well:

More and more, by a kind of fatality, you see them draw apart from their fellow-Christians, like a hive ready to swarm. There is provocation on both sides. On the one hand, cheap jokes about "over-godliness," and acts of stupid repression by unsympathetic leaders. On the other hand, contempt toward the "half-Christians," and ominous references to the kernel and

the husk. Then, while you hold your breath and turn away your eyes in fear, the break comes. Condemnation or secession, what difference does it make? A fresh name has been added to the list of Christianities.

The pattern is always repeating itself, not in outline merely, but in detail. Almost always the enthusiastic movement is denounced as an innovation, yet claims to be preserving, or restoring, the original pattern and life of the Church. Almost always the opposition to the movement is twofold: good Christian people who do not relish an eccentric spirituality find themselves in unwelcome alliance with worldlings who do not relish any spirituality at all. (Quotation slightly modified for clarity.)

Brethren, we know this ugly process has occurred many a time in the past, over various issues. Must it happen again? Can nothing be done to stop the present trend toward more splitting and splintering? Indeed, can nothing be done to regain lost ground, to heal festering wounds, to reconcile those who are estranged? Though Paul was speaking on another matter, do his words not apply to this condition also: "I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no man among you wise enough to decide between members of the brotherhood?" (1 Cor. 6:5).

We would do well to consider these words of a brother regarding Christian unity:

God never thought that we would come to a dead level of understanding in the Scriptures. Unity is based on whole-hearted committal to the person, Jesus Christ our Lord. Theological systems are all man-made. God's people are not divided because they have different systems of theology. They are divided because they take these man-made systems too seriously.

No two men of God are divided because one is a covenant theologian and the other a dispensationalist; if they divide, it is because one or both of them thinks his man-made system is better than brotherly fellowship in Christ. (I am not speaking against systematic theology. Every person who studies the Bible is a systematic theologian of some sort) . . .

When a church, or a group of churches, has a statement of doctrine (written or unwritten) that makes distinction between Christians, rather than making distinction between Christians and non-Christians, it violates the New Testament teaching concerning Christian unity, being a violation of 1 Cor. 12:21 and 3 John 9,10.

For instance, if there is a statement concerning the eternal security of the believer, that divides the body of Christ into two divisions; if there is added to that a doctrine concerning the millennium, that divides it into four divisions; if there is then a doctrine concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit, there result eight divisions. . . . (pamphlet by Earl C. Smith.)

Are We DILIGENT in Keeping Unity??

O that we non-charismatics might say, "Dear charismatic brethren, we love you. We need you. We need your spirit of praise and worship toward the living God. Without your fellowship we might retreat into extremism. You are fellow-members with us of Christ's body; we dare not amputate any part of His body. We shall spend eternity with you praising God; we want to spend the present with you serving God. We acknowledge that His Word clearly says, "*Do not forbid speaking in tongues,*" (1 Cor. 14:39b) so we shall not oppose your Scripture-regulated use of tongues-speaking. We ask for your forgiveness for our mistreatment of you in any way, and we extend to you forgiveness of your wrongs toward us. We receive you with love, as Christ receives us."

O that you charismatics might say, "Dear non-charismatic brethren, we love you and need you. We need your deep loyalty to God's holy Word. Without your fellowship we might rush off into extremism. You are fellow-members with us of God's indwelt temple; we dare not destroy His temple (1 Cor. 3:16,17). We shall worship God with you in heaven; we want to work for God with you on earth. We acknowledge that His Word says that *all* Christians have been baptized in His Spirit but that *not* all Christians speak with tongues (1 Cor. 12:13,30). We also realize that speaking in tongues is of very limited usefulness in public and seems to be primarily for *private* prayer and praise (1 Cor. 14:2,4,9,12,18-19, etc.), so we shall practice it accordingly. We ask your forgiveness for our mistreatment of you in any way, and we extend to you forgiveness of your wrongs toward us. We receive you with love, as Christ receives us."

What Shall We Do?

May we by God's grace take whatever practical steps are needed to maintain or restore the unity of the Spirit. It may require making phone-calls or visits, or writing letters. It will certainly require prayer and humility and Calvary-love which only the Holy Spirit can pour into our hearts. It will mean, negatively, refusing either to *attack* or to *ignore* a brother who differs with me in this matter. In many cases it will mean, positively, a willingness to take the *first* step toward reconciliation, even if we feel we ourselves were wronged rather than wrong. More than that, let us seek to prevent further friction before it happens, by honestly dealing with every root of bitterness before it springs up and causes trouble, and by it the many become defiled (Heb. 12:15).

Let's do what needs doing. "God gives grace to the humble," "but if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you are not consumed by one another" (Jas. 4:6; Gal. 5:15).

I personally would highly recommend four books that deal with the subjects currently under debate.

When the Spirit Is Lord, by Poul Madsen; may be bought from Harold Preston in Chammelview, Tex. Cost: approx. \$1. 91 pages.

Three Men Filled With the Spirit, by Michael Griffiths. Overseas Missionary Fellowship, 237 West School House Lane, Philadelphia. Cost: approx. \$1. 63 pages.

The Baptism and Fulness of the Holy Spirit, by John Stott. Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Ill. Cost: approx. \$1. 60 pages.

Spiritual Gifts and the Church, by D. Bridge and D. Phipers. Inter-Varsity Press. Cost: \$1.75. 160 pages.

TONGUES: Updating Some Old Issues

The new Pentecostalism, with its controversial tongues-speaking and healings, is more popular than ever. Ten years ago, ETERNITY dealt in depth with the subject. Since then, there has been a further acceleration of the movement, spearheaded in part by the Jesus people and the Catholic Pentecostals, and in part by bestselling books. Charismatic study groups thrive in many evangelical churches that would not have suffered them to exist ten years ago. And some evangelical churches that were thriving ten years ago have been rent in schism because of such groups.

As we look at the issues that separate charismatic from non-charismatic evangelicals, a few things have changed in the past decade, but there are also old issues that remain as sharp as ever.

Chief of these is the common, if not quite universal, claim by Pentecostal leaders, that speaking in tongues is the definite sign of the baptism of the Spirit. The implication, of course, is that if you have not received the "baptism," signified by tongues, you are a second-class Christian and missing out on God's best for your life. This relegates a host of non-charismatics, including Billy Graham, to a less spiritual status in Christendom. It can also easily wreck a church, if the pastor has not experienced the "blessing" while other leading members have—or vice versa.

The problem is that the Apostle Paul plainly states that every believer is baptized into the Spirit of God at the time of conversion: "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). There may be subsequent fillings, as the disciples themselves experienced (Acts 4:31). But Paul never admonished Christians to pray to receive the baptism of the Spirit.

In some groups, Christians are subjected to great psychological pressures regarding this subject. "You certainly wouldn't want to miss God's best for your life, would you?" they are counseled. "You aren't 100% satisfied with your Christian life, are you?" We insist that there is no scriptural warrant for this kind of emotional and psychological manipulation.

We are also concerned about the widespread practice in neo-Pentecostal circles of tutoring "second-blessing" seekers in tongues-speaking. No one tutored the disciples on the day of Pentecost. No one tutored Cornelius and his friends (Acts 10). And no one tutored the Ephesian followers of John the Baptist (Acts 19). There is not even any reason to believe that they had any prior inkling that they were about to break out praising God in an unknown language. The spontaneous nature of the phenomenon was one indication that it was a genuine, if unexpected, work of the Holy Spirit. Let not Bible-trained Christians today go around coaxing naive believers in how to let their tongue and vocal cords stumble into heavenly realms. The sovereign Holy Spirit needs no priming.

But there is one area where we have noticed a softening of the evangelical position towards Pentecostalism. It is in the recognition that the gift of tongues may be a legitimate gift of the Holy Spirit, even as listed in 1 Corinthians 12. More and more evangelical scholars today feel that the traditional, supposedly biblical arguments for the cessation of the gifts after completion of the New Testament, cannot be sustained by the Holy Scriptures.

The new stress is on the church as the body of Christ with its various members endowed by the Spirit with differing gifts. The gifts are "apportioned to each of us just as the Spirit chooses" (1 Cor. 12:11, Goodspeed). And who would rule out tongues as one of these gifts? Certainly Paul didn't. If such a gift is used in line with the strictures of 1 Corinthians 14 and for the upbuilding of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:7), not its destruction, it should be recognized as legitimate. But beware of imitations.

All evangelicals need to admit in practice as well as in theory that God is sovereign. He can still show His power as and when He pleases among His people. If He chooses to do miracles of healings and endow some of His servants with the special gift of tongues, let us not circumscribe Him. All we ask is that His name be glorified and His body edified.

But Paul's most emphatic word to the Corinthians was to covet the gift of love. And he meant that we should love both the charismatics and the non-charismatics. In keeping with the earlier chapters of that epistle, he meant that the gift of love would heal the party spirit that was dividing the church. The church of Corinth was wracked by many problems, not unlike the church today. Dividing the church were matters of sensuality, divorce, women's lib, denominationalism and tongues-speaking. To such a church Paul wrote: "If I have not love, I am nothing."

—Editorial in March 1973 issue of *Eternity*, 1716 Spruce St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19103. Reprinted by permission from *Eternity*, © 1973.

The Real Proof

H. Robert Cowles

Overzealous preachers and writers have tended to convey the impression that the infilling of the Holy Spirit will equip us to preach like Peter and pray like Paul. And if we cannot or do not, we have not really been filled with the Spirit.

The argument is familiar enough. Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Look at the sermon he preached. Look at the three thousand converts. Don't *you* want that same anointing?

And multitudes of people, lacking Peter's ability to preach or restore lame men or invoke a Gentile Pentecost, have concluded that for some reason God has bypassed them in the giving of the Spirit's fulness.

We would not encourage mediocrity in the Christian life. It is probably accurate to say that many who seek the fulness of the Holy Spirit are not filled. They will be well advised to continue their quest.

At the same time there is benefit in putting the Acts account in perspective so that we are not reading more into it than we should.

Jesus had twelve disciples. Their names are recorded by Matthew (10:2-4), Mark (3:16-19) and Luke (6:14-16; Acts 1:13). They were:

- Simon Peter
- James, son of Zebedee
- John, son of Zebedee
- Andrew, brother of Peter
- Philip
- Bartholomew (Nathanael?)
- Matthew
- Thomas
- James, son of Alphaeus
- Thaddaeus Lebbaeus Judas, son of James
- Simon the Zealot
- Judas Iscariot

All twelve had at least two and a half years of close fellowship with Jesus Christ while He was on earth. They listened to His discourses. They saw the miracles He performed. They heard Him pray. They were with Him in the climactic week of His passion. Except for Judas, who by then had died a suicide, they were present when He appeared after His resurrection. They saw Him ascend into heaven.

They were in the upper room together, continuing with one accord in prayer and supplication, waiting for the promise of the Father. They were together in one place when the Holy Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost.

Each of them was filled with the Holy Spirit. Each began to speak with another tongue as the Spirit gave him utterance.

Simon Peter is well known. He figures prominently in the Acts of the Apostles. He is mentioned by Paul in his letter to the Galatians. He is the human scribe of two New Testament letters bearing his name. He probably supplied much of the detail in Mark's Gospel.

James, son of Zebedee, was the first apostolic martyr. He died by Herod's sword (Acts 12:2) in A.D. 44.

John, son of Zebedee, is well known. From him we have not only the fourth Gospel but the three letters under his name and the Revelation. Tradition links him with the church at Ephesus and claims he died a natural death there at a very ripe age.

Matthew, though not mentioned after the first chapter of Acts, appears again as the writer of the first Gospel. We know nothing more of him.

Of these four—and Judas Iscariot—we have some knowledge. The other seven are alluded to only one more time in the Acts. In Acts 8:1 we learn that "the apostles" remained behind in Jerusalem when the rest of the church was scattered abroad following Stephen's martyrdom.

There are, of course, traditions. Andrew allegedly was crucified in Achaia on an X-shaped cross; hence, "Saint Andrew's cross." There are confused and contradictory reports concerning Philip. Thomas may have gone to what is now Iran. Later tradition places him as far east as India.

The silence of the Scriptures concerning the acts of these other seven apostles cannot be interpreted to mean that they did nothing. It is reasonable to assume that they had a supportive role in the Jerusalem church and probably in some of the Gentile churches as well.

But neither can we assume that all of them became firebrands like Simon Peter or beloved elder statesmen like John.

We can find in the Book of Acts Spirit-filled apostles who spoke with tongues, Spirit-filled apostles who preached great sermons, Spirit-filled apostles who were effective winners of the lost, Spirit-filled apostles who worked miracles, who wrote inspired letters, who founded churches and witnessed before rulers and faced a martyr's death. But there is no indication that all of them did all of these things and some of them may have done almost none of these things.

The one scriptural proof of the Spirit-filled life is the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. (Peter enumerates a similar list in chapter one of his second letter.)

These qualities are the ultimate evidence of the Spirit-filled life.
—In *The Alliance Witness*



Two Kings

Dennis L. Allen

UZZIAH – A GOOD START—A BAD FINISH

Uzziah became the eleventh king of Judah at the age of sixteen and ruled for fifty-two years. His father was slain by a conspiracy, but the son was still the people's choice as a successor (2 Kgs. 14:21).

Uzziah proved to be a strong aggressive leader in Judah's battles with surrounding countries. He strengthened the kingdom and made many substantial improvements both in fortifications and in agriculture. He possessed a real organization ability, supplied the country with superior arms, and became quite famous (2 Chron. 26:11-15). Contemporary prophets during his reign were Isaiah, Hosea, Amos and Zechariah. Zechariah seemed to have had an especially strong influence upon him as long as he lived. "As long as he sought Jehovah, God made him to prosper." (2 Chron. 26:5).

However, at the end of his life Uzziah erred sadly. The cause was a haughty spirit. "But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up, so that he did corruptly, and he trespassed against Jehovah his God." (2 Chron. 26:16). "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18). Though he was not a priest he took it upon himself to go into the temple to burn incense upon the altar of incense. Azariah the priest, seeing what he was about to do went in after him with 80 priests to reason with him, but he refused to listen. "Better is a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who knoweth not how to receive admonition any more." (Ecc. 4:13). When we get to the place where we feel no one has a right to rebuke or admonish us we are on dangerous ground. Because of his presumption and self-will God struck him with leprosy. (2 Kings only mentions the fact without giving the reason, but 2 Chronicles makes it plain. Do we always have to have an explanation of the reason for God's dealings with men to restrain us from questioning the justice of His actions?)

Uzziah remained a leper till the day of his death. "He was cut off from the house of Jehovah." (2 Kgs. 26:21). Isaiah must have been greatly affected by all this. "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple." (Isa. 6:1). Do we learn anything from God's dealings with other people? Do we take to heart God's chastening of others?

MANASSEH — A BAD START—A GOOD FINISH

Manasseh was only twelve years old when he came to the throne. He reigned longer than any of the other kings—fifty-five years. In spite of the good reign and great reforms of his father, Hezekiah, Manasseh went against the light and undid the good work of his father. He started out bad and got worse. Several times in the Bible we see godly fathers with wicked sons and wicked fathers with godly sons. We should be careful of being critical and take heed to ourselves.

By this time Judah had become a vassal of Assyria. (You remember Hezekiah had foolishly shown these heathen rulers the nation's treasures.) Manasseh seemed to have become enamored with the power of Assyria and her idol worship. He went so far as to put a heathen altar in the temple of Jehovah. Many of the idolatrous practices he followed came from Assyria and Babylon. He was deeply involved in spiritism and seemingly stopped at nothing. (Jewish tradition says that he saved the prophet Isaiah asunder.) During his long reign the people became wedded to idolatry. Even the vigorous reforms under Josiah could not turn the hearts of the people back to the true worship again. His abominations brought Judah to final ruin. (Jer. 15:4). It is even said that he did wickedly "above all that the Amorites did" whom God had caused to be cast out by His chosen people.

GOD'S JUDGMENT AND ITS RESULT

"Wherefore Jehovah brought upon them the captains of the host of Assyria, who took Manasseh in chains (or with hooks), and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon." (2 Chron. 33:11). Evidently he was not kindly treated there either, for in his "distress" he besought the Lord and "humbled himself greatly" before God (vs. 12). God heard and saw his repentance, forgave him and restored him to Jerusalem. "Then Manasseh knew that Jehovah he was God" (vs. 13). During the remainder of his reign he endeavored to undo some of the evil that he had done in earlier days. He took away the foreign gods and restored the worship of Jehovah. His repentance was genuine and lasting.

Manasseh suffered for his wrong doing and stands as a warning that God punishes sin. He also is a great encouragement, showing that God's mercy and grace is greater than man's sin when there is true repentance. However, Manasseh could never undo all the harm that he had done, so his example serves as no encouragement to sowing wild oats.

In these two kings so different are warnings and encouragement for each one of us. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12). And to the one who has fallen, even the very lowest, let him know as concerning our Savior, "He is able to save to the uttermost." (Heb. 7:25).

Reprint:

The Resurrection-Book of the Old Testament

R. H. Boll — 1925

The book of Job deals with a tremendous problem. It is not merely a question "Why do the righteous suffer," although that is in discussion. Neither is it the challenge of Satan, whether there is any man who will serve God "for nought," though that is the occasion of the whole drama. Deeper than that lies the real heart-question of this strange and beautiful Old Testament book. The real inward aim of the book is to set forth the moral necessity of resurrection and future life. At a time when the resurrection was not yet revealed, when the common current of belief seemed to be that death ends all, and that the only reward of virtue or punishment of guilt is what one receives in his life-time, and what he entails upon his posterity—there arises an instance which contradicts all accepted theories. Job, a righteous man, divinely acknowledged as such, loses in quick succession all he holds dear in this life, all those possessions and blessings which in his day were held to be the tokens of God's power, his flocks, his herds, his servants; bitterest of all, his children; at last his health and the respect of his fellow-men. There is absolutely no explanation of it on any ground of God's moral government. God seems to have played him false, a thing which Job dares to intimate, when his friends, arguing from the doctrine of their time, suggest that he *must* have been guilty of some terrible secret sin, else such misfortunes could not have befallen him. Does not a man reap what he sows? Of what sowing did Job's sad harvest spring? Does not the harvest reveal the secret seed?

Job's friends meant well. They believed that God should be vindicated—and in this they were right (Rom. 3:4). But in their limited vision they did another thing (a thing not wholly unknown today!)—they thought God could be vindicated by denying facts, and by preferring unjust charges against Job. "Will ye speak unrighteously for God, or talk deceitfully for him?" Will ye lie to help God out? (Job 13:7,8). Job rightly judged that God resents such assistance. And Job equally ignorant, but thoroughly honest, stoutly defends his own integrity, and asserts that he would maintain his innocence before God Himself: if only God would not overawe him with His majesty—or, better still, if there were an umpire between himself and God, a daysman who could lay his hand upon them both—he would not mind arguing his case with the Almighty Himself. To the horrified, orthodox ears of his friends that sounded like the utmost possible limit of blasphemy. Yet they could not prove their contention. Elihu, a young man, takes up the argument next. He is disgusted with both Job and Job's friends. He, too

sets out to vindicate God, and his argument is really juster and better than theirs had been. He contends that the cause of our afflictions is not always in the past, but often in the future: that God afflicts to prevent our falling into evil, to keep us from pride, to hold us in dependence; that the wisdom of God's dealing exceeds our power of judgment. But he winds up rather incoherently as in the storm-cloud God Himself draws near.

Now Jehovah speaks. He sweeps aside the "words without knowledge." All these have spoken. And what is Jehovah's plea for Himself? How does He answer Job's complaints? He does not answer, but only says in sum, "Job—you know nothing of what is least,—the commonest earthly things around you; how then can you presume to judge my way in higher things? Have you fathomed my power and comprehended the length and breadth of my wisdom? To one such as you it behooves simply to trust where he cannot see—trust Me that I can and will do right, and will justify my way at last." To which Job bows in humblest acknowledgment and penitence.

The trial is over, the lesson has been taught, and Job receives back double all he has lost—except (a significant exception!) *not* the double number of his children. Was it an intimation that the children that had gone before were not lost to him?

And what was the lesson? To the saint of old, the book leaves a suggestion, indefinite but wonderful and powerful, as a light shining far off through the darkness—that somehow God will do all things well, that somehow, some day all wrongs will be righted and all tears will be wiped away; that the whole truth cannot be told in this life, that there is, there must be a future vindication of righteousness and judgment of evil. A life beyond, a future existence, a resurrection! The first momentary thought of it forces itself upon Job in chapter 14 (verses 13-15); and in chapter 19, by the sheer necessity of the case, he perceives that a Redeemer—the "goel," the kinsman avenger—would some day stand up for him, yea, and *he himself* would be there to see and hear it. It must be so, it must be so. What Job dimly discerned thus long ago, we know and believe. Yea, the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now; and we ourselves who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. That will be the day of the great Vindication, when our Kinsman Redeemer shall rebuke forever on our behalf all the wrong done us by the enemy.

We believe in the inspiration of the Book of Job. Not that God endorses all that Job's friends or Job himself uttered, though their speeches contain much truth. (Even some Christians might be ashamed before those standards of right, held so long ago.) But it is the inspired record, a faithful and fair representation of what occurred and what was said—the strange case of a good man's suffering that opened a crevice, as it were, in the wall that shut out the vision of a future life, and a ray of gospel-light broke in upon that

ancient darkness. "For verily, I say unto you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things that ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things that ye hear, and heard them not" (Matt 13:17).



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

How much authority does a preacher have in the congregation?

The intent of this question seems to be an inquiry as to the authority delegated by God—that is, how much authority the Bible gives him. We will assume that congregational independence is not being violated and that he is not an intruder. We will also assume that we are dealing with churches attempting to follow the New Testament order of things, not various denominational bodies whose enactments may or may not follow the New Testament pattern. One could find religious groups in which the preacher is a virtual dictator (however good or beneficent) and others in which he is little more than a paid orator.

The inexperienced person is probably a bit shocked when he first finds out that the New Testament does not really give a *detailed* job description for those in positions of responsibility in the church. The question is not one that can be answered in great detail. We must deal in principles. It would appear that this absence of rigid detail, what each one may or may not do in the Body of Christ, is to give room for members to develop. It is difficult to think of any responsibilities that belong exclusively to one office or position, that cannot be exercised by another under suitable conditions.

The elders, whose work is more nearly described than any other, are guided only by broad requirements such as tending and feeding the flock and exercising oversight. We regard theirs as the highest office now existing in the church, not because the New Testament says that in so many words but because of their very designation (overseers), the heavy responsibility given, and the examples of their activity in the New Testament. (Apostles belonged to the early church and apparently were a temporary arrangement (Eph. 2:20), none today being able to meet the qualifications (Acts 1:21-22). The work and authority of deacons is generally regarded as being less than that of elders because of the lesser requirements for filling the office. As to preachers, other than the responsibility of preaching the word (2 Tim. 4:2) and teaching the word (1 Tim. 4:

6,11,13), there is little specific teaching as to just what a preacher's work is or how much authority he has. He is, of course, to be a man of prayer (1 Tim. 2:1-2) and of godly life (1 Tim. 6:11). As an evangelist he is to be a proclaimer of the evangel (good news); as a minister he is one who ministers or serves. His work will sometimes call for reproof and rebuking, along with exhorting (1 Tim. 5:20; 2 Tim 4:2). But neither the epistles to Timothy and Titus (letters to young preachers) nor any other New Testament books give us a detailed power structure that should exist between preacher, elders, and deacons in their work with the congregation. We can find no specific answer as to whether a preacher should purchase a new mimeograph for the church without conferring with the others, etc. These answers have to be worked out from what is implied in the more general terms, from good practical sense, and from good Christian relations between the members of the Body.

So far as we can tell, preachers (evangelists) in New Testament times exercised more power in unorganized congregations (without elders and deacons) than they did in the organized congregations. They apparently took the lead, filling the void in leadership until some could be provided. They acted in getting elders appointed (Tit. 1:5; cf. Acts 14:23) and had powers of appointment (1 Tim. 5:22). In organized congregations, however, there is no evidence that they pursued a course independent of the elders, dominated them, or ran little projects on the side in rebellion to the elders. We must assume that the oversight to be exercised by the elders in any given congregation included preachers who may have been working with them. Timothy was taught to honor them (1 Tim. 5:1,17-19). It is my judgment that the authority of a preacher in a congregation without elders should be greater than in a congregation with elders. In the organized congregation he should work under the elders and relinquish the oversight of the work to them.

There are practical problems, of course. Good leadership is gained and comes from showing one's self suitable for following, more than being power seized and held by force (cf. 1 Pet. 5:3). Wisdom decrees that as much as possible potential leaders should be developed, so a preacher in a congregation without elders should not take the driver's seat and ignore the development of others. High-handed ruling over the flock is forbidden even to elders, so surely to preachers. Their purpose should be to have an organized congregation as soon as possible. Until leaders can be developed a preacher needs to act as wisely as a parent preparing a child for growing up, leaving home and standing on his own feet. In the practical outworking of this, it may be that spiritually undeveloped people will want to become too independent too soon. Or immature or power-seeking preachers may use bad judgment and fail to cut the apron strings. There will be plenty of room for the practice of Christian love and the golden rule, and ever a need for heavenly wisdom (Jas. 1:5).

When there are elders, the preacher's role may be different. Elders are the *pastors* (shepherds) of the New Testament (1 Pet. 5:1-4), so many pastoral duties, commonly thought today to be a preacher's work, are really the duties of elders. This does not mean they cannot delegate some responsibilities, nor that they alone can tend to spiritual needs, but in far too many cases their work is today done by a preacher. Sometimes it is thrust on him; sometimes he assumes it because of the inactivity of the elders; and sometimes in mistaken zeal he seizes the role. Some modern elders seem to think their primary job is the hiring and (possibly) the firing of preachers, said preachers being something akin to managers who will take over the work of the congregation and keep everything going. Ideally, elders should pastor the flock and preachers should preach the word. This preaching is to be publicly and from house to house, to saints and to sinners, by voice and by printed page or whatever way is good. In the absence of a detailed list of whose work is done by whom and how much authority and initiative should be taken, we have to be governed by principles of mutual respect, forbearance, love, brotherly concern, what seems most in accord with Biblical principles, etc. Spiritually minded people ought to have no trouble in reaching a good working relationship with each other and in establishing a practical power structure for the church.

The true authority possessed by a preacher is the authority of the word. He must faithfully declare what God has said, not being intimidated by men exercising even secular authority wrongfully, but this does not put him above the need for finding his rightful place in the Body of Christ and living in a harmonious working relationship with others in the Body. As we mentioned before, there are practical questions of should he do this or not do that which have no direct answers. As on all sides we count others better than self, subject ourselves one to another, do unto them as we would have them do unto us, trying to stand in their shoes, the occasions for difficulty in authority matters will be few indeed.

Why is the book of Revelation so hard to understand?

Although the difficulty has been sometimes exaggerated, there are reasons on God's side, on the human side, and on Satan's side why Revelation is more difficult to understand.

On God's side is the fact that He has given much of it in something other than simple kindergarten language. Without conceding that it is all figurative, we must nevertheless recognize that figures and symbols are widely used. I do not subscribe to the idea that it was written in "code" so the Roman authorities would not understand it, but I see it as a challenge to disciples for seeking out what the Lord is saying. It is surely a revealing, because its very name says as much, but our Lord has intended that we do some searching and digging for the things revealed. He has not always revealed Himself or His ways and plans in the easiest language possible (cf. Matt. 13:10-16). He weeds out the indifferent and the

ones with only momentary interest. Moreover, His word has meat as well as milk.

On the human side is the immaturity and ignorance of many professing Christians. When by reason of time some ought to be able to understand hard things they are still taking only the milk of the word (Heb. 5:11-14). Some of Revelation is heavy food for babes in Christ. Then there are those who try to force their preconceived ideas on the scripture, and Revelation has had more than its share of interpreters who wrest the scriptures. These false ideas not only blind those who hold them but are set forth to confuse and lead astray others. There are those who find Revelation hard because someone has said over and over that it cannot be understood.

On Satan's side there seems to be an extra hatred of this book—likely because it reveals his doom so definitely. He is always going about trying, figuratively, to throw sand in the eyes of any honest student.

Don't surrender. It is God's word, a part of the inspired scriptures needed to make the complete man of God.

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Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

PROPHECY

Is the Rapture the Reward of Readiness?

Winston N. Allen

"Therefore be ye also ready, for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 24:44).

Am I ready for the rapture, for the catching away of the church described in 1 Thess. 4:13-18 and 1 Cor. 15:51,52? In view of the fact that the signs foretold by Christ in Matthew 24 are being fulfilled in "this generation," and being keenly aware of the increasing frequency and severity of the "travail" or labor pains (which herald the end of his age and the beginning of the millennium) the question "Am I ready?" is of vital importance. Have I seriously considered the possibility that many professing Christians who expect to be caught up to meet the Lord when He returns will miss this tremendous event and be "left" on earth to experience "the great tribulation" under the rule of the Antichrist? "Watch therefore, for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh" (Matt. 24:42).

The writer of the book of Hebrews said, "So Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time apart from sin, *to them that wait for him*, unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28). In Rev. 3:10 Christ gave the promise: "Because thou didst

keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." G. Campbell Morgan wrote, "Personally, I am convinced that not all Christian people will be taken to be with Christ on His return, but only those who by the attitude of their lives are *ready* for His appearing." D. M. Panton stated his view in these words: "Too many are assuming that *preparation* for Christ's coming is solely a matter of past experience and not at all a matter of walk (or the way we live each day), so that for all the saved, no matter how unChristlike a life they live, it will be a pure, unmixed, inevitable joy—an instant, miraculous deliverance so wrapped up in the gift of salvation that it covers even the most unconsecrated child of God. There is and can be, so long as **this** teaching is believed, no demand for sanctity beyond salvation, and the tremendous thunders of the fast-approaching tribulation leaves myriads of Christians unawake. The issue is a grave one, for our Lord's outburst from heaven to catch His bride away is either a comforting opiate for disobedient disciples, or else it is the most rousing of all truths—*it cannot be both.*"

Regarding affairs of this life we know the importance of being ready and on time for important occasions. Almost ready is not enough. Too little and too late can make the difference between success and failure. There is no substitute for readiness. We read in Rev. 19:7b, 9, "his wife hath made herself ready . . . Blessed are they that are bidden to the marriage supper of the lamb."

Matthew 24:44 does not focus attention on getting ready but being ready—staying ready at all times. It must be a way of life affecting every decision and everything we do. When the Lord descends from heaven "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" there will be no time to get ready. The apostle Paul asserted, "Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offense toward God and man always" (Acts 24:16). In the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-13) all expected to meet the bridegroom, but in verse 10b it is stated regarding only five, "and they that were *ready* went in with him to the marriage feast and the door was shut."

The warning and the admonition of the Lord recorded in Luke 21 is applicable to each one of us today where there is increasing pressure to let the pleasures and cares of this life dominate our thinking, our time and resources. Jesus said, "But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth. But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

One of the students of a Bible College in the South 48 went to the office of the President for help and advice. He had lost his

joy as a Christian and wanted to know the reason why. The President said, "I can tell you what is wrong but it will probably make you mad; it's Mary." "Mary?" "Yes, since your engagement to her, she has filled your whole horizon. You have postponed or put aside your plans for Christian service until after your plans regarding Mary are completed and carried out." The young man agreed that indeed another human being and personal plans had taken first place in his mind and affections, and he realized the importance of again putting the Lord on the throne in his heart.

How important it is to "be filled with the Spirit"—to have oil in our lamps—and to bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22,23). The true Christian is busy in the Lord's service while watching and waiting for His coming. "Therefore be ye also *ready*, for in an hour that ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Dennis L. Allen

Kowloon, Hong Kong

Sept. 26, 1974

On August 30 Pong Hay Wing and I went to Manila for eleven days. There were some rain drops on the window of the plane as we were landing, but the rain had stopped by the time we got off the plane. When we got through formalities and saw the brethren (they gave us each fragrant leis of sampaguitas) we found it had been raining hard most of the day in Manila and they had feared our plane would not be able to land. There were floods in many parts of the city. In fact, they had been having floods for two weeks and many streets had gone to pieces. However, there was no more rain after we arrived until eight days later, but even then the showers did not hinder any of the meetings. The Chinese brethren thought this was most wonderful. We had not had time to get answers from our letters when we went, so we had to go in faith that this was the Lord's time. We believe it was.

We were welcomed warmly. Pong Hay Wing stayed with a Chinese family, and I stayed with the Wilsons. Saturday night there was a welcome for us in Brother Woo's home. We were there two Sundays. Pong Hay Wing spoke the first Sunday at the Chinese congregation and I the second. We had six nights of family meetings in Brother Woo's home. Each evening there were over twenty present. We had a survey study of the book of Revelation but with a strong evangelistic emphasis. We each took three nights. One night I spoke at CBI chapel and also spoke twice on Sunday morning at the Filipino service, so we

were kept busy. There was very good interest in the Revelation studies. We also did some home visitation. Four Chinese were baptized the last Sunday we were there. Pong Hay Wing paid his own way at his insistence but said it was worth all he spent.

Water rationing started last night. Water is cut off from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., which is no hardship. If the situation does not improve, however, it will be reduced to four hours a day in a few weeks. A tropical storm is heading in this direction which may help some.

Dollie Garrett

Salisbury, Rhodesia

Sept. 23, 1974

Donald is still struggling to get the children's birth certificates all in order to suit the government. It means that in some cases the mothers must come long distances, and in some cases Donald has to make a long trip to gain proper information.

I have only fourteen girls in my high school group now—three have dropped out or moved away. This Scripture class meets every Friday from 12-1 p.m. We are studying Acts.

Joyce Shewmaker

On Furlough—U. S.

Oct. 8, 1974

We have had two weeks in Hammon, Oklahoma and Pampa, Texas, resting in the homes of J. C.'s brothers. We hope to fly to Denver next week to be with Claudia ten days, before starting our tour across the southern part of the U. S. A. Our son Stanford and family have settled at Abilene, Texas, for their furlough and placed their children in Abilene Christian High School. We hope to visit them about five days.

Elaine Brittell

Livingstone, Zambia

Sept. 16, 1974

Recently our hearts rejoiced after Bible study one Wednesday evening as Roda, Ester, Mary, and Jotham came forward asking to become children of God, and three others returned to the fold. It was cold as we drove and as we climbed down to where the rocks and water form a deep pool—there they were born into the family of God! With joyful hearts these new babes in Christ now began to live with Him as their guide.

The revisers of the Tonga Bible are busy—having work in progress on twenty-nine of the books. With joyful hearts they press on—trusting, Lord willing, that all sixty-six will be completed in a few years time. The book of Luke is in the final stage of correcting, before its final typing. We do appreciate the many prayers on behalf of those having a part in this work in Zambia, and also in other parts of the world, as more are receiving God's word in their language of today.



Viewing the News

In 1973 there were 402 people in this country with income over \$100,000 who paid no income taxes. 99 of these earned more than \$200,000 and 4 of them more than a million.

CESAR CHAVEZ, the marxist labor leader trying to unionize farm workers, was the subject of a television special several months ago. To show how such things are often one-sided, we should note that the program presented only the feelings of Chavez about himself. No farmer was interviewed and not even one farm worker! This is unfortunately too typical of t-v specials and of most of the t-v and radio (and often newspaper) news programs. I wonder why they feel they must propagate instead of report.

A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST agency recently threatened 1400 travel agencies with prosecution if they did not stop having tours to Rhodesia. They made no mention of Russia or any iron curtain country!

THE GROWTH of welfare by the government is following the predictable path. In 25 years the amount of money increased from 2.9 billion dollars to 99.4 billion. And it is estimated that the bill will be 113.2 billion in 1975.

TWO EVANGELICAL BOOK CLUBS have been sold recently. The Word Book Club (and all of the Word books, records, etc.) has been sold to the American Broadcasting Company! The Evangelical Book Club has been sold to Iversen-Norman Associates, a Christian advertising agency that developed multi-version New Testaments.

I REGRET, of course, the violence connected with a recent crusade against un-Christian and un-American textbooks, but I will have to admit

that those crusading had a legitimate complaint. It would shock you considerably if you would study carefully many of the textbooks being used in schools at every level.

FRED SCHWARZ, of the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, recently summarized how our society is sick: Uncontrollable inflation, increasing unemployment, a declining stock-market, growing crime and violence, urban guerrilla warfare, communist activity, faithless religion with consequences such as situation ethics and Watergate, the slaughter of the unborn, alcoholism and the drug culture, pervasive pornography, permissive sex, and family breakdown. These and other similar conditions exist in most of the Western World.

FINALLY a governor of a state (Gov. Thompson of New Hampshire) has spelled out some of the deficiencies of the United Nations in a public statement. Instead of duplicating the President's proclamation of October 24th as UN day, he designated October 23-27 as Truth About United Nations Week and in the proclamation detailed why the UN is such a danger to the USA.

FOCUS ON THE MIDDLE EAST for the last days in the Bible is re-emphasized today by the fast growing wealth of the oil-producing nations there. Christian Heritage Center's "Revival and Survival Bulletin" quotes Walter Levy, a leading petroleum consultant to the government, as warning that within a year "a handful of oil producing countries, most in the Persian Gulf, will own liquid assets, gold and foreign exchange—mounting to more than the liquid foreign assets of all the other countries of the world combined." The same issue quotes from *The Scott Report* of Monday,

September 23, 1974, concerning the government's plan now being implemented to develop a loosely knitted world government before 1980. "Food to control people—Oil to control nations" is the foundation of that policy. How near are we to preparing the way for the Beast of Revelation?

COCU (the Consultation on Church Union—nine denominations trying to become one) is not quite dead yet. It is still holding meetings. Next month the delegates will meet in Cincinnati. The most important issue on the agenda is whether or not the different denominations will accept the principle of mutual recognition of membership. Probably the second most touchy issue is how the six predominantly white denominations will work with the three predominantly black ones within COCU.

CHAPLAINS for the armed services are much harder to recruit since the scandal of two years ago when two women charged a chaplain with sexual immorality. Though the chaplain was found innocent by the court, the publicity given the case has made it difficult to persuade prospective chaplains that they will not be treated publicly as that man was.

WHO WARNED THEM?—The Southern Baptists are showing a tendency to let their 1963 statement on "Baptist Faith and Message" take the place of Scripture, according to an Historical Commission Staff member, Charles W. Deweese. "This is an impingement upon the authority of the Bible," he was reported by Ben L. Kaufman as saying in Kaufman's informative column in *The Cincinnati Enquirer*. It seems to me that others have fought against creeds on the same basis!

THE OBVIOUSLY intentional slide of our country toward friendship with the communist governments continues unabated. Plans have moved very far toward friendship with Castro, the slave-driving ruler of Cuba, and many men in government are traveling for closer relationships with Red China and other communist countries.

Wouldn't you like (or would you?) to be able to read the minds of persecuted Christians in those countries? Or would you like to be able to read the minds of those communist leaders as they chuckle over how they have fooled our leaders into thinking they are legitimate rulers. And they must laugh out loud when they remember that at the same time we are continuing to turn away from Rhodesia because it is a "minority government." About 3% of the people have some part in government in communist countries and many times that have a voice in Rhodesia.

THE FEDERAL RESERVE System is finally coming into some of the criticism it deserves. The unfortunate thing about that banking system is that its name fools most people into thinking it is a government-controlled institution. To be sure, the directors are appointed by our elected officials, but when they are appointed they are a private organization. The control, of course, is in the hand of a few international bankers. It would take a book, not a paragraph, to go into detail on the system, but I must give credit to the men who fought against having a national bank from the early days of our republic. Incidentally, the policies of the "fed" are leading us toward a one-world money system and a weakened U.S.A.

A REMINDER: "The wicked shall be turned back unto Sheol, Even all the nations that forget God." And that includes our country.

SHORTLY AFTER the November election we will probably have an unelected president and an unelected vice-president. In spite of much newspaper writing to the contrary, they are both "liberal" in politics and the new vice-president will be from one of the families that control the money of the world. God can overrule everything unto His honor and glory. Pray for our leaders.

Thank you very much for all your help. Continue sending it to

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DEPRESSED? Take God Seriously

by Lawrence J. Crabb, Jr.

This brief article is about depression—men and women with the blues. In a word, my message is: Christ has the answer. Too often, when Christians discuss an issue (whether it's mental health, politics, or even religion), we politely tip our hats to God (usually by saying, "Christ has the answer") and then proceed to consider what the "experts" have to say on the subject. The predictable result of depending on man's ideas (even if the men are recognized authorities) is a man-made solution with no guarantee of effectiveness.

In this article I earnestly want to take God seriously, to believe that he really is there and that he has communicated all that we need to know to live happy, productive, meaningful, undepressed lives.

Rather than acknowledging that Christ has the answer (so the article is fit for a Christian magazine,) but implicitly depending on human wisdom by discussing psychological theory, let's take God seriously and see what the biblical answer is to the problem of depression.

When pressures mount up, when the sales chart takes a frightening plunge, when your key executive accepts a position with your Number One competition, when it seems that the more money you make, the more you have to make; when the treadmill takes its toll, the businessman sometimes tumbles into the basement of the blues. If he stays there long enough, or if his particular cellar is deep enough in the ground, friends and relatives begin to offer observations like this: "What a shame. George is suffering from depression. I really wonder if he should consult a psychologist. Whether or not he does, the best thing we can do is to show him lots of sympathy, warmth and understanding."

I maintain—on what, I believe, are biblical grounds—that loving support and acceptance of his illness is precisely what George does NOT need. George is irresponsibly responding to difficult circumstances according to his own wisdom and in his own strength. He is leaving the Lord out of the picture. And that is sin!

"But Doctor, you of all people—with your training in psychology—should realize that depression is an illness, a disease just like any other sickness. You certainly wouldn't blame someone for catching the flu by charging him with irresponsible, sinful behavior. You would treat him for his illness. Why, in heaven's name, would you insist on holding George responsible for his depression?"

Well, it is squarely in heaven's name that I would confront George with his failure to really take God seriously and to trust the Lord, no matter what. Here's why:

When you search the scriptures, you find God allows for two sources of distress: (1) physical, organic illness, and (2) sin—irresponsibly going one's own way, instead of God's. In James 5:14-15, James clearly implies physical sickness may not involve sin (notice the "if" in verse 15), but simply may be the result of an organic condition. If a person is physically ill, send him to the physician (anointing with oil was the accepted medical treatment of the day) and pray God will overrule.

But what about the individual who is not physically ill, yet still experiences some form of distress—perhaps depression? The Bible speaks of only one other source of problems, and that is sin. In Psalm 38 David complains of generalized tension (v. 3), a deep and persistent depression (vs. 4 and 6), self-hatred (vs. 5 and 7), and a sense of hopelessness (v. 8).

If David had consulted a modern psychologist who patterned himself after Freudian thinking—still the dominant influence in psychological circles—he would likely have been told he was suffering from a depressive, psychoneurotic reaction characterized by acute episodic agitation. Notice the anxiety attack briefly described in v. 10. The headlines in the *Jerusalem Star* might have carried the unhappy news: King David Struck by Mental Illness. Anti-depressive medication, shock therapy and intensive psychotherapy would likely have been prescribed. At a press conference the king's personal psychologist, with furrowed brow, would have muttered words like "guarded prognosis" and would have stressed no one must assume a judgmental or moralizing attitude toward the stricken ruler.

After four months a local preacher, named Nathan, approached David and violated all accepted mental health principles of psychiatric care.

"David," Nathan asserted, "you are a sinner. That is your problem." Rather than sinking into deeper depression, David responded by confessing his sin. Nathan pronounced him clear of guilt because of God's forgiveness. David was restored to the joy of his salvation.

Have you caught what I am saying? According to the Bible, if depression is not directly related to physical illness (scientific evidence is unclear on this possibility), its cause is sin. Perhaps nothing so blatantly sinful as adultery and murder, as in David's case, but sin in the sense of definite failure to respond in God's way to a given situation. The Bible does not seem to make room for the modern concept of mental illness, with its insistence the sufferer is a helpless victim of an externally-imposed illness—completely non-responsible for his problems.

Secular psychologists are beginning to see the devastating effect of the propaganda on mental illness. Someone has cleverly observed that America has solved the problem of crime by defining it out of existence. We no longer have criminals responsible for their crimes and should be punished, we now have sick people who cannot help what they do and, therefore, need to be treated.

Many psychologists are talking about "the myth of mental illness" and advocate people should be held responsible for dealing with unsolved personal problems. Very few, however, acknowledge the resurrection power of Jesus Christ, which alone enables men to selflessly commit themselves to living responsibly.

God will show to the open mind where depression-producing sin exists. Confession to the offended party, and to God—on the basis of Christ's shed blood—brings the individual into contact with the dynamic of the Holy Spirit. The result is love, joy, peace and all the wonderful fruit of the Spirit. Look over the list in Galatians 5:22. Do you see any room for depression in a Spirit-filled Christian?

When you become depressed, don't ask Ben Casey to cure you of illness. Check with Dick Tracy to discover the crime behind the symptom—the sin that is keeping you from experiencing the peace and calmness God wants to give you.

A man I know well lost his son some years ago. The fellowship of Christian businessmen and other Christians helped him to keep trusting in the Lord. He obeyed Paul's injunction to "give thanks in everything," recognizing God is sovereign and can do as He chooses. Had he responded in any other way, it would have been sin, and he would undoubtedly have been overwhelmed—depressed. Because he went God's way, he personally experienced the truth of Philippians 4:6, 7: "... in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Are you depressed? Come into contact with the God who really is there, by acknowledging your sin before him and accepting Christ as Savior.

Are you depressed? Ask God to show you where you are walking apart from Him. Confess it as sin. Dedicate yourself totally to living for the Lord.

Because I take God seriously, I can guarantee freedom from depression, if you will respond to life according to biblical guidelines.

Are you depressed? Christ really does have the answer.

—In *CMBC Contact*

NEWS AND NOTES

"They rehearsed all that God had done with them . . ."

Portland Christian School: We started our second half-century with an enrollment of 275 in twelve grades. There are sixty brand-new youngsters in our student body. About twenty-five new Christian families have joined our PCS "family." One of these, we understand, made the move from Illinois largely for the purpose of enrolling children in Portland Christian.

Echo Valley Christian Youth Camp: We had a total of 150 campers and 50 staff members this first year. There were 20 responses and 14 young people were immersed into Christ.

Cramer and Hanover Church, Lexington: Our series of meetings with Brother Alvin Price just ended. We had a real good revival with nine responses, two of them for baptism.

Last Sunday morning one confessed Christ and was baptized into Him and another came desiring a greater commitment to Christ and further instructions regarding following Him. Forty people attended the adult Bible class last Sunday morning and manifested encouraging interest in our study of the nineteenth and twentieth chapters of Revelation. There was a total of 106 at Sunday School.

Gallatin Church: Hall Crowder has resigned as minister after a number of years leading this work.

Highland Church, Louisville: In a note from David Brown: "Praise the Lord... I had the joy of baptizing three young people. Two were our own children, David and Mary. We had good meetings yesterday. We all send our love to all there. The Lord bless you."

"WORDS OF LIFE" ADDS NEW STATION

The Vines Insurance Agency and the Locust Street Church of Christ are cooperating together in sponsoring "Words of Life" on radio station WJCW in Johnson City, Tennessee. The program will be heard Sunday afternoons at 12:30 beginning October 6. We praise God for this coop-

eration by which we continue expanding the outreach of this radio ministry. We expect to add at least one other station, possibly two others, about November 10.

Two recent prophetic messages entitled "Maybe You are Premillennial but Don't Know it" and "Is the Fact of the Premillennial Reign Taught Only in Revelation 20?" have been put into print. We are willing to mail out quantity lots free, but for those who wish to pay for them, we suggest that you send \$5.00 for 50 copies, \$8.50 for 100. Write to: "Words of Life" P.O. Box 1871, Lou., Ky. 40201.

Sellersburg Church: We thank the Lord that three persons have been baptized recently and an additional four have placed membership with us.

Highview Church, Louisville: We have set the second Sunday night of the next three months for open discussion of current important questions relating to Bible teaching.

On November 3 we hope to have the group from Maple Manor with us. They will quote the "Sermon on the Mount" and the "Sermon on Pentecost" in their entirety.

Westside Church, Ft. Lauderdale: We praise God for continued growth and progress here in Ft. Lauderdale. Our building is almost complete and new families visit with us often. Our attendance is climbing again as our members return from much deserved vacations.

I am convinced my labors within God's will here are fast concluding. Pray with us that God will direct His preacher to lead this growing, loving, willing congregation.

—Vaughn A. Reeves

Rosspoint Church, Ky.: On November 10, 1974, I will conclude the most enjoyable ministry of almost a half-century of preaching the gospel of Christ. This is my second time with the Church here at Rosspoint, and it has been a most delightful stay. At the time of my departing I will have been here three years and ten months, and I am very happy to say

that, insofar as I have been able to detect, there has been perfect harmony throughout this period of time. Thank God for people like these of Rosspoint Church of Christ.

This Church will be in need of a full-time minister after Nov. 10, and to the man who is able to get out and work the field it offers unlimited opportunity. They have a nice three bedroom house for their minister, and they will take care of him. Any one interested may contact Mr. Paul Ellis, Route 1, Baxter, Ky. 40806. Phone 606-573-1564.

I am quitting the local ministry and will be available for holding meetings should any one desire my services. My new address will be Route 1, Salvisa, Ky. 40372. —C. H. Wiley

Linton, Ind.: The publisher tells me that my New Testament commentary, "Am I Not Free?" will be released this week. For two years I distilled my notes taken from R. H. Boll's classes and writings, my notes taken from R. C. Bell's classes, and my sermon notes to prepare a book that is designed to help the reader better understand the Bible. Copies of this hard-cover 8½" x 11", 240-page volume will be furnished to the Word and Work to be sold for \$5.95. I appreciate your willingness to co-operate with me in this effort to further the Lord's cause. —John S. May

Henryville, Ind.: Attendance was unusually good at the meeting which closed on the 13th. Neighboring families were present.

Brother Bruce Chowning brought

the excellent messages given to him from the Lord. There were 10 responses to them: five for baptism, two for membership, and three in need of prayer.

Brother Howard T. Marsh, the minister here, wishes to express his deep appreciation for the blessing of the Lord on his wife's health. Her illness was very serious, but she has become so much better as to be able to attend church again. They are thankful also to and for all who prayed.

Waterford Church, Ky.: Brother John Pound had to be taken to the hospital (he was much improved at the last report) soon after the meeting started. However, Brother Crowder carried on according to plan. New families attended, one came from Shelbyville.

There were two new births in the waters of baptism and five rededications. The meeting with its good messages and encouraging crowds ended with fellowship around a good meal on the grounds.

Portland Ave. Church, Louisville, Ky.:

The meeting at Portland, with Bro. Eugene Mullins, is nearly half-way through at this writing. Messages have been especially good and so has attendance. Much prayer and visitation was done ahead of time and is bearing fruit in increasing attendance.

Sister Lucy Albus, wife of one of the Portland elders, is teaching three classes a week in the book of Daniel—one in a home, one at the Maple Manor Home (Senior Division) and one at Portland.

Make me an Intercessor,
Willing for deeper death;
Emptied, broken, then made anew,
And filled with Living Breath. —Ezek. 1:21

Make me an Intercessor,
Reveal this mighty thing—
The wondrous possibility
Of praying back my King. —2 Sam. 19:10

Make me an Intercessor,
Hidden — unknown — apart;
Lightly esteemed by those around,
But making glad Thine heart. —Prov. 27:11

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