

"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The Word and Work



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

APRIL, 1999

<<< Struggles Of The Soul >>>

Teach me to feel that Thou art always nigh;
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;
Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.

-- George Croly

QUOTATIONS

"To escape the distress caused by regret for the past or fear about the future, this is the rule to follow: leave the past to the infinite mercy of God, the future to his good providence; give the present wholly to his love by being faithful to his grace."

-- Jean-Pierre de Caussade in The Joy of the Saints

* * *

*To keep your marriage brimming
With love in the loving cup,
When you're wrong, admit it,
When you're right, shut up.*

-- Ogden Nash via Leadership, Summer 1996

* * *

I confess, O God --

that often I let my mind wander down unclean and forbidden ways: that often I deceive myself as to where my plain duty lies: that often, by concealing my real motives, I pretend to be better than I am: that often my affection for my friends is only a refined form of caring for myself: that often my sparing of my enemy is due to nothing more than cowardice: that often I do good deeds only that they may be seen of men, and shun evil ones only because I fear they may be found out.

O holy One, let the fire of Thy love enter my heart, and burn up all this coil of meanness and hypocrisy, and make my heart as the heart of a little child.

--John Baillie via Power for Today, August 12, 1997.

* * *

*"We used to think that the chief end of man was to glorify God.
Now we're tempted to say the chief end of God is to gratify man."*

-- Oswald Chambers

* * *

"Christ's followers cannot expect better treatment in the world than their Master had. Let them not promise themselves more honor or pleasure in the world than Christ had. Let each live a life of labor and self-denial as his Master, and make himself a servant of all; let him stoop, and let him toil, and do all the good he can, and then he will be a complete disciple."

-- Matthew Henry on Luke 6:40

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

Dennis L. Allen, Missions

Bennie Hill, New & Notes

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Marred Memories, Fiesty Feelings, and Christ's Cross

Alex V. Wilson

There's a hymn by George Croly which ministers to me often, especially this verse:

**Teach me to feel that Thou art always nigh;
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear,
To check the rising doubt, the rebel sigh;
Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.**

If possible, I would suggest to brother Croly that he change *feel* in the first line to *know*. For feelings are uncontrollable and unreliable. "I dare not trust the sweetest frame [i.e., emotional outlook], But wholly lean on Jesus' name," as another hymnwriter put it. Sometimes feelings sway us to believe matters which are untrue but we *want* them to be true. Other times they launch strong attacks against facts we have become soundly convinced of -- through faith in God's proved word, and experience. Our Father seems absent, or at least asleep. (The psalmists often felt that way too.)

Lord, teach us to quench such doubts when they arise. And to check rebellious sighs too -- when we feel Your will is so hard and distasteful, and "Why, Lord, why?" keeps rising in our hearts. And prayer seems to make no difference. O God, teach us to endure these struggles of soul, and -- more than that -- to overcome them through Christ and His indwelling Spirit.

Harsh Memories, Hard Feelings

Several articles this month relate in one way or another to such struggles. Corrie ten Boom wrestling to forgive a despicable ex-Nazi guard. A sister from a church somewhere in Kentucky battling with her desire to avoid some troublesome person. Church workers with one spiritual gift feeling proudly critical of those whose gifts and call differ from theirs.

Often it is memory which causes our feelings. Some Christians remember their faults and failures, and fear to take the Lord's Supper. R.H. Boll writes about that. But memories and feelings can be positive as well as negative. Don McGee imagines Eve remembering her "birth," and how such memories would inspire love for her partner.

Memories. Some of them leave scars. Some stir up devotion.

Feelings. Some are hideous and harmful. Some strengthen us to soldier on.

It depends from what perspective we view them. How we react to them. And our Lord gave us His holy supper to purify our memories, feelings and struggles. Two articles plus a significant quote from Charles Spurgeon deal with that important means of grace. Read and be strengthened.

Dead Folks Don't Feel

Ann Onimus, from a church in Kentucky

Last evening a friend of mine and I were chatting on the telephone. She was feeling rather frustrated that her daughter had been left out of several different circles of friends that she had been with that day. I could empathize. It is much easier to be hurt yourself than to see your child hurting.

"This isn't the first time that this has happened," she went on. "I just wish I knew what the Lord was trying to tell us."

"I think I know."

"What?"

"I think He is teaching you and your daughter to die to self. Dead people don't feel, you know."

"It could be. But it sure is hard."

I know. I've been there and it seems as if the Lord keeps me in the middle of situations that make me stay there. Unfortunately, dying to self is not a one-time act. It is a constant, willing, purposeful decision that must be made many times every day.

It has only been recently that I have realized that dying to your own feelings was a part of the process of dying to self. My own ambitions and goals, yes, but feelings?????

It is no revelation to me that the Lord has specific reasons for the people that He brings into my life. But face it folks, some people just rub us the wrong way! Have you ever found yourself skirting over to the other aisle after church just to avoid an encounter with someone. Then you've been there, too.

"Uh-oh, here she comes," you think. "What'll it be this time? Will she correct my child in public? Criticize my husband? Re-evaluate my child-rearing techniques? Ask if I made my dress? Wonder aloud why I chose not to send my child to the church-sponsored school?" And so on.

She's got a strong personality and you don't and you feel at her mercy. No matter what the topic of conversation, somehow you always end up feeling inferior and inadequate. It doesn't matter how

hard you try, your feelings end up quite bruised before the conversation is over.

So, what's the answer? Avoidance? A strong defense? Putting up walls? A cold shoulder? Simply gritting your teeth and praying you don't get bitter?

I think that complete victory would be much more satisfactory to us and bring much more glory to the Lord.

And where do we find complete victory? Only in the paradox of the cross. How ironic that life comes from death---that freedom comes from sacrificing self.

Let's get practical. Why not make your bed your altar? After an encounter such as the above scenario, take the first opportune moment to go and kneel there. You take those bruised feelings and imagine that they are in your hands. Then spread out your hands on the altar and place those feelings right there.

You might say something like: "I'm hurting again, Lord. You told me to give you my burdens, so here they are. It's not much of a gift, but if I keep them, I won't be able to love her as I should. I want to be like You and act and react in Your love. Please help me."

It might possibly be good to talk it all out with the Lord, detailing the conversation. And one time will probably not be enough. Remember the 70 X 7 principle? I firmly believe that one application of that teaching of Christ is that we must forgive someone over and over in our minds until we can recall the hurtful incident without pain.

When praying to the Lord, it is good to keep three things in mind:

- 1) Do the unthinkable---thank God for this situation! (I Thess. 5:18)
- 2) Ask the Lord to show you if you are contributing to the negativity of the situation. (I Cor. 11:31-32)
- 3) Ask the Lord to show you His goals in this situation. (Gal. 5:13-26)

Can you mentally jump 30 years into the future? Will you be able to look back at the hurtful episodes with gratefulness that this wonderful person was a catalyst to draw you close to the Lord? Or will you have to look back with hurt and bitterness that you have held onto all these years at this person who was a deep irritation in your side?

Is it worth it? Giving up isn't easy. Crucifying ourselves may not come any easier for us than it did for our Lord. But what joy, peace, and rest comes as we learn to die to ourselves and live through him!

Love Your Enemy

Corrie ten Boom

It was in a church in Munich that I saw him--a balding, heavysset man in a gray overcoat, a brown felt hat clutched between his hands. People were filing out of the basement room where I had just spoken, moving along the rows of wooden chairs to the door at the rear. It was 1947 and I had come from Holland to defeated Germany with the message that God forgives.

It was the truth they needed to hear most in that bitter, bombed out land, and I gave them my favorite mental picture. Maybe because the sea is never far from a Hollander's mind, I liked to think that that's where forgiven sins were thrown. "When we confess our sins," I said, "God casts them into the deepest ocean, gone forever. And even though I cannot find scripture for it, I believe God then places a sign out there that says, 'NO FISHING ALLOWED.'"

The solemn faces stared back at me, not quite daring to believe. There were never questions after a talk in Germany in 1947. People stood up in silence, in silence collected their wraps, in silence left the room.

And that's when I saw him, working his way forward against the others. One moment I saw the overcoat and the brown hat; the next, a blue uniform and a visored cap with its skull and crossbones. It came back with a gush: the huge room with its harsh overhead lights; the pathetic pile of dresses and shoes in the center of the floor; the shame of walking naked past this man. I could see my sister's frail form ahead of me, ribs sharp beneath the parchment skin. *Betsie, how thin you were!*

The place was Ravensbruck and the man who was making his way forward had been a guard--one of the most cruel guards.

Now he was in front of me, hand thrust out: "A fine message, *Fraulein!* How good it is to know that, as you say, all our sins are at the bottom of the sea!"

And I, who had spoken glibly of forgiveness, fumbled in my pocketbook rather than take that hand. He would not remember me, of course--how could he remember one prisoner among those thousands of women?

But I remembered him and the leather crop swinging from his belt. I was face-to-face with one of my captors and my blood seemed

to freeze. "You mentioned Ravensbruck in your talk." he was saying. "I was a guard there." No, he did not remember me. "But since that time," he went on, "I have become a Christian. I know God has forgiven me for the cruel things I did there, but I would like to hear it from your lips as well. *Fraulein*" -- again the hand came out-- "will you forgive me?"

And I stood there--I whose sins had again and again needed to be forgiven--and could not forgive. Betsie had died in that place--could he erase her slow terrible death simply for the asking?

It could not have been many seconds that he stood there--hand held out--but to me it seemed hours as I wrestled with the most difficult thing I had ever had to do. For I had to do it-- I knew that. The message that God forgives has a prior condition: that we forgive those who have injured us. "If you do not forgive men their trespasses," Jesus says, "neither will you Father in Heaven forgive your trespasses."

I knew it not only as a commandment of God, but as a daily experience. Since the end of the war I had had a home in Holland for victims of Nazi brutality. Those who were able to forgive their former enemies were able also to return to the outside world and rebuild their lives, no matter what the physical scars. Those who nursed their bitterness remained invalids. It was simple and horrible as that.

And still I stood there with the coldness clutching my hear. But forgiveness is not an emotion-- I knew that too. Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function regardless of the temperature of the heart. *Jesus help me!* I prayed silently. *I can lift my hand. I can do that much. You supply the feeling.* And so woodenly, mechanically, I thrust my hand into the one stretched out to me. And as I did, an incredible thing took place. The current started in my shoulder, raced down my arm and sprang into our joined hands. And then this healing warmth seemed to flood my whole being, bringing tears to my eyes.

"I forgive you, brother!" I cried. "With all my heart." For a long moment we grasped each other's hands--the former guard and the former prisoner. I had never known God's love so intensely as I did then. But even so, I realized it was not my love. I had tried, and did not have the power. It was the power of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Romans 5:5: "...because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

- via Locust St. Laborer

Scars and Memories

Don McGee

Have you ever tried to imagine what it was like when God gave Eve to Adam? He took a rib from his side and constructed her. I ask, why did He not do it for man the way He did it for the animals? I mean, God simply created the animals male and female all in one fell swoop. Done, and that's it! But, not so for Adam. If you think about it, Adam had to suffer for his bride. I mean, was it not painful after the surgery? I know God could have made it painless, but I wonder... could not the pain have been an important part of it all? Is it not possible that in those moments when Adam admiringly looked upon his busy bride whom he loved so much he might have once again examined the scar on his side? I'm sure he thought, "But it sure was worth it!" And what about Eve? How many times do you suppose she gently touched that scar on her husband's body as he slept by her side? Each time she was reminded of the place from where she came and the pain her husband suffered to make it all happen.

I see Jesus and the church in all this because, of course, you know the Bible calls the church the bride of Christ. So, how did God handle this one? Essentially the same way He did the first one... by blood. Jesus' back was whipped into shreds, His scalp was punctured with fiery thorns, His hands and feet were nailed to a Roman cross and His side was pierced with a soldier's spear. His Revelation indicates He will bear those scars for all eternity. Scars which will serve as a constant reminder of what it cost Him for His bride. And I know he thinks to Himself, "But it sure was worth it!"

And what about the church? Each time she "sees" the scars she is reminded of the place from where she came and the pain Jesus suffered to make it all happen. And that's the reason for communion. Jesus said to take the Lord's Supper in memory of Him, so we have the juice and the bread as emblems of His blood and body. Each Sunday we are reminded of what He did for us. Each Sunday? Yes, each Sunday. The same Book that tells us the first Christians took up a collection each first day of the week also says they had communion each first day of the week. No question that Jesus understood we would need to be reminded of these matters quite often, so He instituted what we call the Lord's Supper. And I think you will agree that was wise, human nature being the way it is.

But a new dispensation is soon coming. A day when we shall no longer walk by faith, for we shall then see Him as He is. And what a day that will be! We will then gaze upon those scars as did Thomas and with him be able to say, "My Lord and my God!"

THE LORD'S SUPPER

R. H. Boll

The two verses in 1 Corinthians 11 which solemnly warn against the improper participation of the Lord's Supper, have been a source of great doubts and fears, and of spiritual loss to many conscientious Christians. But, as always, the cause of stumbling lies not in the scripture, but in man's misunderstanding of it. In this case the translation in common use (the King James Version) is largely responsible for the misunderstanding. I will give the two verses first as they stand in the King James Bible:

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." I Cor. 11:27.

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." I Cor. 11:29.

The common misunderstanding of these verses is two-fold: (1) As to the meaning of the term "unworthily;" and (2) as to the "damnation" that follows in the case of one's eating un-worthily.

Who Then Is Worthy?

Tender hearts and consciences are often weighed down with a sense of unworthiness. The tenderer the conscience, the keener the sense of sin and failure; and (where there is faith, rather than doubt) the greater the wonder that God would look upon such a one. Not one of us but feels and says, like Jacob, "I have not been worthy of the least of Thy lovingkindnesses, and of all the truth which Thou hast showed unto thy servant." Thus Paul also counted himself chief of sinners, least of saints. Such a feeling should not be thought of for a moment as rendering a man unfit to partake of the table of the Lord.

But what if we are conscious of recent and grave failure? Then let us go straight to the throne of grace that we may find God's sure mercy. Past failure can be no barrier to the Lord's Supper—*unless* I intend to continue in sin; unless I "regard iniquity in my heart;" unless I have enthroned idols there; unless I hold malice and hatred and an unforgiving spirit. That would of course render me unfit for the observance of the Lord's Supper; but for every other act of worship and service as well. We must get right with God; and so we can come worthy in the worthiness of Christ to eat and drink.

But it is not the man's personal worthiness of which the apostle speaks, but *of the manner* in which the Lord's Supper is eaten, whether with due recognition and reverence, or not. The Revised Version makes this plainer when in the place of "unworthily," it translates "in an un-

worthy manner." And what is the unworthy, and what the worthy, manner of participation ?

The State Of Affairs In Corinth.

The Corinthians had been guilty of a desecration of the Lord's Supper which to us seems shocking and incredible. They had made a feast of it, after the pattern of the heathen feasts—an occasion of surfeiting and drunkenness. And not only so, but the wealthier members brought their own provisions and shared them with those of their own clique, neither waiting for, nor regarding the rest. The apostle protested to them that the Lord's Supper was not that sort of feast. Its purpose was not to satisfy hunger; nor was it a social meal, still less a convivial affair. If you want to eat and drink—there are your homes. Do you so despise the church of God, and put the poor among you to shame? Then he proceeds to tell them what revelation he had received concerning the institution, purpose, and manner of participation in, the Lord's Supper, as follows:

"For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said. This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

From this we gather that the Lord's Supper consisted not of a bill of fare, but of the bread and the cup only, that these were not taken for enjoyment, or nourishment, but for a *sacred purpose*: "do this in remembrance of me;" in which the bread stood for the body; the fruit of the vine, for the blood of the Lord. This then was no common meal. It was not merely "bread" and "a cup," but *the* bread, and *the* cup, even that of the Lord's own institution. There is a distinction between that which is holy and that which is common. This is a sacred meal, hallowed and set apart by the word and ordinance of Jesus Christ.

Eating "Unworthily."

We are now prepared to see what it is to eat and to drink unworthily. The Christian who ignores the holy significance put upon this memorial meal by the Lord, and eats of it without reference to the Lord's body and blood, and not specially in remembrance of Him; if he prostitutes this meal to any social or other common purpose—he eats and drinks in an unworthy manner. That was what the Corinthians had done. It applies equally today to all who participate of this meal without reverence, or thought, or purpose of faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. Because he had no regard to the meaning and content of this ordinance of the Lord; because he ate and drank as if this were common bread and wine, and did not discriminate between the

body of the Lord (for which that bread stands) and the bread which means only material food—because of this indignity offered to the Lord's sacred memorial he is "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord;" not, however (as some have thought) as though he had "crucified the Lord afresh" (for which sin there is no repentance); but guilty of an offense regarding the Lord's body and blood. And in thus unworthily partaking he eats and drinks damnation to himself.

Eating And Drinking Damnation.

This opens the second inquiry—What is meant by eating and drinking "damnation" to oneself? It is here that the most serious misunderstanding comes in. By "damnation" people of course understand the final sentence, "Depart from me ye cursed into the eternal fire." And for this impression the King James' translation is chiefly responsible. The true meaning appears in the Revised Version: "Eateth and drinketh judgment to himself. Now the following teaching shows that this "judgment" is not the same thing as that which is commonly designated by "damnation." On the contrary, it is the safeguard against damnation; for he goes on to say, "When we are judged we are chastened of the Lord that we may NOT be condemned with the world."(I Cor. 11:31).

It is certain then that this "judgment" we eat and drink to ourselves if we partake unworthily, is not "damnation," but a discipline intended to prevent damnation. This is a point constantly overlooked, and a point of vast importance not only in this connection, but in its general application. It throws light on God's dealings with His children. They stand upon a footing of grace. He said to David of old concerning his seed: "I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him as I took it from Saul"(2 Sam. 7:14, 15). So God speaks of us now who are in Christ Jesus. He does not condemn us, but chastens us that we may not be condemned. By this it is not meant that a Christian cannot, should he so choose, override God's mercy and despise the chastening of the Lord, so that condemnation would be the only alternative left. But it does mean that the Lord will not cast us off, but with chastenings discipline us that we may not be condemned with the world.

The Nature Of The Chastening Judgment.

The Corinthians who had thus eaten judgment to themselves were already suffering under it. In their physical weaknesses, sickness, and premature deaths, the chastening hand of God was recognized by Paul. "For this cause," he says, "Many among you are weak and sickly and not a few sleep" (1 Cor. 11:30). That this is bodily, and not spiritual sickness, the connection clearly shows. We must guard here the conclusion, especially uncalled-for when imputed to others (as Job's friends did), that sickness or early death are always God's chastening judg-

ments on sin, which is not at all the case. (Comp. Phil. 2: 27, 30). But God does sometimes use that method. Nevertheless the advantage is incalculable. "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, . . . that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity . . . for Jehovah will not cast off his people." (Ps. 94:12-14). Judgment does indeed begin with the house of God, even here and now; but if it fares hard with some of us, what shall be the end of those who obey not the gospel? (1 Pet. 4:17). For our judgment is disciplinary and redemptive in its nature; but theirs retributive and hopeless.

How To Avoid The Judgment

But there is a way in which we may avoid even the chastening judgment. "If we discerned ourselves we should not be judged" (1 Cor.11:31). The Lord would rather have it so. He takes no pleasure in even our temporary afflictions. How are we to escape the chastening rod? By self-judgment. And that not in the first place self-judgment after the wrong is done (though even this brings forgiveness, cleansing and mercy, 1 John 1:7-10), but beforehand, that we may not fall into guilt. "Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup" (1 Cor. 11:28). This will lead to self-judgment, repentance, amendment, acceptance; and all the guilt of sinning against the Lord's body and blood is thus averted. But if we are conscious of past sin, self-judgment will save us from the sentence of condemnation, even though it may not *always* result in exemption from needed chastisement (Ps. 99 :8).

"Let Us Draw Near With A True Heart."

Lastly, in the words of another, it is good to be reminded that "the warning is directly against the careless and profane, and not against the timid and the doubting." The denominations who observe the Lord's Supper only on rare occasions claim that weekly observance detracts from the solemnity and sanctity of it. There is of course a danger of the familiarity that breeds carelessness, if not contempt in this case. But it was God's design that we should move *constantly* on that high level of reverence and earnestness, which these think to attain only on their special occasions. But in order to avoid falling into formality and carelessness in the weekly celebration, the teaching must be constantly impressed: the great benefits of a right communion; the great guilt of a wrong participation; the sweet promise and the solemn warning; the awful facts back of the observance—these must be held up *all* the time. If we so eat and drink, we shall not stray far between times; but by our daily life we shall bear testimony, and in the Lord's Supper proclaim, that our Lord died for us and is coming again. "For as often as ye eat THIS BREAD and drink THE CUP, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come."

Communing with our Savior

"When we, first of all, began to break bread on every first day of the week, I heard some say that they thought that the coming so often to the table might take away the impressiveness of the holy feast. Well, I have scarcely missed a Sabbath now these twenty years, and I never was so impressed with the solemnity and sweetness of the Master's Supper as I am now. I feel it to be the fresher every time. When it was once a month I had not half the enjoyment in it, and I think that where friends have the communion once a quarter or once a year, as in some churches, they really do not give the ordinance a fair opportunity to edify them."

--Charles Spurgeon in a sermon, 1882

The Farmer and the Baker

Harry Robert Fox, Jr.

In a previous article entitled "The Body of Christ Has Two Hands", we discussed the tendency of members of the church to react to each other rather than to interact. Now let's look at a specific example of this tendency in the case of "evangelists" and "teachers". The same could be done with "prophets" and "pastors" as well as "administrators" and "healers", (types of "ministers" mentioned by Paul in one place or another in Romans 12:4-8; I Corinthians 12:27, 28 and Ephesians 4:11).

Although the various kinds of ministers enumerated by Paul in the passages cited are intended by God to complement and supplement each other "for building up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12) they have not always done that. To partly understand why this has been so in the case of evangelists and teachers I would like to discuss this question under the heading of "The Farmer and the Baker".

As everyone knows, farmers and bakers are people who make different uses of wheat. The farmer uses wheat as seed to be planted in the ground to produce more wheat. The baker grinds wheat into flour and bakes it into bread for feeding hungry people. These are complementary functions and do not usually create tensions between farmers and bakers. But when we turn to their spiritual counterparts in the church we too often find it to be otherwise.

The spiritual counterparts of farmers and bakers in the church are evangelists and teachers. Evangelists take the word of God (which is symbolized by wheat seed in the parables of the sower and the tares in

(Matthew 13) and sow it in all kinds of "soil" (hearts) to win souls to Christ. Teachers use the word of God not for sowing, but as bread for hungry souls. Thus is fulfilled Jesus' dual commission to his disciples to (1) preach the gospel to make converts and to (2) teach those converts all that Jesus commanded them to be and do. (Matthew 28:19-20) These dual functions are complementary and should be done in a spirit of mutual good will by evangelists and teachers.

Unfortunately, however, evangelists and teachers too often tend to dislike and work against each other. Their attitudes toward each other are manifested by such comments as "evangelists are mass-oriented and are shallow and superficial" while "teachers are stuck up and tend to talk over people's heads." Each of these criticisms is, of course, partly justified by the conduct of some of those against whom they are made. But there is more to it than that. It is not sufficiently understood that in the very nature of the case most evangelism must be extremely simple while most teaching must deal with complex matters. Evangelistic preaching deals mainly with what is sometimes called "first principles", that is, with arousing faith in men and women which leads them to repent of their sins and to be baptized into Christ. Teaching is designed to take converts on to maturity so that they will advance from simple "milk drinkers" to "meat eaters" (Hebrew 5:11-14).

It is usually when someone in the church begins to urge "milk drinkers" to "go on to maturity" (Hebrews 6:1) that reaction occurs. Again, part of this reaction can be explained by the "reactionary" attitude with which some teachers approach milk drinkers. This reactionary attitude on the part of some teachers, however, can sometimes be explained by the reactionary spirit which they encounter here and there. And so a vicious cycle gets started which is hard to break. Let's look at this situation, then, to see if better understanding can be achieved between evangelists and teachers as well as between the multitudes of people "lined up" behind them.

One of the most common complaints lodged against teachers is that they are "sterile", that is, they don't produce converts. And one of the commonest complaints against evangelists is that their overly elementary preaching fails to nourish some members of the church who are starving for solid food. But let's pause a moment to think about these complaints objectively. When have we ever heard of anyone complaining that loaves of bread failed to sprout into wheat plants? Or when have we heard of anyone complaining that raw wheat doesn't make very good "eating"? The reason we don't hear such absurd complaints is because no one in his right mind regards a loaf of bread as intended for anything other than to be eaten. Likewise, no one expects raw wheat to be used "as is" for food. And just as surely we all know

that as soon as wheat is ground into flour it can't be used as seed to be planted in the ground for growing new wheat plants.

Therefore, until we can all learn that the word of God is to be seen as both raw wheat to be planted and as bread (food) to be eaten (John 6: 32-35) we will never be able to appreciate the division of labor that exists between evangelists and teachers. Evangelists "rightly handle the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15) when they treat it as seed to be planted into good and honest hearts to bring about their conversion to Christ. If evangelists were to "analyze" the word of God the way teachers must do they would "kill" its usefulness as "seed". But teachers must "grind" (i.e., analyze) the wheat into "flour" so that it may provide nourishment to famished souls.

Teachers and evangelists, therefore, are going to have to quit reacting to each other and learn to "pull together" as members of the same team. Neither of their ministries can be neglected by the church. For whenever evangelism is emphasized to the neglect of teaching, the church may gain numerous converts but will fail to hold them. And whenever teaching is emphasized to the neglect of evangelism, the church will eventually run out of anyone to teach. Thus, the church must learn to love and appreciate both its evangelists and its teachers and to encourage and support both.

What the Bible Teaches about . . .

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING

Comparing Various Passages

Alex V. Wilson

Several preceding articles in this series focused on the important subject of our Lord's return. We looked in detail at Christ's main teaching about the future, Matt.. 24-25, and compared it with I Thes. 4 (July and Aug. '98 *W&Ws*) Several articles examined what Scripture declares about the "imminence" of the second coming (Sept.). And we studied the Day of the Lord, a topic too often neglected despite its being mentioned numerous times throughout the Bible (Mar. '99).

Now, finally, let's try to draw these various strands of teaching and reach some further deductions. Unless charts and diagrams are carefully based on clear Scriptural statements, they may be used to "prove" false inferences. We never want to do that, so we urge you to examine the following passages thoroughly lest we have jumped to wrong conclusions.

The events named in the chart go from left to right in order of timing. Notice how the columns resemble each other, containing many similar ideas and even identical expressions. It seems to this writer that such repeated similarities are significant and unforced. When we collate or fit together all these passages, this is the order we arrive at: this present age will end with the "great tribulation" (or "distress," NIV) when Antichrist rebels against God and persecutes His people, followed by the heavenly signs of darkened sun and moon, which usher in the Day of the Lord--that period when He will return (no return is specified *before* then). During that great Day He will both "gather" His people to Himself and destroy Antichrist and his followers.

Notice that the heavenly signs separate the great tribulation from the Day of the Lord, for they follow the former (Matt. 24:29) but precede the latter (Acts 2:20). Thus, contrary to what some say, the great tribulation and the Day cannot overlap, can they? And notice the timing of Christ's coming: it occurs during the Day of the Lord, doesn't it? (Study the last column carefully.) Comparing these passages seems to contradict the inference that He will come before the great tribulation--for where is that idea stated anywhere? Yes, He will come *for* His people before coming *with* them (1 Thes. 4:16-17; 3:13). But in no way does that require 7 or even 3 1/2 years to occur between those two phases of His coming. They could take place very near to each other. When? "Immediately *after* the tribulation of those days. . . they will see the Son of Man coming . . . and He will send his angels [to] gather his elect" (Mt. 24:29-31).

May the Lord guide our study of His word, as we examine it with open minds. As I've said repeatedly in these articles, the main point is that we be prepared--ready whether He returns today (as we pray, "Come, Lord Jesus") or whether we shall go through the dreadful persecution which He clearly foretold will come upon His "elect" (Mt. 24:22, 24, 31)--a term used of Christians (e.g., 2 Tim. 2:10; Tit. 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:10). Please investigate carefully *and with open Bible* what follows. Be sure to read the passages in 2 Thessalonians, especially chapter one -- which is too often overlooked.

The following chart will not mean much unless you look at the scriptures.

1. Matt. 24:1-31

This Present Age	Abomination of Desolation	Great Tri
(verses 1-14)	(15-20)	(21-
war, famine, martyrdoms now/later, worldwide gospel preaching (cf. Rev.6)		

2. John 14:2-3

No indication of when

3. Acts 2:20 (from Joel 2:32)

4. 1 Thes. 4:13-5:11

(Ignore the chapter break; this whole passage deals with different aspects of one topic.)

5. 2 Thes. 1:4-10

Now: persecutions, trials; Cns. troubled by the ungodly.

6. 2 Thes. 2:1-10

Now: the secret power of lawlessness is working, yet is held back

Rebellion will occur & the Man of Sin be revealed

7. Rev. 6:1-17

Now: (compare Mt. 24:1-14)
#1) worldwide gospel preaching
#2) war #3) famine #4) death
#5) martyrdoms now -----
also later

(Isn't Rev. 6 a dramatized replay of Mt. 24:1-31, before the more detailed series of

25)

(29)

(30-31)

Coming on the clouds with power & glory; with angels & trumpet call; He gathers all the "elect."

I'll come and take you to be with me in the Father's house

Sun/Moon Darkened

The Day of the Lord

The Coming of the Lord with a loud command; the archangel; trumpet-call; dead Cns raised, all Cns caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord; the Day of the Lord will bring sudden destruction/wrath on the unsaved but salvation to the saved, dead/alive

Jesus revealed from heaven with angels, to punish the disobedient on the Day He comes to be glorified in His people (Cns). He will relieve them from trouble & repay their troulers--at the same time.

Regarding the coming of our Lord Jesus & our being gathered to him: the Day of the Lord will come; the Lord Jesus will destroy the Man of Sin by the splendor of His coming.

#6) Sun/Moon Darkened

#7)The great Day of God's wrath has come.

f trumpets & bowls?)

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

Part 5

Alex V. Wilson

In our preceding installment we finished describing his attitudes in writing and editing, and began looking at the content of his teaching. Now we continue.

C. The Holy Spirit

The subject of the Holy Spirit was not ignored in the Stone-Campbell movement throughout the 1800s. But discussion centered for the most part around the respective parts played by the Spirit and/or the Bible in the conversion of the unsaved. This was due to the widespread reliance people placed on unusual experiences--dreams, visions, etc.--interpreting such as evidence from the Holy Spirit that they were saved.⁸ In rightly debunking such views and stressing people's need to hear and obey God's written Word, many of our preachers over-reacted and minimized the Spirit altogether. By and large He was the forgotten member of the Godhead. This was true during the early 1900s too. If He was mentioned at all, it was mainly to refute the teachings of Pentecostalists. Quite a few taught that the Holy Spirit simply is the Bible.

To the contrary, Boll taught much about Him. In 1927 alone, in addition to running an article by another man on this subject, RHB himself wrote the following: "The Promise of the Comforter"; "Who Receives the Holy Spirit?"; "How May I Know that I Have the Spirit?"; and "What the Indwelling Spirit Does for Us." In the last-named article, he mentions these specific blessings: (1)The indwelling Spirit makes a God-pleasing life possible, for (2)He alone can produce in us the Christlike life. (3)He endues us with inner strength. (4)He imparts boldness, and (5)wisdom, and (6)He intercedes for us.

In another article, writing about Paul's command, "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18), Boll comments,

Evidently, it must be one thing to have the indwelling Spirit, and another thing to be filled. For he speaks to Christians who were already in possession of the Spirit, and exhorts them to be filled with the Spirit. Let us note now a few truths involved in that exhortation.

1. It must be *possible* -- for God would not urge it upon us if it were not for us to attain. 2. Manifestly it is God's will: *He wants* us to be filled with the Spirit. 3. It is clear that this filling is not dependent exclusively on God; it must depend on some step or attitude of ours. The command is addressed to us.... 4. It follows that if it is possible, if God wants it, and if it devolves on us whether we are "filled with the Spirit" or not -- it is a great failure for a Christian to go through life

without it. 5....Where the Spirit does not...hold full sway, the flesh holds place. Half-hearted, double-minded, lukewarm, weak and unreliable conduct follows. But in the man who is filled with the Spirit, the abounding fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:22) will testify that he is indeed a child of God.

D. The Grace of God

The heartbeat of Boll's life and the mainspring of his service was the grace of God to undeserving sinners like us. He never got over it! Love divine was the theme of his song. He delighted to preach and write about it. Bob Ross, a former student commented,

R. H. Boll first taught me that the Gospel means grace, and when it becomes law it is no longer Gospel, no matter how "conservative" or "Biblical" its dress....As Brother Boll used to say, "The hardest thing to believe about the Gospel is not the virgin birth, the resurrection or the miracles of Jesus, but the fact that it is simply too good to be true."

When Church of Christ people hear Boll's name mentioned, the first thought to come to the minds of most of them is probably, "Prophecy." But his longtime co-worker, Stanford Chambers, believed that in the long conflict that went on "the real issue [was] ...not prophecy but grace." After quoting that statement by Chambers, Richard Hughes writes,

Chambers was right, for no one in the history of Churches of Christ possessed a keener sense of divine grace than did R. H. Boll. Divine grace, in fact, was the central feature of Boll's theology, and his pre-millennial outlook was but a pale reflection of it. Put another way, the idea of the premillennial second coming of Jesus underscored for Boll the helplessness of humankind: we would all be doomed apart from divine intervention.

On the other hand, many in Churches of Christ...had nurtured for years a confidence in human potential and a legalistic understanding of the Christian faith that rendered them inevitably hostile toward Boll's message. (*Reviving the Ancient Faith*, p 168)

1. Grace and Salvation

Maurice Clymore, a fellow-preacher and longtime acquaintance of Boll, testified, "He told me one time that when he learned the true significance of the grace of God it changed his whole life as much as any other one thing. If one had asked him the secret of his power, his love, his humility, his gentleness, and his reverence for the word of God, I believe his answer would have been, 'I am what I am by the grace of God.'"

Boll found in God's undeserved favor a resting place when difficult questions arose. He had left Roman Catholicism after having been

brought up in it. But his mother remained a devout Catholic as long as she lived. When he mentioned this publicly, people often asked what he thought was her destiny. The conversation would be something like this:

“Do you believe that your mother was saved?”

“NO, Sir.”

“Do you believe she was lost?”

“NO, Sir.”

“Now, she had to be one or the other.”

“...I leave that whole thing in the hands of God. And He is too wise to make a mistake, too good to do a wrong, and He loves my mother better than I loved her and whatever sentence or judgment He'll pronounce will be absolutely right. But if I would walk in her path with what I have learned, and what God has shown to me, I would be lost.

“....

2. Grace and Christ's Return

W. Robert Heid, who grew up under Boll's ministry and later preached at the Portland Avenue Church himself, rightly observed that “No matter what subject Brother Boll started preaching on, he always ended up on the grace of God.” It was like a magnet that drew him constantly.

This appears in his teaching about prophecy too. In an article, he quotes a letter someone sent him. “I want Christ to come, but I expect I would be frightened. I am afraid He will not be pleased with me, and my doom will be eternal punishment....I am afraid He will find too many faults in me....” For two full pages, Boll administered the medicine of grace to this person and the many other believers with similar fears. He said, in part,

We not only were saved by grace in the first place, but we “stand in grace” (Rom. 5 :1-2). And not only that but there is more grace coming --*at the coming of Christ*. “Set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”(1 Pet.1:13). In the meantime there is constant healing and cleansing; there is ever-ready mercy and grace to help us, also along the way (Heb.4: 16). And this is the inspiration to us unto a life of obedience, holiness and good works. (1 Pet. 1 :14-16)

Many folks, especially in the Stone-Campbell movement of those days, needed such blessed assurance. For it was a time when legalism poured forth from most pulpits in the mainstream Churches of Christ as well as elsewhere. There were notable exceptions, such as K. C. Moser, G. C. Brewer, and J. N. Armstrong. But they seemed to be voices crying in the wilderness. Boll's preaching, editing, and writing helped the pre-millennial churches, by and large, to be far more grace-centered than most main-stream Churches of Christ during his lifetime. Of course a number of fellow-workers joined him in this emphasis. ⁹

8. For an accurate portrayal of this mindset in the form of a historical novel, see Louis Cochrane, *Raccoon John Smith*, especially chapter 7. The book is now published by College Press, Joplin, Mo.

9. We already saw Hughes' observation that where grace is emphasized, love for Christ's return usually abounds also. Thus it seems to be more than a coincidence that a number of the premill preachers (such as E. L. Jorgenson, Stanford Chambers, H. L. Olmstead, J. R. Clark, Frank Mullins Sr. and others) strongly accented God's grace. It is lamentable that opposition to "the pre-millennialists" closed many pulpits to such men and their message of the gospel of the grace of God.

VOICES from the FIELD

Moto Nomura

Japan

March 1, 1999

Brother Frank M. Mullins, Sr., when I was in KBC / SCC in Winchester, taught me to "give till it hurts you," like what the Lord has done for us. That spiritual instruction has prompted me to keep serving the Lord in serving His people, both the believers and those who are not. Each day is a busy battle from 6:00 am till 12:30 midnight. Monday morning is the only time we feel a bit relaxed....

For the past almost twenty years, I have written for our churches in Japan a considerable amount of articles on the Restoration Movement history for our periodical similar to the Word & Work. No one has done this in Japan so far.... I am currently writing good quality material on Early Church History from a view point of "be faithful only to Jesus Christ and to His Word" rather than the viewpoint of some hierarchy. No one else has done writing like this, either, thus we all in Japan remain in the bottomless swamp of legalism and ignorance. There is hardly any teaching on the grace of God among our churches in Japan... [so] I am compelled to write these above mentioned matters for our churches in Japan.

Besides, I have classes each night locally. It has been fifteen years since we moved from Tokyo to this area, and we first met with [many difficult] persecutions from the villagers. But now three or four believing families come together on each Sunday to partake the Lord's Table. Some youth in the remote mountainous rural communities around us are hungry for intellectual or cultural stimulation, thus come to us to study English and sing Christian hymns and gospel songs in the evening after the hard manual labors they engage in. It is our opportunity to witness about Jesus Christ to these youth who receive Christian influence through us. Jesus is always our priority, and we serve these people because it is our way to serve Him... just like what Hebrews 13: 1 teaches us.

NEWS FROM THE CORN PROJECT

by Max Timbrook, January 26, 1999

Why has the corn project survived? It is an example of faith and obedience. The Hand of God has been upon Hollace and Ila Sherwood. Ila went home to be with the Lord on January 25, 1999 after a short battle with cancer. Her passage to heaven seals a life of service: teaching - home-building - the corn project. The volunteer workers who visited the farm will cherish the memories of the gracious, soft-spoken 'lady in the background' who served the delicious snacks on the screened porch. Since Hollace's stroke it was she who did the 'phone work' as long as she was able. She was vitally interested and in touch during weeks of accelerated activity during January because of hurricane Mitch. The Corn Project will always be the Sherwoods', no matter what. The rest of us only help to extend it.

What is the future of the Corn Project? Will it continue despite the physical problems of the Sherwood family? The hope of the Sherwood family is that it continue.

The long-term illnesses of Hollace and Ila have steered the Corn Project into transition. I have tried in these past months to only do what they could not. My personal goal has been to assure Ila and Hollace that the Corn Project would survive any of us, that it is of God. With God's help, their dream of feeding hungry children will continue to be presented in the Name of Jesus. 'The type of organization is yet to be determined. This ministry holds an important role to missionaries and mission agencies whose strategy includes a feeding program of some type. My trip to Honduras this past week has convinced me that we have only begun to address the hunger problems of the poor in that country. Crop destruction and "the poor that you will always have with you" have continuing needs that are unimaginable to us in the U.S. Please join us in seeking wisdom from God in all of this.

What are the benefits to God's Kingdom work of the Corn Project? Here are some that we see.

For the senders, the benefits include:

- Cooperation among believers and friends in a common cause.
- The value of addressing seriously the needs of others.
- A demonstration of unselfishness as a characteristic of God's Kingdom people.

For the receivers, the benefits include:

- Physical life; survival in feeding the poorest of the poor.
- Feeling 'cared for' as food is shared.

- Hearing the Good News of God's love in the person of Jesus Christ.
- Cooperation of various Christian missions in meeting the needs of hungry people.

Thank you for your continued support.

Monetary contributions may be sent to:

The Corn Fund, c/o Bryantsville Church of Christ, Bill Hopkins,
Treasurer, R.R. 1, Box 27L Mitchell, IN 47446.

Contact us by phone: (812) 849-2599 fax (812) 849-3992

How the Corn Project works:

All the high Lysine corn is grown on Rosehill Farms acreage. The corn is stored on the farm and the farm corporation is reimbursed as each shipment is made. The money for the reimbursement is made available through donations of individuals, families and churches. The Bryantsville eldership oversees this part of the operation. The labor needed for bagging, loading and administration is volunteer help.

The bagging of the corn can sometimes be scheduled ahead if shipping dates are imminent. Corn is not bagged far ahead of the shipping, preferably less than two weeks. It is best that groups who wish to help in the bagging operation call ahead. The group can then be scheduled for a date compatible to our shipping information. 4 to 6 people are needed for the bagging.

The loading is a different animal. Trucking schedules are often at the mercy of driving conditions and dispatching of previous loads of freight. This means calling a crew (12 minimum) at a few hours notice to do this heavy work. Fortunately, we have many standby 'minute-men' who will 'drop everything' and form a team for loading the corn.

The routing and shipping of the corn is left entirely to the agency that is receiving the shipment. Some corn routed for Central America is shipped in banana containers; some agencies, such as Feed the Children, have their own fleet of trucks; other agencies may have to shop for the best price, or possibly can find a generous hauler who contributes his equipment and time. Sometimes, during an extreme emergency, U.S. Air Force planes are used as per the "Denton Project." In such cases the sending agency trucks the corn to the nearest AFB.

It is difficult for many of us to imagine the plight of families in third-world countries where corn is a staple food, and cannot be obtained there. Be assured that the shipments of high lysine corn are in the hands of capable Christians who get the food to where the need is greatest.

The Value of High Lysine Corn:

Lysine is one of the essential amino acids that the human body uses in protein synthesis. Cereal grains—corn, wheat, rice, etc.—are a poor source of Lysine. However, this variety of corn, developed at Purdue University, is higher in lysine and total protein than "ordinary" corn. The additional protein and lysine make it valuable in the diet of those in developing countries, where protein is likely to be the limiting factor in their diet. 3/4 lb. of high lysine corn should provide the protein needed for a young adult (recognizing that they need vitamins and minerals from other sources.) Thus, one 60-lb. bag of corn should feed 80 persons for one day. When we ship a semi-truck container of 700 bags we are seeing that over 50,000 people are being fed for one day.

Through your support, the Corn Project has shipped over 75,000 bags of corn to date! That's 4,500,000 pounds of corn. May God continue to bless this incredible work.

RECOMMENDED READING

Robert F. Gill

Jerusalem in Prophecy by Randall Price, author of The Stones Cry Out; Harvest House Publishers; Eugene, Oregon, 1998.

Anyone who is interested in the future will enjoy and be blessed immensely by this book. The author and his family love the Lord and His land. They spent years in Israel learning the language, the people, the land and their history.

This is the best researched and documented book I have read regarding Jerusalem. One quote from page 32: "Therefore, those who desire to defend the truthfulness of scripture against the attacks of skeptics in these last days of the church age cannot afford to neglect the proof of prophecy."

Over 400 pages, Paperback - \$12.95

Questions Asked Of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

Am I responsible for the wrong done by the company or business I work for? And what if I am helping make products that will be used for evil how far does my responsibility go?

There is no simple answer to this question that will fit every circumstance. Obviously there is a broad area involved here that calls for human judgment, wisdom, and even information about the business of the sort that may not be readily available. It is quite possible to be in a big organization that has multiple interests, holdings, and aims—some of which are praiseworthy and some objectionable. Or one may be engaged in manufacturing a product which will be used in both good and bad ways. The good uses may outweigh the bad or they may not. The Lord recognized that we are in the world and are going to do some elbow rubbing with people who will not all be motivated by Christian ideals (1 Cor. 5:9-19). We are not to avoid all association with unregenerate people. Surely we are not responsible for every evil deed done by others in the same company or business we may work for. We are not responsible (unless such is our position within the organization) for the improper, unethical policies that may be adopted by a company. We are not responsible for every use which people will make of products we may have helped manufacture. Jesus' instruction to His followers to pay their taxes (Luke 20:21-25) shows we are not responsible for all the uses or misuse which may follow.

There is another side to all of this, however. The Christian should stand for righteousness, engage in that which is good, and keep a clear conscience in all that he does. This will mean that there are some jobs he will not hold, some products he will not make, some practices he will not adopt, and some callings he will not accept. Drawing the lines of distinction will not always be easy and will call for a great deal of toleration even between Christians. He will need both sensitivity and sense. He certainly will need a good Bible-educated conscience. Even then the decisions will not all be easy. Suppose my company wants me to give short measure or weight. I must not hide behind the excuse that someone else "ordered" it. This matter is wrong, so as a Christian I refuse to do it. That may get me fired, but it was a relatively easy decision to make. The issues were clear. But suppose my refusal does not get me fired, and I am shifted to another unrelated job where I do not do the weighing or measuring. Should I go on working for a company that engages in such a practice? This is a more difficult question. Does my continued association with the company give an approval of the evil? Should I actively try to get the matter corrected? Maybe in some cases there is no legal violation, only a moral one, or solid proof may

be lacking. We suspect that too many Christians do not let their colors show as they ought in such situations. On the other hand, where is the company or business that is morally perfect? We cannot resign from the world. And these problems can even be extended beyond employment to the matter of buying stock or patronizing the business.

I know of no magic formula to decide some of the dilemmas. Each case pretty much has to rest on its own merits, and each Christian needs to be concerned with his own conscience and to some extent with the attitudes of church and society. How do others feel about the job, product, or service? Does he appear to be a hypocrite? As difficult as such decisions are, we must not make an artificial separation between our secular life and our spiritual life as though they are unrelated.

Manage Your Minutes

Bobb Biehl

When things seem overwhelming, make a list of all the things you've got to do, put them in order of importance, and start at the top.

It's my guess that every single person in the world has thought, *I'll never get caught up . . . It's hopeless . . . I'm so far behind, I don't know where to begin!* We all know that overwhelmed feeling of having so many things to do we don't even know where to start!

MAKE A LIST

When you begin to feel buried by all the things you need to do, ask yourself, *What do I have to do by the end of today? By the end of the week? By the end of the month?* Put a time limit on the things you need to accomplish.

Let your mind dump onto a piece of paper all the things you feel pressured to accomplish in the near future, and form a list. Making a list of things to do is about as sensible to me as making a grocery list when going to the market. When items are listed on a sheet of paper, you don't forget anything, you can organize what you need to do, and you have the satisfaction of crossing off each item as it is accomplished. Begin to see lists as friends, not enemies.

IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE

If your list is long, you may feel overwhelmed and not know where to begin. That's when you make a second list! Ask yourself, *If I could only do one thing, which one would I do?* That thing becomes number

one on your new list. Then ask, *If I got number one done and could only do one other thing, what would I do?* That becomes number two . . . and so on. This little bit of extra planning is valuable because it makes sure you're getting the highest done first.

START AT THE TOP

Start at the top of your list whenever possible, but there may be occasional exceptions. Sometimes you may feel too discouraged, overwhelmed, or fatigued to tackle the number one task—especially if it is a big one. You may want to start with a couple of easy items and check them off to feel like you're making progress. Just do something! If you keep "chipping away" at the list and checking off items, sooner or later they are all done!

For my senior year of college I transferred from Bethel (a small Christian college with about 500 students) to Michigan State University (with a campus of 35,000). The first day I was absolutely overwhelmed! I soon had thousands of pages to read, stringent course requirements to meet, and more than I thought I would ever be able to handle. I remember thinking, *I'm going to have this overwhelmed feeling hundreds of times in my life. How do I deal with it?* That's how I discovered the value of making lists.

Three years later I completed my Bachelors and then my Masters at Michigan State. Since then I've faced a lot of overwhelming times, but I've never forgotten the feeling of relief that came from simply making a list . . . and starting somewhere!

KEY QUESTIONS

1. *What are all the things you need to do?*
2. *What is the order of importance of those things?*
3. *What are the top three things you could do in the next seven days?*

ACTION POINT

Get a piece of paper and a pencil. Write out all the things you need to do—call Jami, talk to Joli, write Evida, finish studying for my English test, take my geometry test, and so forth. If you make the list and do one thing at a time, you won't feel nearly as overwhelmed. "Keep on keeping on," and sooner or later you will be done!

Excerpt from The On My Own Handbook, by Bobb Biehl, Chariot Victor Publishing. Used by Permission.

Good News, Bad News:

Update on Y2K, the Year 2000 Problem

Alex V. Wilson, April 26, '99

There are still many voices proclaiming doomsday Y2K scenarios. But I personally have become persuaded that Jan. 2000 is more likely to be a nuisance rather than a breakdown in *most of the U.S.* (However, *don't quit reading yet!*) Last month we shared with you the evaluation of Christian financial consultant Larry Burkett. He foresees **only sporadic breakdowns in electricity and telecommunications here, yet longterm economic recession due to unprepared countries overseas and their effect on our economy.**

More "Good" News

So far as Louisville is concerned, two Christian brothers who have worked long- time in responsible positions at Louisville Gas and Electric assure me with convincing evidence that LGE is ready. They say it has been prepared, tested, and re-tested, and January should bring no shortage of electrical power in this region. (But keep reading.)

April 1 and April 9, considered to be days when possible breakdowns might occur in some areas, turned out to be mostly glitch-less.

Even Peter de Jager, the Canadian mathematician and computer scientist who first predicted the Y2K bug in 1991, has changed his tune about "the impending disaster." In fact de Jager is, according to The Financial Times, so confident in the U.S.'s recent progress toward Y2K compliance that he currently plans to spend the night of January 1, 2000 traveling by plane! In a recent interview, De Jager spoke reassuringly, "A tremendous amount of work has been expended and we are making good progress. We are not going to get everything done, but it will not be the end of the world." (But keep reading.)

Also Senator Robert Bennett, long considered to be among the more pessimistic senators on the issue, stated that his predictions for Y2K had changed dramatically in the last year. Initially, he had predicted that there was a 40% chance of a national power outage. Now that prediction has lowered to less than 10%. He explained that his initial fear regarding the Y2K problem was mainly caused by the "specter" of embedded micro-chips. Early predictions for the failure of embedded chips were 2-3%, he stated, but more recent studies show that "The actual impact on embedded chips will be...0.02%." IF he is right, that means that two out of 10,000 rather than 3 out of 100 chips will malfunction. His explanation for this revised estimate was not given.

Bad News

But there are many reports showing the **staggering unpreparedness of numerous other countries worldwide**. Here are just a few samples: **Asia**: "One unidentified Asian country is so late in preparations that it is making plans to shut down the country's main airport on Dec. 31...." **The Middle East**: "UN officials stated that airports, Egypt's Suez Canal and electricity networks could be affected [by Y2K]. The highly-computerized oil refining and water desalination plants of the arid, oil-rich Gulf states were particularly at risk. 'If they should stop, then millions of people would have no power and no water to drink. This is the biggest challenge facing our region.' A science and technology adviser for the UN told Reuters that few countries in the region had considered the problem, let alone outlined plans to avoid it. **Africa**, like Asia, contains a great diversity of nations and cultures, and may turn out to be the least Y2K prepared continent in the world." Etc. etc. Of course if Y2K cripples many different countries, the U.S. will without question suffer a backlash from their devastation.

For example, our Department of Energy says that **the U.S. imports about half of its oil, mainly from countries that might not be ready for Y2K**. "Here in the U.S., we have oil refineries and companies doing pretty well," says Lou Marcoccio, Research Director of the Gartner Group. "But many of the refineries located in these countries that are far behind are at risk, especially in countries like Venezuela, Saudi Arabia and other parts of the Middle East." Venezuela supplies the United States with most of its imported oil. Analysts warn that that country is 9-15 months behind the United States in its Y2K preparations. In light of all this, the U.S. government has decided to set aside two to three months' worth of petroleum reserves. So, what might happen? Probably a few months into 2000 there will be at least some scarcity of gas, and prices at the pump will go a lot higher.

And even in the U.S., all the news is not good by any means. Some analysts estimate that half of small- and medium-sized businesses in the U.S. have yet to address the Y2K problem! That means that up to 750,000 small businesses might (repeat: *might*) be severely hurt or be forced to shut down because of Y2K.

Sen. Dodd said that 90% of the nation's 800,000 doctors' offices have not upgraded their computers, meaning that doctors could temporarily lose access to medical records or that dialysis or heart monitoring equipment could stop working. Affluent hospitals will be in good shape, Dodd said, but "we are very, very worried about what happens in the rural or urban situations."

Despite most utility companies being well on their way to compliance, Bennett emphasized that citizens should still be wary of problems at the local level. "Take charge of your own Y2K future," he repeated five times, referring to the need for the public to investigate the readiness of their individual communities. Bennett also called for the public to not abandon their personal emergency preparation. "Emergency supplies are prudent, regardless of Y2K."

As Peter de Jager puts it, "Preparations...sufficient to cope with Montreal Ice Storms are reasonable and prudent. [In fact,] parents have a responsibility to their children to always maintain that level of preparation, regardless of Y2K."

See W&W's recent issues (Jan. '99 and following) for more details re: preparations. But getting ready for longterm recession may in some ways be harder than preparing for humongous shutdowns in January -- which now seem much less likely. Keep praying, studying, discussing, and taking practical steps, looking to the Lord for wisdom.

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Bennie Hill

Johnson City - (Ken Runyan) I really detest phone solicitors. As soon as they catch my ear they begin their rhythmic banter. They talk fast, and are full of information, know what's best, and never listen to what I have to say. I wonder how God feels about 'prayer solicitors?' You know, those Christians full of religious jargon and pious protocol. They know all the correct phrases, display the correct posture, even give advice to God, but hardly ever listen. In your prayer life Christian, do you listen to God? Do you set as much time aside to listen as much as you talk? I am being quite serious here. The scriptures admonish us to "*be still and know that I am God*" (Ps. 46:10) God's voice does not

always come in tragedy like death or sickness. God's voice does not always come in triumph like a birth or healing. Many times, God's voice is found in the quietness of morning or the still of night. If we are "still" we can find God's voice in the advice of friends or the experience of worship. I beg you my good friend in your scripture reading and prayer to purposefully make time for quiet, reflective meditation. Put everything else aside. Turn off the TV, the radio, the lights. Make sure you are alone. Just you and your God. Imagine how aggravated God must feel with us. He has so much to say. So much peace to give. So much love to show. All we have to do is *stop* and get it.

Update from Kineshma

(Paul & Virginia Kitzmiller-pkitzmiller@glasnet.ru) We've just returned from our second round of weekend classes in Kineshma. In addition to seeing many friends that we know from our previous times there, we were able to meet a good number of new teachers and students on this trip. There are many opportunities to present the Word of God and to build a stronger friendship with these people. We continue to appreciate your prayers and support. Our e-mail address book has grown to the point that it is difficult for us to write to each of you individually and so we must use a "form letter." Please know that we are thankful for every prayer in our behalf and for every letter sent to us.

From Joseph Shulam

(jshulam@ibm.net) This a.m. at 3:45 I heard three strong "bangs" - I awaked from sleep. On the window I saw fire. As I got closer to the fire - I saw a "Molotov Cocktail." The bottle did not break - I opened the window and took the burning bottle to the sink and drowned it in a pot full of water. I called the police - they came in 5 minutes. Our home was fire-bombed! The only damage was on the window and my nerves. But, with God's help we will continue to be strong and continue to stand fast by His word. God loves Israel and the Jewish people and He wants them to be saved. We ask you to continue to be with us

in prayer and keep us and Jerusalem constantly before the Lord.

Tell City (Jerry Carmichael)
This year we are asking each one who attends our congregation to bring a sacrificial offering of **thirty pieces of silver** on Easter Sunday. The offering will be going to Maple Manor Adult Division to be applied to the furnishings for one of the new rooms they are building. Bring Silver coins, nickel and up and drop them in the barrel that will be beside the pulpit on Easter Sunday. Bring at least 30 coins, or more if you desire and put them in the barrel.

17th Annual Lectureship in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines (Cyrus O Gesulga)

May 19-21, 1999. What faithful Christians are looking for:

First, the surety of the 2nd coming of our one and only redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, for His own.

Second, the blessed hope of a great deliverance from the Wrath of God through the rapture.

Third, the greatest joy of reigning with Christ for a thousand years and the eternal joy of reigning with Christ for eternity.

As we wait, we can declare with the Apostle Paul, 'we are more than conquerors.' As we can expect with patience we pray with the Apostle John, 'Lord Jesus, come quickly!'

For these in gratitude we say, 'thank you Lord for counting us worthy servants.' Among the speakers included on this year's program will be Bro. Earl C. Mullins Jr. and Bro. Cleo Russell.

CYE...Deridder, La

Junior Wk. June 20-25 for 8-11 year olds

Junior High Wk. July 11-16 for 12-14 year olds.

Senior Wk. July 25-30 for 15 years up.

From Jennings bulletin: "Gifts of ministry. The foundation of ministry is character. The nature of ministry is service. The motive of ministry is love. The measure of ministry is sacrifice. The authority for ministry is submission. The purpose of ministry is glorifying God. The tools of ministry are the Word of God and prayer. The power of ministry is the Holy Spirit. The model of ministry is Jesus Christ." - copied

Denham Springs (Earl Johnson, Elder)

1998 has been a very good year for the Denham Springs Church of Christ. Bro. Sam Marsh and family sent to us by the Lord and he assumed the ministry here on the first Sunday of April. He is completing his first year here, and it has been a very exciting and fruitful period in the life of the congregation. We have had seven baptisms and eighteen responses for rededica-

tion and renewal, requests for prayer and for thanksgiving. Other activities have included:

CYE at Deridder Sr. Wk. There were 53 campers present along with staff of 25. Sonny Childs was the keynote speaker.

Bible Bowl competition with 17 young people participating.

Sr. Fall weekend retreat with over 40 campers and staff participating. Speakers included Sam Marsh, Don McGee and Sonny Childs.

The Lord has truly blessed us this past year and we are looking to Him to guide us and help us to have an even more fruitful year in 1999. (Submitted by Sam Marsh, Duane Jolibois, and Larry Parrott)

Hamburg...Worthy Goal for the Church! "Strive for 99 in '99!" Be inviting friends & neighbors as we try for an attendance of 99 in the year 1999. Make a difference in someone's life and be a part in leading them to the Lord this year!

April Revivals:

5-9 Lagrange Ky. (Different speakers)

11- Ave "E" Crowley LA (Bro. Listen)

12-19 Linton (Kenneth Preston)

Kentucky-Indiana Fellowship:

August 2-6. Come and share in this time of great fellowship!

Maple Manor Christian Children's Home:

Announcing our Open House/Building/Dedication/Auction for Saturday, April 24, 1999. Come share the excitement and fun as we dedicate our new all-purpose building to the Lord! Festivities begin at 11:00 a.m. We're located at 635 West Utica Street, Sellersburg, Indiana (Darryl Witten, Development)

Turkey Creek...The Lord continues to bless us in the work here. We have had 35 responses so far this year -34 for prayer & rededication and 1 for baptism. Bro. Sonny Childs from Paragould, Arkansas was with us March 14-17 for a "Family Values Revival." 22 of the rededications & 1 baptism were during the meeting. We are looking forward to VBS the week of June 6 and Jr. High week at CYE July 11-16. Kate & I will be at Henryville, Indiana October 10-13 for a revival meeting. Dale Offutt will be here in revival Sept. 12-17. Pray for us. Harry & Kate Coultas

Announcing the 25th Annual Central Louisiana Christian Fellowship (November 15-18, 1999) at the Glemora, Louisiana Church of Christ. Theme: "God's Instructions for 'Last Days' Living from Paul's Letters to Timothy & Titus."

"A Note of Thanks"

I am so thankful for all the notes I have received from many friends in our churches. Your

prayers on my behalf have been answered as God has given me back my health so I can preach and teach once again. Thanks again for your faithful prayers in Christ. --Nathan Burks.

Maple Manor told that they are one of Indiana's best

Maple Manor (senior division) has been recognized by the state of Indiana as being one of only 36 of 614 nursing homes in the state with zero deficiencies in the Indiana State Department of Health's annual survey. It is the only nursing home in Clark or Floyd counties to do so; it is the second straight year with zero deficiencies for Maple Manor. Some of the areas examined were residents' rights; how the facility protects its residents; quality of life; how the facility determines the appropriate care for the residents; quality of care; nursing, physician and dental service; infection control; physical environment; and administration.

--bulletin of Highland Church

Coming Soon!

Robert and Joy Garrett plan to arrive in Louisville, from Zimbabwe at the end of May. They hope to be here about a year and to visit as many churches as possible.

To arrange for a visit to your church, you may write to 1611 Plum Creek Trail, Louisville, Ky. 40299. Take advantage of hearing these veteran missionaries while they are here.

99-05 Z:1

James R. Satterfield
114 Brandywynne Lane

New Albany

IN 47150

Think About It!

A closed mouth gathers no foot.

**Health is merely the slowest possible rate at which
one can die.**

I got lost in thought. It was unfamiliar territory.

Honk if you love peace and quiet.

Atheism is a non-prophet organization.

If enough churches would like to get copies of the now out-of-print hymnal, GREAT SONGS OF THE CHURCH, then maybe — just MAYBE — we could convince its publisher to reprint it! Let us know if you are interested, and how many copies you would want if they can be convinced. Then we'll contact them. — avw