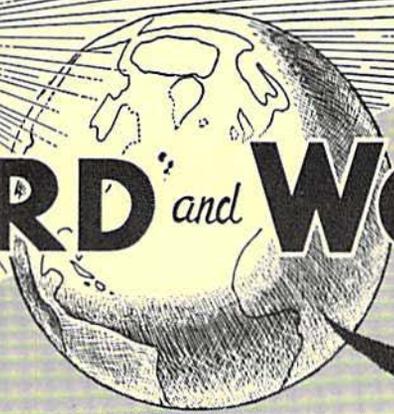


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Talking Things Over

G. R. L.



Unity can be dangerous. You may recall the story of the unity-minded hunter and the bear. The hunter wanted a fur coat and the bear was looking for his breakfast. After a time of "dialogue," they came to an agreement that satisfied both requisites—the hunter was inside the bear!

So much has been said about religious unity in recent years that many have come to assume that unity *in itself* is a worthy goal. Forgotten are such warnings as, "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate. . ." In the face of this seeming paradox—unity vs. separation—the most natural reaction is to choose one extreme in preference to the other. In my opinion, the general swing has been toward unity to such a degree that the truth of separation has been badly blurred, if not lost. Whether we like to admit it or not, our thinking has been conditioned to some degree by the ecumenical atmosphere around us. UNITY has loomed so large before us that we have not considered critically the foundational truths related to it.

FALSE BASES OF UNITY

1. It has been often suggested that agreement on fundamental doctrines should be a valid basis for unity. This sounds good, but in practice it has been a ground for *division*—not unity. For decades the Restoration Movement has been splintering and re-splintering over the question, "What is really essential?" Beyond all this, what do you know for sure about a person who "believes the right thing"? The demons, we recall, also believe some right things. Faith and believing are not necessarily the same thing. James goes to a great deal of trouble to warn us of the difference between faith and "that faith."

2. A rather popular criterion for unity is baptism. "All baptized believers are brothers." This is a good statement if we use a rigorous N. T. definition of "believers." In actual practice, the real criterion turns out to be the observable phenomenon of immersion. ("In writing up reports of your meetings, you always report that so many were baptized," said a brother in Louisville to a certain evangelist. "Why don't you ever report them as being saved?" The answer: "I *know* they were baptized.") Several years ago I read this statement by a fellow editor (Church of Christ): "The Church is full of baptized devils." It should be obvious that mere

conformity in religious practices cannot be sufficient ground for recognition of spiritual unity.

3. A third criterion—I forget where I picked this up—is that the Restoration Movement is a basis of unity for all groups recognizing it as their point of origin. “We have a common heritage. . . a real basis for unity.” In my book, this is *no criterion at all*. This doesn’t even include reference to Bible doctrine (item 1) or to biblical practices (item 2). A large part of the Restoration Movement is now adrift. The Word of God is no longer the standard of truth; Christ Jesus is no longer the virgin-born God-Man; blood redemption and the new birth have been lost from their vocabulary. As for myself, I profess no spiritual kinship to such. “Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ.” Jesus Christ links me to those who are my brothers; there is no other connective between us. If we have a Restoration Movement background in common, this is incidental. I was born (the second time) in Zion—not in Bethany, or Nashville, or Louisville.

4. Much writing and speaking on unity is negative. It dwells on the absurdities and inconsistencies sometimes observed in the

P. C. S. NEEDS TEACHERS

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Church of Christ. These attacks make it look ridiculous to be separate. They seek to create guilt feelings by playing on the concept of “love” and showing how lacking it is in the churches. Now it must be recognized that many of the criticisms are valid—certainly there are plenty of things wrong within the Church of Christ. But that is a poor excuse for joining the ecumenical movement. From these writers—and there are too many of them in print—I see no spiritually-oriented, biblically-based, constructive solutions. About the best they can do is to echo the worn-out clichés of the social gospel crowd. “Get involved” in social activism! The clear implication is that only this really counts. We can safely shelve such old-fashioned ideas as faithfulness to the Word of God and personal loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Of all the false platforms being proposed for unity, this, in my judgment, is the most dangerous—because it is deceitful. The strong appeal to love and the alleviation of human suffering strike a responsive chord within the genuine believer’s heart. But in so much that is written today, *love and human misery are used as a bait to turn you aside from Christ*. If a writer frequently refers to love, you’d better look to see what is on the other end of the string! (If you would like to read a really bone-shaking treatment of love that is thoroughly biblical, try *A Revolution of Love* by George Verwer—30¢. It will either revolutionize some of your attitudes or else confirm you in your coldness toward Christ.)

5. Another appealing suggestion is that we should recognize the unity of all "seekers after truth." There is an appearance of humility in the statement, "I am looking for truth wherever it may be found"—in the tradition of Socrates. And the person who would presume to have found the truth is characterized as arrogant, proud. The latter criticism is leveled (justly, I think) at the common Church of Christ claim that "We have the truth"—for that statement usually intends, "Our doctrine is 100% correct and only we can say this." Many have rejected such an untenable position to join the self-styled "seekers of truth" who are never sure of anything.

But a Christian is sure. "*I know him . . . !*" says Paul, and we with him. "I have written these things that ye may *know . . . !*" says John, and he uses the word "know" some 40 times in that short epistle. "I am the truth," says our Lord, and the heart that believes His Word has found rest. No more groping, blundering, stumbling. "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness!" The search is ended!

We who have been found by Him can certainly sympathize with the agnostic "truth-seeker." We cannot profess to be one whit more clever or intelligent than he. But we can *know*, and know that we know, without being arrogant about it. And unless he crosses over the boundary between us—from death to life—there can be no spiritual unity.

ECUMENISM— THE GOOD AND THE BAD OF IT

The modern emphasis on unity has been mostly bad. The bad—much of which has spilled over into the Church of Christ—consists of the ignoring of Christ. His name has been used freely, but His person has been shamefully ignored. Unity has been pursued on the organizational level—getting groups together, restructuring society, etc. The needs of the individual—and the power of a personal Savior—are lost in the shuffle. There is no acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as the Life, nor of the fact that all who share His life are automatically co-related.

There is a good side (or side-effect) to the ecumenical movement. It has caused many separatistic Christians to reconsider their extreme position. While perhaps they remain separated from other Christians in their worship and work, they have become aware of the fact that across the denominational fences there are others who share the same Lord, the same life, the same blessed hope. There has arisen a sense of kinship and concern for these other brethren which has sometimes led to fellowship in unofficial home gatherings for prayer or Bible study. Here it is not a matter of "my church" or "your church," but simply recognizing and rejoicing in "our Lord."

THE ANSWER

This comes far short of giving a final answer to the questions and problems in the area of unity. I would repeat that the unity appeal poses grave dangers for Christians today. To summarize: If

a unity appeal is organizational in nature, be extremely cautious. If the proposed basis for unity is something other than the life that we share (Jn. 15:5) with the Lord Jesus, then *beware!*

On the positive side, hold fast to Him who is our Head, and allow Him to nurture that new nature which He placed within you when you were born again. Look for evidences of this new nature in others who profess to be Christians, and where you see it, let that one know that you're glad to recognize him as one of the family.

(P. S. This was prepared before the Unity Forum at S. C. C. and without any knowledge of the program. Any relevancy to that event is purely coincidental.)

Christians Can Win Lotteries

Donald M. Taylor

How's that again?

Christians can win lotteries. They can win every time.

Secular magazine publishers, manufacturers of soaps and foods and other products frequently deluge the post offices with direct mail offers of sweepstakes, fabulous prizes. All the recipient needs do is move a replica of a key or a book or a coin or some other article a few inches from its cardboard pocket to another slot, mail the material in a self-addressed, postage-paid envelope, and sit back and wait to learn if he is one of the lucky hundreds or thousands out of many millions who received the offer. A computer—so the message goes—has already selected the winners; so you are not actually gambling, you are not hazarding anything; you are just claiming what you have won.

But really you do not have to wait to win. You can win the very moment you receive the tempting offer. Here's how. Just dump the whole mess in the wastebasket, thereby indicating that you are not dependent on chance, but solely on the Lord. He knows your needs. He knows your name. He has your address. Your name has not been selected by a computer; but you have been chosen in Christ Jesus by the living God before the foundation of the world. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32)

Maybe you will not get a shiny new car, or a trip to Europe, or a refrigerator stuffed with ten dollar bills; but you will have the satisfaction of expressing your faith in the living God. You will be a winner. And you'll win more than a consolation prize, or the most fabulous prize the lottery affords

—In *Letters of Interest*

What is Happening in the Name of God? (II)

Mrs. W. F. Frisbie

WHO'S TO BLAME?

Let it be explained that *wisdom* is one of the many words, like *sin*, that has been dropped from the Christian vocabulary. In common vernacular, *wisdom* may be otherwise known as "common sense" or "horse sense." Horse sense obviously went out with the horse. (Man learned a lot from his faithful old horse and mechanized transportation might be considered something less than a blessing in at least this respect.)

The favorite excuse with children is: "You didn't tell me!" Of course, you probably did at least fifty times—but you didn't GET THEIR ATTENTION. If we can get *your* attention, and if you can get the attention of some of your brethren, it is possible that by all means we can save some from this insidious breach of faith.

If enough people literally believe they are sinners saved by baptism, and *kept* only by a *performance* that is *obedient* to traditional teaching, then there is already a *humanistic* church and no part of a spiritual one. In other words, if salvation is all of man and none of God, then the liberals and modernists have been right all along. Whatever Paul meant when he told the Ephesians, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God," we couldn't rightly say, if we chose to deny or *discredit* the cardinal principle of Grace. You see, the general idea of the entire Scriptures is that man is nothing and God is everything. Unless man humbles himself to the will of Almighty God and lives to glorify Him who is the Author of all, he is nothing more profound nor holy than a mere man with a big ego. That's why Paul finished the above declaration by saying, "Not of works, lest any man should boast."

The humanistic church may be chock full of faithful followers, but to follow tradition is not always the same as following Holy Scripture. Many "sincere" persons feel ever so duty-bound to be followers of God, but they are bypassing Jesus Christ, and have no consciousness whatever of the Holy Spirit. Paul saw this in the religious Jews of his day: "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:3).

R. H. Boll said: "We are not saved by grace plus something else besides; otherwise grace is no more grace. If we are saved by grace at all, then it is purely grace and all of grace." (W & W. 12/66).

E. L. Jorgenson says: "This act (baptism) is not a 'work,' never called a work in the Bible, though it is an act, a passive act of no value whatsoever except as an expression of saving faith." (W & W. 10/66).

Jesus said: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing

them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you . . .”

So when a young man (or an old one either) stands up in a Church of Christ pulpit, preaches a social-gospel sermon in which Jesus is placed in the position of a divine “man” of God, whose highest calling was to set forth the Sermon on the Mount to reveal to man how to correct the ills of society, and then closes his sermon by asking if any “would like to come to God,” you may be quite sure that such an invitation is made to satisfy tradition. If by that time none of the saints has taken him by the nape of the neck and ejected him from the pulpit, it is pretty certain that the difference between inviting someone to “come to God” and inviting someone to surrender his life to the Lord Jesus as Savior will not be noticed.

However, if you should be inclined to go to any with evidence that their honest mistakenness has resulted in a humanistic church that is admitting modernism and social-gospelism, and they not only refuse to listen, to talk, or to pray, but instead do absolve all former attachment to you, you will think they are being malicious. Don't. They are scared of you. That's about the size of it. Now, as to why they will be scared of you and not of conditions and situations you are presenting to them, there's a puzzler! It is no small thing to allow a man to preach when it is obvious that he has learned to doubt the ABSOLUTES of the Scriptures, even to the virgin birth of Jesus, His resurrection and ascension, His coming again, His deity and His blood sacrifice.

When one of the brethren who makes himself quite vocal as editor of a regularly-circulated publication says: “Within the church of Christ change is taking place with breath-taking rapidity. *New teachers with new ideas and a new vocabulary* are taking the rostrum. The impact of the *thought revolution* now rocking the world will be felt upon the church. And it should be.”; you can be sure of one thing—this veteran saint has been flim-flammed by the NEW BREED.

The NEW BREED are composed of fellows from about twenty-two to thirty-five whose parents forced them to attend every service in their local churches the first 18 years of their lives, but never bothered to find out if they were learning anything worthwhile or not. It was in the lifetime of these boy-wonders that the electric razor replaced the strop, gas heat replaced the woodshed, plastics softened the hairbrush, modern appliances replaced the chores, “education” replaced experience, and an inflated economy blinded parents to the difference between luxuries and necessities.

Many of their parents were more infatuated with the New Deal than with the New Testament. Sin became synonymous with poverty. And education was more important for their sons than righteousness. Following World War II, however, a “religious” wave spread over America and the crusading spirit of youth responded. Their parents' examples and ideals had left them with a hollowness because there was no strength of conviction and purpose. (And it is a fact, youth MUST HAVE A REASON FOR BEING. Christian

parents lost sight of this a long time back. Children are stuffed into Sunday schools with the same amount of care and precision that goes into stuffing them into their snowsuits.)

Tales of war atrocities began to leave a scar on the hearts of these young people. They learned to fear all sorts of human suffering more than they feared being wrong in the sight of God. A suffering, dying, bleeding Saviour on a cross of ignominy was as repulsive as the broken, starved bodies left to rot at Buchenwald and Auschwitz. In the midst of luxury and man-made beauty so easy to behold, it was simple to see that a God who permitted so much ugliness and sufferings must be recreated in the image of man, who, after all, had performed so much more splendidly—all things being considered

Parents hadn't spoken of the Bolsheviki since the 20's, and all these kids new about Communism was "good ole Papa Joe." Socialists had left their soap boxes and gone into the universities and into government, which gave them respectability and a larger audience.

In an effort to meet the rising cost of living and compete with press, schools, radio, television, and popularity, preachers changed from evangelists to lecturers. It was thought to be too sentimental and too emotional to *plead* with the hearts of the lost to be saved. Appeal to their intellects instead. Jesus' death on the cross, the entire Old Testament, and the realities of Hell were too terrible to relate to the sensitive ears of modern, civilized men and women. (If you will follow the growth of America from east to west, you find that as the niceties of civilization come in, the forcefulness of preaching goes out.)

Now that we've got the New Breed, ushering in the "thought revolution," what do we do with them? One man says: "We should hate false doctrine but love the brother who may teach it. It is not necessary to destroy the brother, and his influence to keep the church pure." I asked one man (he is a minister and an elder) who had been responsible for hiring one of the New Breed if he'd ever asked the man about his beliefs. The answer was an unqualified, "No." In the long run it wasn't necessary to ask since it became obvious he didn't try to conceal his disbelief in any and all fundamental Bible truths. On the subject of sin—he was for it. Extremely seedy and run-down-at-the-heels in appearance, he divested himself of all encumbrances—such as the need of a Saviour or even of carrying a Bible.

Well, what we are going to do with them seems to depend on "Who's to Blame?"

I'll tell you. It is Satan.

John says: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess *not* that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. . . Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, *hath not God*. He that abideth in the *doctrine of Christ*, he hath both the Father and the

Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not *this doctrine*, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for *he that biddeth him God speed is partaker* of his evil deeds" (2 John 7-11).

Peter says: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom *resist* stedfast in the faith. . ." (1 Peter 5:8-9). Those who fail to resist may be variously described as proud, heady, high-minded, cowards, traitors, weak, fearful, or turncoats.

Are you a member of the *resistance*?

(The last of this series appears next month.)

The Weapons of Our Warfare

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

The Greeks were learned people, they were interested in thought, in trying to understand life—how could this simple Gospel be presented to them? Well some of these men—and I am thinking now of a man like Origen in Alexandria, in Egypt, and Clement, who followed him—felt that the thing to do was this. They said in effect: You cannot expect educated Greeks to accept the Old Testament as it is, they cannot accept the facts of the Old Testament. Very well, we must show them that they are not really facts but rather, allegories, or pictures. They did not really happen, but they convey important truth. So they introduced the whole fanciful, allegorical method of interpreting the Scriptures. Their motive in doing so was to help to evangelize their fellow men and women.

That is what happened in the first three to four centuries; and it is extraordinary to notice how this tendency has persisted ever since. Even after the Protestant Reformation—when Luther and Calvin and others discovered the old essential Faith and Truth—before a hundred years had gone this same element had come in. Great teachers began to rationalize the Christian Faith, and to work it up into a great system and dogmatic body of truth. So you had what is called the Orthodoxy of the seventeenth century which became the kind of counterpart of Mediaeval Orthodoxy. It tended to be as hard and dry-as-dust and purely intellectual; and it provoked a reaction which became known as pietism and which emphasized the importance of experience and feeling.

GOOD MOTIVES—BAD RESULTS

Again you notice that the motive was a good one. They were anxious to defend the Faith against Roman Catholicism, and against some of the excesses of some of the wilder sects that arose. But in doing that they introduced so much of the element of philosophy and human wisdom that it became a rigid and lifeless system.

After the great Evangelical Awakening of the eighteenth century the same thing tended to obtrude itself again; and during the whole of the last century the philosophical element came in more and more. Let us be honest and admit that you cannot even absolve a man like Charles Hodge of this particular charge. Philosophy

comes in! Too much philosophy comes in, and you tend in the end to have an intellectualist system rather than the dynamic living faith and preaching which we see in the New Testament, and which we see in every period of reformation and revival.

That is, then, the way in which this tendency comes in; and those are the reasons which explain it. Why should we be concerned about this? We should be concerned about it because of the terrible dangers that are involved. What are the dangers? The lessons of history, in addition to the teaching of the Scriptures, show this quite plainly. By the time that Constantine brought the Roman Empire into the Christian Church about A. D. 325 you could say this—that Christianity had become Hellenized. It was very difficult to recognize it as the same thing that had started in the first century, the Church of the New Testament. It had become Hellenized—so permeated with the influence of Greek philosophy that it had almost become the exact opposite of what it was originally.

Now there were certain people who saw this danger clearly. There was a great man in the Christian Church round about A. D. 200—a little before and a little after—called Tertullian. He focused this problem, this danger, by putting what became a very famous question. It was this. "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What has the Academy to do with the Church?" That is the great question, What has Athens the center and home of philosophy to do with Jerusalem, the home of the Church? What have the Academy and the Porch, the places where the philosophers taught, to do with the Christian Church? If only the Church in those days had paid attention to that question! But are we paying attention to that question today? Because what is happening today, as I see it, is that "Athens" is coming back into Evangelicalism, the Academy is coming back into the Church and Christian organizations. It is always one of the most dangerous things that can happen, if not indeed the most dangerous of all.

Why is that the case? For one thing it indicates a wrong spirit. It indicates a spirit of fear. Why should there be this tendency to bring back philosophy and intellectualism and worldly wisdom into the realm of the Gospel? The ultimate reason is that educated Christian people are a little bit afraid of not being regarded as intellectuals, because they are Christians. They do not want to be looked down upon, they do not want people to think that they are Christians simply because they are not intellectual. Now that is a spirit of fear.

Or, sometimes, they are afraid of being proved wrong. They say, If we take the Bible as it is and then suddenly one day science proves something to be a fact which we have denied, where are we then? They are afraid of being proved wrong. That, again, is the spirit of fear.

THEY WORSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

But in addition to fear there is pride, pride of intellect, pride of knowledge. Keep your eye at the present time on the word "Scholarship." Scholarship! There is a very real danger of our worship-

ping scholarship. Do not misunderstand me. I am not out to defend obscurantism; I have already described it as one of the dangers. It is not the business of a Christian to bury his head in the sand and to say, "As long as I have got my faith I don't care what people think or say." Apart from other considerations, you are your brother's keeper, you have a duty to others. If a man has a brain he must use it, and if you have knowledge it is excellent. I am not out to advocate obscurantism, but I do say that we are in grave danger of worshipping scholarship.

I came across an instance of this, this very week in a religious paper I was reading. I quote it because it illustrates this tendency very plainly. I was reading an article by a man who was explaining why he did not believe in the Virgin Birth, he does not believe in the infallibility of the Scriptures, and he is very much opposed to the infallibility of the Pope. But this is what he actually said. He was quoting a statement by that famous New Testament scholar, the late Professor T. W. Manson. Now what I am saying has nothing to do with Professor Manson himself. I am sure he would be the first to discount the kind of statement I am going to quote. But here is a very able man, trained not only in Oxford, but also in the famous Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He actually writes this: "Disagreement with a critic as able and as learned as Manson is impossible." You must not believe in the infallibility of the Bible, you must not believe in the infallibility of the Pope, but you must believe in the infallibility of the late Professor Manson. Why? Ah, he was a scholar! All honour to the late Professor Manson and many other great scholars, but none of them is infallible.

This man writes quite seriously. He and those who belong to that outlook charge us with being bibliolaters. They say that we are worshipping an idol, and that you must not worship idols. I quite agree. But the time has come when it is our duty to point out that "scholarship" also can be made into an idol, and that you can so worship scholarship, that it drives you to say that you cannot and must not disagree with a man like this because he is so able and so learned. But that is the situation which is creeping in amongst us. We are so anxious to be thought intellectually respectable, and so afraid of being charged with not being intellectual, that we are in grave danger of worshipping scholarship in a wrong sense, and of being guilty of intellectual pride.

But it not only leads to a wrong spirit it leads to wrong actions. What do I mean? I mean that the moment you begin to think along those lines you will soon be anxious to use big names, and, to use a biblical expression, you will be much too ready to "lay hands" upon certain people hurriedly. Have you not noticed a tendency creeping in amongst us to lay hold on any man who is prominent in any sphere of life who even vaguely hints that he is a Christian, and particularly if he has gained distinction in one of the learned professions or has high academic honours? If he makes a statement even vaguely Christian we lay hands upon him, and ask him to be the chairman at the next public meeting.

We do not seem to trouble any longer as to whether the man

really holds our conservative evangelical position—he is a great name. That seems to be the great consideration. That is one of the things to which this attitude leads. And this in spite of the fact that it is prohibited specifically in the Scripture itself.

Another thing to which it leads is what I am constrained to describe as “the degree mania.” Again, I am not against degrees; they have a value. There is nothing wrong in having degrees, but if you are going to estimate a man as a Christian, and his effectiveness in the Church, by means of his “degrees,” well the first thing you do is to put out the man whose memory we are honoring here to-night, and many others whom I could mention with him. The thing is monstrous and even unintelligent quite apart from the contrast it presents to the unlearned and ignorant men of Acts 4:13.

CAN WE WIN WITH CARNAL WEAPONS?

A further terrible danger is this—and it is a very serious one in this country today—that this tendency to worship scholarship is landing us in a position in which the whole training for the ministry is determined by secular universities. I can imagine nothing which comes so directly under the category of fighting this warfare with carnal weapons.

The third thing it does, and this is the most serious of all, it compromises the Truth. The moment you begin to think in terms of worldly wisdom and knowledge, and your intellectual understanding, and your scholarship, then you will not be quite as careful as you should be in the translation of Scriptures. You will be more interested in the fact that scholars have done it, and that it is new and up to date, than in its accuracy and its spirituality. Are these not living issues amongst us? What is our acid test of a translation. Is it that it is new? Must it be right because it is new, and because it is the result of latest scholarship? Is that the guarantee? These are some of the effects and results of thinking in the wrong way.

Then another thing it does, is to tend to make us go beyond the scriptures. In our desire to explain everything, in our desire to accommodate those who are outside, we make statements that go beyond the Scriptures; instead of saying quite simply and honestly, “I do not know, I cannot understand everything nor explain everything; this is all I know.” There is a tendency today to attempt to explain things that cannot be explained.

A further danger is that of granting too much to modern knowledge and to modern theories and speculation, granting so much that eventually you contradict some of the vital doctrines of the Bible and of the Christian Faith. I am thinking of things like granting too much with respect to the early chapters of Genesis, granting too much to the theory of Evolution. Why do I say this is dangerous? For the reason that it involves the whole doctrine of man, and the doctrine of the Fall. That, in turn, involves the doctrine of redemption and of Salvation, and, indeed, of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. These are some of the terrible dangers.

—In *The Evangelical Library Bulletin*



Truth Advance Section

Stanford Chambers

Questions Asked Of Us

Was not Phoebe (Rom. 16:1) a deaconess?

Yes, if the meaning of the term is adhered to and not perverted. *Diakonon* is the word in the original, and is translated servant seven times; minister (one who renders service on behalf of others) twenty times. The word deacon, derived from this Greek word, is hardly a translation, but rather an Anglicized term (not to say a transliteration), like baptize from *baptidzo*, which is Gr. for immerse. Since by usage the English word baptize has come to be applied to three different acts, sprinkling, pouring, immersion, so the word deacon has come to be applied to an ecclesiastical order termed Deacon, feminine Deaconess. Phoebe was not a deaconess in this latter sense, for such "orders" did not come into existence till a later date. Phoebe was one of the Lord's servants in the church of Cenchreac, and because she was a servant who served actually, not merely professing to, Paul commended her to the Christians in Rome, where she was going. Because the term deacon has come to be so generally applied as it is today, a number of translators use a better understood word, i. e. servant. Would that they used the same wisdom pertaining to baptize, using the term immerse, admittedly its meaning.

It has become unpopular in some quarters to preach "first principles," and little teaching is heard on those lines, so that there is lack of knowledge thereon; can "first principles" be discarded? Is that what the apostle means in Heb. 5 & 6?

When pupils pass on from the Primary Department they are said to leave their ABC's behind, but in reality do they? They go on in the sense that a builder goes on from the foundation to building the superstructure. Wherever there is expansion, more foundation has to be laid. Conversion has to start with first principles. People are not born full-grown. The matured are not to lapse into ignorance of foundational teaching. If for no other reasons, they are to be teachers of the unconverted, to build them on the "one foundation"—"which is Christ." The Hebrew Christians whom the apostle is writing were lapsing, were about to return to Judaism, so making it necessary for them to be taught over again, and this the apostle depletes. A mistake it would be (or is) to continue forever on "first principles," for churches and Christians do not develop spirituality on

that pabulum. Many congregations have greatly suffered from this mistake.

The "located preacher" is being discussed pro and con: is there Scripture on this issue? If so, is it to be observed, is it being observed? May a congregation import a needed servant, if it has not in its own numbers the talent qualified to do the needed work?

From one cause and another (too often wholly unjustified) congregations have not developed their own talent, affordings neither exercise, training or proper instruction. Consequently no qualified preacher has sprung up among them, no teachers of ability, no overseers who really exercise shepherdly oversight as they who shall give account for souls; "sheep without a shepherd," and this goes to the heart of the "Great Shepherd of the sheep." What is to be done about it? Train members for service according to their bent and desire. Cultivate desire, stimulate dedication of life time and talent to Him whom we call Master and Lord. Opportunities to exercise are a must. A church that is not developing its members thus is failing to function as a congregation of Christ, and that is something to pray about.

The readers' attention has previously been called to the fact that the Portland Avenue congregation of Louisville has long been conducting a day school in addition to such work as churches in general carry on, as a result of which many workers have been raised up for service near and far. It has teachers of classes, leaders of different age groups, has its "counsellors," all under the direction of overseers who are themselves not merely figureheads but are above average ability. One of its overseers (elders) who had taken advantage of opportunities for exercise with a willingness to shoulder responsibility on behalf of Christ for the souls of both the saved and the lost, became an elder who labors "in word and doctrine (teaching)." The church with complete unanimity called upon this one of its overseers to devote his entire time to laboring "in word and teaching" as a "laborer worthy of his hire." The Portland church does not set itself up as a model, but acknowledges much deficiency. I am commending it to other congregations in this particular. Carl Vogt Wilson is resident minister of the Word, paid (not over-paid!) that he may give entire time that there be no neglect of the work or of those needing such ministering. I think there are unmistakable signs of others' development likewise to the same Christ-honoring ends.

But suppose the congregation had no such developed talent, could it therefore not function? Could it import the needed service? Certainly. Who could say it Nay? It is responsible for souls under God, and it cannot—must not—shirk its responsibility. Antioch accepted the imported ministries of Paul and Barnabas, Paul located at Ephesus and labored with them there for "the space of three years" (Acts 20:31). Following that the church at Ephesus has the blessing of Timothy's ministering there. A congregation is not put in any "straitjacket" hampering its usefulness or fruitfulness.

A church of Christ is to be all out for Him. It will then enjoy the fulness of the Spirit, and that is life.

This writer has long been convinced of the unscripturalness and evils of the modern "pastor system." The "pastor" in that sense is an innovation—an institution (the overseers are the "pastors"—Eph. 4:11). So we have professional "pastors" on the market for pulpits, as also we have professional "evangelists" on the market for revivals to hold, who like to report "booked up." Some "very loyal preachers" are very loyal to their own interests, hence the "pulpit racket" and the "protracted meeting racket." Can ye not discern?

In contrast, on the Scripture line, let a church do its very utmost to serve its own generation and its own unbounded area on behalf of Christ who is professedly its Head. Cooperation of congregations can play a very important part in this matter, one church aiding another. Cooperate.

Paul is instructing the Corinthians to leave off his name as their distinctive mark distinguishing themselves from other Christians. "Were you baptized in the name of Paul?" Is it not proper and scriptural to ask and instruct those wearing human (divisive) religious names to leave them off for the sake of Christ and oneness in Him, to leave them off and be Christians only?

Yes, it is scriptural to do so—"in meekness correcting (instructing) those who oppose themselves." But know this: it is not popular to do this, and to avoid the unpopularity of it, many are not making the plea to be Christians only. It gets members unpopularity with their neighbors to back up the plea, and then you get to be unpopular with your brethren who profess to be Christians only. That is how the restoration plea has been watered down and neutralized so as to bring such meager results. Time was when virtually an entire congregation, wearing a less worthy name than Paulinist, would discard the human appellation and declare themselves "Christians only." Baptized believers have that right and that obligation. Let the same be recognized and declared. Does restoration need restoring? Do we need to assert ourselves as standing for "the whole counsel of God" in preaching and practice? But count the cost.

What about the claim that you are not one for missionary work unless you are "called of God for such work"?

Correct. But "missionary work" needs to be redefined and "called of God" also. Missionary work is work in which a mission is committed. Preaching the gospel of Christ is a commitment, and he to whom the commitment is made has a mission, and is therefore a missionary.

"Called of God" is the good fortune of every saved man, woman and child. You are called of God to declare what you have received unto the salvation of your soul. Matt. 28:20 is all the call you need. The next need is your dedication to Him who is the author of the call. And the field? "Lift up your eyes; look on the fields . . . white already unto the harvest." "The field is the world." The Lord recognizes no boundaries between foreign and domestic fields.

You are called of God to accept and discharge your mission. Don't cast your eyes too far from home so that in pursuing your "foreign romance" you pass by multitudes of unsaved souls not far from your own back door. "Every Christian a missionary"; that should be the emblazoned and trumpeted slogan, until it is universally adopted. Who is not a missionary at home falsely claims to be called of God to lands far away. To reach a region "where Christ hath not been named" is no low aim; but in reality how far away is such a region? "If you cannot cross the ocean and the heathen lands explore, You can find the heathen nearer; You can find them at your door." Are you dedicated to your Lord? to Him who bought and paid for you? To be sure. He has the right to locate and assign His laborer, who, if dedicated, is willing to be assigned. Work it out with the "Lord of the harvest." Yea, every Christian a missionary. Take a new look at Acts 8:4.



Meekness Under Pressure

J. H. McCaleb

When one becomes angry in a discussion, it is quite possible that he has found himself to be on shaky ground. There is a tendency, under these circumstances, to use noise for logic. There is another inclination, however, which is equally dangerous: when one *knows* that he is right, there is a great temptation to become caustic and resentful. It is difficult to be meek in the service of the Lord.

In dealing with the Corinthian Church, and with those who were stirring up trouble there, Paul seems to have suffered about all the indignities that cut deep into a man's heart. His good name was blackened and his motives impugned. When one is judged justly, the hurt is bad enough; when one is accused falsely, the wound is deep indeed. Paul knew the weakness of the flesh under these conditions and appealed for help to the meekness and gentleness of Christ.

We admire the man who can "take it." There is an element of raw courage that captures the heart even though we hesitate to make outward acknowledgment. We thank God for the apostles and others who have suffered without whimpering. And the perfect example stands above all: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth."

Precious Reprints

R. H. Boll — 1953

Indispensable Things

Two things are quite necessary in the Christian life, though—as is usually the case with some of the most important truths—they are often overlooked and lost sight of. What are they?

1. Remembrance of what we once were.
2. Realization of what we now are.

On both these points there is a great deal said in both Testaments. How often did the Lord remind Israel of their lowly origin, of their one-time evil estate, and of their utter ill-desert all along.

And as they were reminded over and over of their former evil state and how God graciously delivered them, so were they told again and again what was the new place and standing which they now had before God: "For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession above all the peoples that are upon the face of the earth" (Deut. 7:6).

CHRISTIANS ALSO REMEMBER

As with Israel, so with Christians. Again and again we are reminded of what we once were, what we now are, and how we passed from our lost and ruined estate into the high position given us in Christ. "Wherefore remember," says Paul, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh. . . that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." That is what they were. "But now," he continues, "ye that once were afar off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. . . So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph. 2:11-19).

Stranger still is the contrast in the beginning of this chapter: "And you did he make alive when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; among whom we all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest" (Eph. 2:1-3). That is what we were—and we must not forget it, lest we come to feel ourselves superior and take credit to ourselves for our salvation, and perhaps haughtily look down on others. There are no uglier traits than self-righteousness and spiritual pride. Therefore remember that you are but a brand plucked from the burning, a sinner saved by grace.

OUT OF THE DEPTHS

"But God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places"—a tradition well-nigh inconceivable, a lifting from lowest depths to highest height. And this we must consistently keep in mind. The man who has forgotten the cleansing from his old sins (2 Pet. 1:9) has not only forgotten what once he was, but can not possibly have any knowledge of the grace of God, nor any appreciation of the great love wherewith God loved him. It follows that he himself is devoid of love, for "we love because he first loved us" (1 Jn. 4:19). Paul reminds Christians that it is not for them to speak evil of any man, nor to be contentious, but "to be gentle, showing all meekness toward all men."

And why this? Because "we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another." That is what we were. And how did we get out of it? "But when the kindness of God our Saviour and his love toward men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs, according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:3-7). For the Lord Jesus Christ "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works" (Ti. 2:14).

A THIRD THING

These two things then are so vital to the Christian life: what once we were, and what now we are. They must always be kept in mind and never forgotten.

But a third must be added—not only what we were, and what by the grace of God we are now but what we shall be. This also deeply influences the life of the Christian. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. . . Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that if he shall be manifested we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." To which the apostle adds, that "every one that hath this hope set on him, purifieth himself even as he is pure" (1 Jn. 3:1-3). What we were, what we are and what we shall be—*and by whom such a salvation was wrought!* O Christian keep these things in mind, and your life will be pure and strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

If you begin to get weary in prayer, get an Aaron and a Hur to pray with you to strengthen your hands (Exodus 17:12).

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

The FRONT COVER PICTURE this month was recently received from the Dennis Allens. Rooftop school teaching and evangelism are great challenges in Hong Kong. Political agitation from behind the bamboo curtain seems to have subsided recently.

David and Dora Brown
Salisbury, Rhodesia, May 27.

The new church building has been in use for the last six weeks or so, though it is not quite finished yet. The official opening and dedication will come later. But how thankful we are to the Lord for His wonderful working to provide as He has done. And how we thank each one of you, who have responded to the touch of God's hand, and have been a channel through which God could work.

The Waterfalls assembly is manifesting a growth in the Spirit, and there is a consciousness that God's hand is upon this work. At present in one of our Bible studies we are in Romans 8. How thankful we are to the Holy Spirit for illuminating to our innermost being, some of the wonderful truths in Romans. We are praying that the Holy Spirit will make them a reality in our lives. Pray with us for this. I am personally indebted to a beloved physician in Linton, Indiana for a deeper appreciation of this book, and for stimulating a study of it. Dr. Bailey taught a class in Romans while we were there, and it has been a blessing to me.

We also appreciate the Sunday School teacher training course on filmstrip, given by Lily Dale church for use in the work. Any good Sunday School material, or VBS material, flannel graphs and so on would be much appreciated, and could be put to good use in the work here.

Our prophetic study at the Harare church will soon be coming to an end, and Lord willing we plan to have studies with the new congregation in Tafara township. We are supervising a school near Tafara, which gives us opportunity to give God's Word. One Sunday morning recently, we had 180 in Sunday school at the school. After our study a teenage girl under conviction came and said she wanted to be saved. What a joy it was to point her further in the way of the Lord.

The Harare church is planning a series of meetings over this next week-end on the subject of "Witchcraft." There has been a revival of witchcraft among the African people, and this is infecting a number who have confessed Christ to be Lord. Two elderly African brethren, and Bro. S. D. Garrett will be the main speakers.

We are conscious of your prayers for us, and for this work. We are grateful to you, and we thank the Lord for each one of you.

How much better that we set ur affections on things that are above! Everything in this world is crumbling, and is in the process of passing away, but praise the Lord, those who do the will of God shall abide forever! God bless you and keep you abiding in Him, until He comes.

Joyce Shewmaker
Bulawayo, Rhodesia, June 19.

J. C. has been asked to take the adult class at Queen's Park congregation on Wednesday Nights and also to conduct a class there on Friday nights on the subject of "The Christian Life"—a broad scope, isn't it?

Our son, Stanford, has arrived in Zambia. He is collecting material for writing his thesis on the subject, "The Impact of the Gospel on the Tonga People." As he is very conversant in the language, he is best qualified to do this work. He plans to be there 11 weeks, before coming to see us.

Motoyuki Nomura
Tokyo, June 21.

Our small witnessing endeavor slowly but steadily sees His blessings. We are enjoying constant visitors from the community recently, a good sign for which we are all grateful. I told you before that our last Gospel Meeting which we held at the end of last March resulted in one girl who now comes to our meeting faithfully, and we pray she will accept Him soon. She was the only visible result out of over 2,000 handbills and cards we have handed out to every door of the community. Our young folks worked hard. Pray for this high school girl.

I continue my teaching ministry at YMCA downtown Tokyo. I teach both English and Bible six days a week, five days at YMCA and on Wednesday at our Hachimanyama. I have two hour a week Bible class at YMCA and often take its students out to weekend Bible retreat camp outside Tokyo city. These contacts are so important to lead them to the Lord. I get tired but this is a wonderful ministry. Some of them will attend Southeastern Christian College, Winchester, Ky., this fall, I think.

During the busy summer season, I shall be serving at various camping sites as a Bible teacher, as an evangelist, and as a chaplain of various groups. This summer, I have been invited to visit Korea to attend an international Christian camp at Korea Christian College in Seoul.

I am especially happy to accept an entirely new challenge of faith this year in that the Lord opened the door for me to visit Korean churches. Due to the dark and sad history between Japan and Korea in the past, the two have been hating each other strongly. Only a few Japanese ministers have visited Korea before and only two Korean national workers have been invited to Japan in the past. So I count the invitation a privilege and a must to accept for the sake of the churches of the two nations so close to each other and yet so far away. The entire cost involved in the trip would be

around \$250. Won't you also remember this specific need for the small churches in the Far East?

Continue your SOS (Save Old Stamps and Save Our Souls) operation for us. Send only commemorative stamps and foreign stamps, please. I want to thank each one of you who have sent us so many stamps and Christmas cards. We have sufficient number of used Christmas cards now, but not enough stamps yet. Also, if you don't need books on the Sermon on the Mount and on the Lord's Prayer, won't you send them for our young folks here?

We have been privileged to host three Christian GIs from Viet Nam. If you know of any GIs serving in Viet Nam, tell him or them to call on us. Our street number is: 22 Hachimanyama, Setagaya, Tokyo. Phone 303-3346.

W. L. Brown
Salisbury, Rhodesia, June 15.

About two years ago a new African Township was started in the Greendale area of Salisbury. Only Africans working in the Greendale area are allowed housing in this township. Brother Sitole and his wife who we baptized some two years ago have moved to this township and on the first Sunday in November we held a meeting in an African home with 15 people present. The next Sunday we had 23 present. The third Sunday there were 37 present which was far too many to get into the house so we moved outside under some gum trees. The fourth Sunday we had 48 present and we got permission from the township manager to use an old cow barn which is about ready to fall down. We got some disinfectant and whitewash and cleaned the place up and this is our meeting house. I have applied for permission to build a building and we hope before too long we can have a more respectable place in which to worship.

To date about 30 people have been baptized and we have found several Christians who were living in the location but were not attending worship service any place as they were scattered as sheep without a shepherd.

Although I am assisting these brethren in the direction of the work having assumed responsibility for it with the manager, we have appointed three brethren as leaders and it is my aim, as always, to make this an indigenous work which is the only way the church of our Lord will ever be permanently established in Africa or any other part of the world.

Irene Allen
Anchorage Alaska, June Newsletter

Norman and I left Anchorage May 14 for Louisville and we enjoyed reunions with relatives and friends in Kentucky, Indiana and Tennessee until June 12. The main purpose of our trip was to see David's graduation from Portland Christian High School, but it also proved to be a real refresher for us.

We appreciated the numerous invitations extended, both for meals or refreshments and also for spiritual fellowship. Seven or eight ladies' groups asked to hear more about the Anchorage mission

work, and it was a joy to know that many have been faithful to pray for the work since it was begun in 1964. Those who do pray and give make the work possible and we are thankful for each one of them.

It was not easy to say goodbye to dear ones, but I did experience a real thrill when we touched down at Anchorage's International Airport where Winston and eight others were waiting to welcome us back. We were grateful to God for traveling mercies.

E. A. Rhodes
Yokohama, Japan, June 15.

Bess' condition remains about the same although we can see a little improvement in some small ways. We wait patiently on the Lord who "performs all things for us." Amano san has started a S.S. class with a few children at Kanazawa and we hope that that work may be revived again. We have had no one to do anything there for quite a while, except to go on Lord's days and preach. There are a few faithful members but as yet none who can take the responsibility and lead into an active work. Amano san preaches here on Sundays, too. Pray for him and the work.

A short meeting has been scheduled for July 12-14. A brother from Shizuoka will do the preaching. He spoke at the meeting a year ago and there were good results. We hope the Lord will bless this meeting likewise.

Jack and Rena Chrissop
Simonstown, South Africa June 12.

Here in Simonstown we go quietly along. We have at last managed to start a class for the little ones and this, like the rest of our services, is held in the home of one of the members. Rena—she takes the class—has a dozen or more attending and what is encouraging is that the youngsters chose to stay for the worship service which is held later.

Further progress in the Lord's work comes from the Rosebank group who are in the very near future starting a new work in the Wynberg-Plumstead area, a thickly populated European zone. Movement from Simonstown out to the new township at Slangkop is already under way, about fifty families have already been moved and as houses are provided so will the coloured people be moved out there.

Shichiro Nakahara
Shizuoka City, Japan, June 22.

It's been almost two months passed since I returned from the States. I left Dallas on April 27 and arrived in Tokyo on the 28th; it took us only 18 hours. I greatly regretted that I had missed the opportunity of seeing Bro. Allen in Anchorage. I was told that our stop would be only operational and within 30 minutes the plane would be again in the air, so I thought at least I could talk with him on the telephone, but when I got there I directly went to a telephone booth to make a call but his name was not listed and I just could not get in contact with him at all. It was only twenty minutes' stop-over

and we came to Japan right away. The Lord was merciful indeed all the way through.

I was to look into land that is available for a kindergarten, so ever since I have been back I have been running round contacting various people, visiting various places, etc., and had little time to do my writing, and I am now trying to catch up with it. Land is very scarce, and very dear, and we believe we need at least one-half acre of land to do the work we plan in the future, which requires so much money that we need help from God's people both in prayers and money. I am sure that you will be hearing on that account from the Piedmont Church in Dallas which now is acting as a sponsoring congregation for the sake of convenience in business handling.

A Trip to Japan

James R. Rice, M. D.

In November, 1967, as I was entering the last month of my Vietnam tour with the Army, I had the opportunity to visit Japan on a 7-day leave.

This was a great opportunity for me. Having been introduced to the mission work of Motoyuki Nomura in Tokyo at the Highland Church of Christ in Louisville and then my wife and I committing ourselves to help in the support of that work, I now would have a chance to view it first hand, to meet Moto whom I had come to love by the faith he expressed in his news letters.

My wife and I have been experiencing the blessing of mission giving for several years. This began especially when we committed ourselves to the support of a certain work. Since we have been participating in the support of Moto, we consider him our missionary as well as the Lord's. Each month when we receive my check, Moto's check comes out first. Each evening when we pray, we never forget to mention Moto and his work. We have truly been spiritually blessed.

No doubt our taking Moto on as our missionary was the answer to the prayers of many. At the time we were introduced to his work, he was in very bad need of help. Since he was Japanese and lived in Japan, it was hard for him to return to the states to seek his support. Then there are those who also feel that there is no justification for the support of nationals or native missionaries. Those that do mission work within the United States often meet this barrier.

There are many reasons for this, but I believe one of the main reasons is the failure to recognize the fact that a native minister who has committed himself to full time Christian service, has to eat, sleep, live, and support his family just like any other missionary. His work as the work of others has expense and needs support.

It is my feeling that no one can minister to the Japanese better than the Japanese, no one can speak to us Americans better than an American, or even better, no one can speak to the Negro better than

the Negro. By making this statement I don't mean to take anything away from the dedicated ones from America who have committed themselves to foreign mission work. While in Japan I met several American families hard at work there for our Lord.

Mission work in Japan is a very hard and slow process. It is a beautiful country and it is amazing how effectively they utilize every inch of the land. It is a country of many gods, steeped in paganism and heathenism. The people there as our people here are immersed in materialism, education, and intellectualism. Japan is one of the highest industrialized nations in the world. It has a gross national product which is fourth in the world. As it is here, there is little spiritual concern.

I was fortunate enough to arrive in Japan on a Saturday night which permitted me the opportunity to visit Hachimanyama Church of Christ on Sunday. There I was welcomed by a group of young Christians between the ages of 20-26, numbering about twenty.

I hadn't prepared to speak, but I had in my Bible study just finished the study of 1 Thessalonians and this book had such a fine message for just such a young church as this. So I drew a short message from this study. As I looked over this young group, Romans 10:17 came to my mind: "So faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" and Romans 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Here before me were those who had never heard of the Bible, seen one, or heard any part of God's word until it had been proclaimed unto them by one of God's messengers, Moto. I could see within their faces the miraculous changes that conversion had brought about by the working of the Holy Spirit through the word.

I find it impossible to put into words the feeling within as I could see the results of the power of God before me. Each time I think of this young group I can't help but reflect back over the wonderful conversion experience I had within my own life when I came to know Christ.

Brother Moto informed me that there is a great need for workers and he extends an invitation for someone to come work with him.

I invite you to pray with me for these things in Japan:

- (1) Motoyuki Nomura and family, that the Lord will give him the strength, wisdom, and encouragement to keep pressing on.
- (2) Pray for other missionaries you know there by name.
- (3) Remember the need for workers.
- (4) The need for financial help—and there is a great need!
- (5) Pray for a Japanese church standing for Christ without the American. I would like to add that the Hachimanyama church has already involved in a foreign mission work. They are small but already have a vision to work.

If you have any questions concerning the work of Motoyuki Nomura write his forwarding agent: William A. Price, 2217 Walterdale Terrace, Louisville, Kentucky 40205.



Should Located Preachers Retreat?

Wm. Robert Heid

Early last spring I received an invitation from a personal friend, a Trappist Monk of Gethsemani, Kentucky, to attend a retreat at which there would be open discussion of pertinent theological subjects. Also there was to be time to share in contemplation. Needless to say, I accepted the invitation and "retreated" from Friday at suppertime to breakfast on Sunday, thence leaving to drive a few miles to Nelsonville for regular services.

I could list many impressions that I received while there, but most of them would not pertain to this article. I learned some points of Catholic doctrine that are in the process of change (generally for the worse) and heard readings extolling the attainments of several "saints" of bygone days. In a way I enjoyed the quiet hours and the ever-present sanctimonious atmosphere, generated by the simple and austere life of these voluntary celibates. But I could not escape the feeling that here was a great loss of manpower (at one time about 300 men of ages varying from 18 to 80) that could have a wide influence if permitted to have normal contact with fellow men. Some of them were highly educated in fields of architecture, printing, music, theology, education, and the like. Upon entry, all are reduced to abject poverty, with only one complete suit of garments, a cubicle about 6 x 7 feet in floor area (the shelf-mattress sleeping area taking up two-thirds of this) and the promise of regimented singing, praying, working, eating, meditation, and sleep.

My friend was an architect and was then working on the reconstruction of the cathedral building. I marvelled at his ability as I did at his dress and his poverty. I mentioned the current events as pointing up God's prophecies of the end time, and he was admittedly blank about it all. But then, so were the others who engaged in the theological open forums later.

Today the trend for retreats has grown, largely because of the great rush and confusion that has overtaken us all. Vacations are fine, but they do not always provide rest, so many try to slip away for a few days to a quiet place. This is good. We advocate a place where Christian workers can "come apart and rest awhile," and such a retreat, with good fellowship, will be "health to our bones."

But we dare not continue forever at the retreat. And herein is a failure, as I see it, of the Trappist monks. It is true that the

Lord Jesus took His inner circle—Peter, James, and John—up on the mountain and was there transfigured before them. But they were not to stay forever. It was good for them to be there, Peter commented; but when it came to building tabernacles in order to anchor there permanently, then came a voice out of heaven telling these joyous souls to listen to their Lord's leading and not to begin building for their own spiritual gratification, even though their joys were heaven-sent.

Down at the base of the mountain was a young man possessed with a demon. The other disciples who had missed out on this "eye-witness of His majesty" were having a rough time and could not cast the demon out. How often Satan launches a "Tet offensive" at just such a time as will do the most damage. The Master knew that His help was needed to reinforce these, else their faith would fall to the ground. We might say that these nine were not as mature spiritually as the three of the "inner circle." So this would be the very reason that Jesus would bring the mountain-top experience to a close, and rush to the aid of the ones being overpowered.

In our congregations today we have Christians of every stature, and as always, the giants are not numerous. "Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." I may delight to attend with a certain group because they have so many to sing, to testify, or to pray. But in the little group where I belong, my very presence is encouragement to others, more than I might realize. If spiritual guidance and teaching are needed, they are needed more where growth is less, where there are babes in Christ, where there has been heretofore a lack of spiritual food.

Today there are groups meeting in what is loosely called "multiple-minister" congregations. Many there are able to take the lead, and to do it well. When the meeting begins, they all look to the Lord to decide just who will speak up. Evidently such meetings are most heart-warming and a real joy to attend. Spiritual fervor seems to gender even more spiritual fervor, and the longing heart is refreshed. But what about those who are down at the foot of the mountain? Sinsick souls are still in need of the message of the gospel. Truly those disciples that are down there in the conflict have the same gospel and the same Lord as do the "inner circle," although admittedly they have not appreciated their position nor "gone on with God" as they should have. Then there is a double reason for their reinforcement: first, to help put their message across to the lost, and then to help make things more real to their own souls, so that future encounters will be more ably met. Located ministers dare not retreat from the heat of the day for a very long time.

But why is there any desire to "retreat"? Some blame needs to be laid upon the congregations. There are small groups (and some not so small) where the minister cannot find *one* brother who is like minded and desirous of prayer-communion. If the

minister feels the need for same, he must of necessity find kindred souls for prayer elsewhere. Others have tried to hand all of the duties of a congregation (business, teaching, visitation, evangelization, social activities, as well as the weddings and funerals) to the complete charge of the minister. This is surely not mature Christian living on the part of the group. What is worst of all, some groups have placed the minister in an entirely different class (Clergy, whether they call it by that name or not) and actually think that they cannot pray as well or speak for the Lord as well as he. If a minister permits such a feeling to continue, it is bound to burden his soul for not have led them to better things in Christ. Let the the congregations feel the blame if ministers desire to "retreat."



A Christian Views The News

Ernest E. Lyon

BAD SIGNS

Traditionally, Southern Baptists have carefully avoided making strong pronouncements on race, civil rights or any social problem. They preferred to let their sister denominations do that while they hewed to the line of "preaching the Bible." So says George Dugan in a New York Times article on June 7, reporting this denomination's annual Convention, held in Houston.

"This statement . . . (made June 6) urged members to work for equality in housing, employment and education . . . The temper of the delegates was made even more evident when an amendment attributing the current racial tension to Communist infiltration was defeated. The vote on the civil rights statement was 5,687 in the affirmative, or 72.85 per cent, and 2,119 in the negative, or 27.15 per cent. A total of 7,806 delegates cast secret, paper ballots."

On May 21, a report from Nashville, Tennessee, tells of a document released the day before by the top leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention, calling for creation of a Bap-

tist task force to attack the nation's social problems. Signers of the document included 29 executives of Southern Baptist agencies, among them the top executives of the denomination's foreign mission board, home mission board and Sunday School Board, executive secretaries of 23 of the 30 state conventions, 21 editors of Baptist publications and four of the six Southern Baptist Seminary presidents.

A Presbyterian Church in Burlington, Vermont, has eliminated Sunday morning worship services and has substituted social service and monthly day-long "worship festivals."

By uniting with another church organization (the Evangelical United Brethren church) the Methodists, now known as the United Methodist Church, thought they had become the largest Protestant denomination in America, but the Southern Baptists came up with a new figure for their membership and the Methodists, a dying cause vainly being kept alive by ecumenical mergers, returned to second place. At their convention, where the merger was completed, the Methodists,

bowing to a survey that showed that 70 per cent of Methodists drink, including quite a few preachers, removed the Discipline's ministerial pledge to total abstinence and the article permitting congregations to hold trials to deal with drinking members. The convention also made many pronouncements following the left-wing party line, such as approving civil disobedience and riots, an enlarged governmental "poverty program" (which would make paupers out of us all), and withdrawal from Vietnam, etc.

Another item of concern to conservative Methodists is this year's program resource book put out to assist the ladies in their societies of Christian service. An example of its slant is in its music section where great praise is given to three singers known to be communists or strong communist sympathizers (two are identified communists). Music publications by a communist-oriented publication house are also highly recommended—publications that praise the Viet Cong and condemn America for example.

A newsletter from a Church of Christ in the South has bothered me considerably. In a recent issue the writer speaking about Dr. King said, "But these latter accusations, for example, that he was a communist and somehow hoped to see this nation under Russian rule, were apparently without foundation, that is, unless protest against injustice makes one a communist, and then perhaps all Christians are Communists." (Italics added.) Later the writer added: "When will blacks and whites begin to communicate with one another? And finally, when will Christian people overcome their fears and in the freedom of love reach across the barriers which separate brethren, whether those barriers be racial, social, or otherwise?" Personally I am more concerned about our learning to "communicate" the need of the gospel and the power of the gospel to both blacks and whites. I hope that his last statement does not mean to call all men "brethren." When men are Christians there should be no barriers to reach across. In another issue the same writer quoted as true a very questionable news release on South Vietnam and then added: "Question: Can American Chris-

tians continue to support this kind of war? . . . does a nation have the right to oppose the international expansion of Communism by the deliberate destruction of innocent civilians including women and children, many of whom are themselves opposed to Communism?" I know of no time when the U. S. armed forces have done what he has accused them of, but I know of many authenticated instances where the communists have deliberately wiped out whole villages and used murder and prolonged torture-murder to get their way. I wonder why none of this was mentioned.

To me a bad sign is the way William Barclay's writings are being pushed among the churches of the Restoration Movement without pointing out that Barclay is not a believer in the inspiration of the scriptures and of many other things that the Bible teaches. He is brilliant, a wonderful analyzer of teaching, one of the best at giving backgrounds and local color, but read without discrimination he can lead one completely astray.

"A Minnetonka minister has suggested that a proposed united church of nine Protestant denominations tax its members for 'healing the wounds of the world.'" So begins a Religious News Service article from Minneapolis, printed in the New York Times on June 18, 1968. The Rev. Robert K. Hudnut, pastor of St. Luke Presbyterian Church, suggested a graduated income tax to substitute for voluntary giving.

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A U. S. Presbyterian elder and deacon, James H. Brock wrote an article in a recent issue of Presbyterian Life entitled, "There Are Some Things About Christ I Don't Like." He said he recently read through the whole New Testament "to increase my conversational acumen at social gatherings." Among the things he didn't like were Jesus' belief in hell and the devil. His attitude about money, His taking an alcoholic drink (an incorrect assumption that the wine at Cana was fermented), His association with sinners, His attitude toward race relations (especially His talking to the Samaritan woman), and especially His attitude toward Himself. He thought we should be able to interpret Christ

on "our own terms."

• • • • •
The theme song for the 180th General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church was a new hymn entitled "When the Changes Come." The hymn denies the Scriptural account of the Cross, calls Christ a "holy fool," and makes Him out to be an example for social transformation and revolutionary sacrifices, among other things.

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The National Council of Churches took a very active part in the "poor people's campaign," even to having an office in "Resurrection City"—much better named Insurrection City, it seems to me.

GOOD SIGNS

A large group of Russians are receiving Bible training in South America by the Slavic Gospel Association. Pray that they will be able to take part in the revival among the people in Russia. The SGA is also beaming gospel radio programs into Russia. Correspondence from Russia indicates enthusiastic listeners.

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Ever since the Presbyterian denomination became a part of the National Council of Churches, individuals and churches have been pulling out of the denomination and declaring their independence from both the denomination and the N. C. C. For some time now we have heard that within the Presbyterian church body a National Presbyterian Lay Committee has been formed, opposing church pronouncements on social economic, or political problems. About 20 chapters have been organized.

When ministers and laymen from 33 of the 182 United Presbyterian Churches in the Philadelphia (Pa.) Presbytery voted in June to form at least one local chapter, Roger Hull, board chairman of the Mutual Life Insurance Co., New York, and president of the National Committee, told the group that conservatives "gradually will bring the church back to the Bible."

Charles S. Ecker, Jr., field director for the National Committee, said a monthly newspaper, Presbyterian Layman, initiated by the Committee last year, has increased in circulation from 35,000 to 171,000. Two prominent Philadelphia Presbyterians who helped found the National Committee are J. Hofard Pew, president of Sun Oil Co., and Paul J. Cupp, president of Acme Markets.

BRIEFS

Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, of Los Angeles, invited R. N. Hogan, minister of the Figueroa church of Christ in Los Angeles, to deliver an unprecedented eulogy before the Board of Supervisors on April 9 in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It was the first such religious ceremony ever held before the Los Angeles County Board. Hahn is a member of the Inglewood church of Christ and a graduate of Pepperdine College—Quoted, with deletions, from CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE, "International Newspaper of the Churches of Christ."

• • • • •
A recent poll among 1,500 members of various religious faiths over the nation showed that now a majority are against the church becoming involved in political and social issues.

Who is the most effective witness? Let me begin by answering that negatively—"Not the one called the minister or pastor!" The *Sunday School Times* recently had an article on this subject taking a specific example of a mission church whose pastor wrote the article. 2,000 calls with some "parish workers" brought 40 people to the first service. On follow-up calls less than ten percent of his contacts came but when members of his congregation invited folks or referred them to the pastor, about 80 percent came. In one effort of intensive work by well-trained (professional) workers over 3,000 calls were made and one family joined the church. Contrast that to 90 families that have joined in the past five years because of everyday witness of the members. . . . And now go do your calling!

—Ernest E. Lyon

Make Personal Work Personal

Roland E. Coffey

The Bible contains a record of great gifts, and most of the people I know love to receive gifts. These two observations have led me to investigate both areas more thoroughly.

Our God is a God who gives. His demands are relatively few and insignificant when we take into account His overwhelmingly magnanimous gifts. Yet, considering all the things that have ever come to man from the hand of God, none is as wonderful and satisfying as the gift of Himself.

Himself! How that pronoun stirs the heart when it refers to the gift of God! What the Bible really contains, in fact, is the record of God giving Himself to His people. More than anything else, the people I know want each other than material things. Basically our desire is to have someone give himself to us, to make us feel we are the most important person in the world to him.

This is precisely what God has done. Salvation is an intensely personal thing. I am saved because I believe Christ died for *me*. It is true that He gave Himself for the world, but it is singularly satisfying for me to realize that He gave Himself for *me*.

If we are ever to impress anyone with the marvelous truth that Christ died for him, we will do it best by giving ourselves to that person. If the Bible is a record of God giving Himself and of the servants of God giving themselves, why does it seem so difficult to give ourselves to the spiritually needy of our day? Such sharing and involvement pay rich spiritual dividends.

People want the gift of our friendship and love. They will not be satisfied with our dipping into the vast resources of our affection and attention and doling out minute and meaningless portions of human kindness. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, "Being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us" (1 Thess 2:8). It is little wonder that many people today are left untouched and unmoved by "impersonal personal work."

To accomplish this task of truly giving ourselves to others at least three things are necessary: *First*, it requires a prayer burden. We will speak to God in earnest about the person with whom we have become involved. *Second*, it requires friendly interest. My conversation with the person will reveal an earnest concern about the things and persons that are a part of him. *Third*, the person must come to know that I am not only interested in him as a person but also that I am anxious that he come to know Christ.

In any of these ways we can give ourselves to one or more of the lonely millions around us—lonely because they wait for the greatest gift of all, God Himself.

—In *The Alliance Witness*

Was Paul Baptized?

G. R. L.

That's a strange question. I had never heard of it until the June issue went out. In my attempt to be brief in answering a previous question, I evidently left the impression that I questioned whether or not Paul had been baptized—and some have been deeply disturbed about it. So let's settle that right away: “. . . and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized” (Acts 9:18). That's the last word, as far as I am concerned. I have never heard anyone question it.

The fact remains—as I pointed out—that when Paul was telling his own story, he never did say that he was baptized. Perhaps I erred in not giving explicitly my reason for pointing this out: If Paul could recount his own conversion—*three times*—without mentioning baptism, then why should there be such concern when C. I. Scofield does the same thing in the 20th century? My conclusion was that there is something wrong in the way many of us look at baptism. I called it a “misplaced emphasis.” I do not think there is too much emphasis on baptism, but a wrong emphasis. I believe that some are treating baptism much as the Jews of Jesus' time treated the Sabbath. They reversed God's order: “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.” Baptism—let's face the facts, brethren—has been turned into a watermark of orthodoxy and a brand for segregating the sheep. (Now don't you Baptists smirk! You're just as bad as the Church of Christ!) It has been made to serve men, rather than to bless them.

Another word of explanation about the string of references in Acts (see June issue, page 156): I heartily concur with the view of our Senior Editor, E. L. Jorgenson: “As to the group of conversion passages cited, is it not evident that these are, and are intended to be, simply short and condensed statements giving a sum-up of the gospel's progress in those early days of the church? They do not deal with the details of conversion. . . .” From what I read in Acts and elsewhere in the N. T., it appears to me that the early church did not have a mechanical 1-2-3-4-5-step view of salvation. Sometimes they mentioned faith, sometimes not. Sometimes they mentioned repentance, sometimes not. Sometimes they mentioned baptism, sometimes not. Whatever was not mentioned was assumed. The Lord Jesus was central, and these other things—though important, and even necessary—were peripheral. Salvation is not believing or repenting or being baptized, but coming into a personal relationship to a crucified and risen Savior. My whole point in stirring up the question once in a while has nothing to do with what we practice. My concern is with *our attitudes*. Some, I am convinced, have turned the brass serpent into an object of worship. This cannot please the Lord. It cannot glorify Him. And it cannot produce anything but bondage in the souls of those to whom we should be bringing the blessing of freedom.

NEWS AND NOTES

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

Louisville, Ky.: Last Sunday we were delighted to have visiting with us Phil Elkins, who has been teaching missions at Harding College but is moving to Abilene Christian College. He brought us a very moving message on Sunday night on dedication to mission work, using examples of missionaries he has visited in the course of working on his doctoral dissertation on the history of mission work in the Churches of Christ. His summer address is 842 Glendale, Abilene, Texas.

Thomas Y. (Buddy) Clark will become minister of Kentucky Avenue Church of Christ on July 1. —Ernest E. Lyon

Dallas, Texas: The first Sunday night of the month is the time for our monthly Prayer and Praise meeting. This is proving to be one of the monthly spiritual highlights at Mt. Auburn.

Guest Speakers coming our way this month: July 14, George Galanis of Athens, Greece. July 17, O. D. Bixler missionary to Japan for many years. July 28, N. B. Wright, former Mt. Auburn minister, presently living in Los Angeles, Calif. —Neal Phillips

Lexington, Ky.: Our Daily Vacation Bible School under the leadership of Frank Gill closed last Sunday night with a very inspiring program by the pupils and efficient corps of teachers. The house was filled with parents of the children and the members of the church. Bro. Gill brought a short inspiring message at the close on "Servants in Bondage." There was an average attendance of 133. The Adult Class held to the splendid attendance of 40 throughout. A picnic was enjoyed at Woodland Park on Saturday with luscious eats served by the good ladies of the church. —H. N. Rutherford

What Others Are Doing

Jimmie Lovell, editor of *Action*, plans to devote the November issue to articles by editors of other publications. He is hoping that this may sug-

gest ways for more love and understanding between brethren who differ on various issues. \$1 will get you *Action* for one year. Address: Box 146, Palos Verdes Estates, Calif. 90274

" . . . there is no Bible precedent for congregational singing," writes Carl Ketcherside in the July *Mission Messenger*. Get a copy and read his unusual treatment of music—instrumental and otherwise—in the worship. Address: 139 Signal Hill Drive, St. Louis, Missouri 63121.

Herb Hatfield, with the Little Children Mission in Juarez, Mexico, came through Louisville recently. He dropped off two children at the home of Christians where they will spend the remainder of the summer.

Dora Linscott, together with a number of other Christian young people, is engaged in intensive literature distribution in the densely Negro-populated area on Chicago's north side. To lessen personal risks present, the workers go in teams of two or three, usually with a Negro and a White together. Distribution is done in the late afternoon and evening, and weekends are used for follow-up.

Salvisa, Ky.: Youth Revival August 5 through 11. Homecoming on final day. Evangelist, a young preacher with promise: Terry Morrison, Fisherville Church near Louisville. —N. Wilson Burks

Louisville, Ky.: Lord willing, we hope to open this fall our first kindergarten. We have some who have already registered for the training, but are looking for more. We feel that the Lord can use such a program to reach into this neighborhood. This is an attempt to teach young children about Jesus and to get into some of their homes with the Gospel. —Michael T. Sanders

W & W Bookstore

More than a month ago we lost our bookstore manager, Delmer Browning. Our new manager is Houston Cockrell, a recent graduate of Portland Christian High School.

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