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The **WORD** and **WORK**



"Holding forth the Word of life."

JANUARY, 1976

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Robert Heid is a pastor in Louisville, Ky.



God's Family

W. R. H.

Have you ever mused, wondering what it would have been like to have been born into a royal family? How important is heredity?

A royal birthright

"Beloved, now are ye the children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that we shall be like him, for we shall see him even as he is." How unbelievably glorious is this word of John! We do well to stand in amazement at this intimate relationship with God our Father. If we fully realized who we are, church houses would be full and worship would be joy and gladness. Consider that the King of the universe has deigned to redeem us and give unto us His name! He has washed us from our sins and implanted within us His Holy, life-giving Spirit. He has put eternity into our hearts, that we may dwell with Him in glory forever. And, in the meantime, He has given us employment in His vineyard, talents wherewith to trade, and power of His Holy Spirit to enable us unto every good work. As we comprehend this position that has been given unto each of us, the treasures of this world and the lusts of the flesh will fade from view. Christian fellowship and brotherly love, the natural issue of the indwelling Spirit, will spring into life. Old hangups, such as pride, bigotry, or greed will drop off like last summer's fruit. Miraculously we are "changed into His likeness, from glory unto glory."

Human families are from God, also

Since the day that Eve was formed and first given as a wife unto Adam, the human family has been God's glorious prime unit of society. Although the first pair were tested and despoiled by Satan, yet God maintained His plan and purpose, enabling man to be fruitful, multiply, and subdue the earth. Children were early spoken of as a "heritage of Jehovah," and their care and guidance were the parents' prime obligation. Such was God's way in the beginning, and it is just the same today. But, we see and hear many who are in high place, trying to demean the family

and its place in society. The rage today is all in the direction of turning the children over, at younger and still younger age, to the professional educators or to the State, with some groundless hope that such little ones will be better guided and fitted to live in today's world. But the State has proven itself unable to do the job that God has delegated to it, that is, to govern in righteousness and justice. Since no government has been able to rightly do what God *has* assigned it to do, (and the powers that be are ordained of God), how can they succeed in doing that which God has *not* delegated unto them? Besides a failure to maintain justice, we see a similar failure in the way that governments have undertaken welfare and security programs, only to break down the family, neighborhood, and church responsibilities along this line.

Families are breaking up

But God's institution, the human family, is in rough waters in these days. Marriage vows are broken, and home life is being drowned in a sea of selfish lust. Morality, long ridiculed on the stage and tube, is now being sacrificed on many a pulpit. Nations are going off the gold standard, the silver standard, and especially God's moral standard. Many people do not hold life sacred, nor consider that procreation is a priceless gift from the Creator. Parents often consider their offspring as unwanted burdens, rather than great opportunities to see goals accomplished in the lives of the next generation. And the children, sensing the selfish attitudes of the parents, fail to develop the love and respect that they could and would reflect, had it been held up before them at Mother's knee. How vicious becomes the cycle, when human relationships are robbed of the eternal love of the God who has made us, and we go from generation to generation with a severe Spiritual heart trouble. Where is new strength to come from?

A Father of love

There is a great link between the Family of God and the families on earth. For those who know the Heavenly Father, it is impossible not to show Him forth in every day life. God's love is shed abroad in our hearts, and so, having shined into us, it will also shine out. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples; if ye have love one for another." Realizing that we are in God's family puts new light upon all that we see and know in our families down here. Values are righted. Wills are subjected to Him. Teaching becomes vital (life-giving). Work becomes worthwhile. All because we have a Father who loves us to the extent that He gave Himself up for us. "We love, because He first loved us." After I learn of Him and His love, and come to love Him, I can love in my own home. And what the whole world needs today, is love, wherever you are or wherever you go. God, and God alone, is the source of that love.

Carl Kitzmiller is a pastor in Oakdale, La.



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

There are churches which have not changed much in numbers in a hundred years and others which are on a gradual downward path. It saddens me to see people with so much truth making so little progress in reaching others. What can we do to get the churches to grow?

It would be nice to be able to offer on a couple of pages a magic answer to the problem suggested. A survey of the advertisements in a representative religious magazine would indicate that about the only need is a change in Sunday School literature or the hymnal in use, or possibly attendance at a given seminar. Now some *things* may be desirable and may confer benefit, but we must not suppose that the difference in growing and non-growing churches is somebody's filmstrip, or the publisher of the class material, or even the building in which the church meets. The problem is seldom (never?) that simple.

Generally speaking, church growth is good and desirable. Growth means numbers, and numbers mean people. It is certainly better to see more and more people being won to the Lord and strengthened in the faith than to see decline and atrophy. Christians deal with enormous and eternal issues, and it is still people who are saved or lost. So we can never afford to be indifferent to numerical growth.

On the other hand, we must not suppose that numerical growth is to be achieved at any cost. It is not to be our first concern, nor is its absence always a necessary sign of lazy people or of God's displeasure. Some church growth is to be attributed more to changing communities than anything else. Some church decline is almost inevitable in dying communities, however diligent or faithful the leaders or the people. What we are saying is that there are factors which affect both growth and decline which involve neither credit nor blame for God's people. It is not profitable for a church to be self-congratulatory for growth that comes from just being in the right place at the right time, and it is somewhat silly and futile to beat ourselves over the head for something that is not our

fault. As the Lord oversees His church and rules in the affairs of men, He may see fit to use the church in different ways. In His ministry He chose not to do many mighty works at Nazareth, because of their unbelief (Matt. 13:58). There are times and conditions which make for hard going for His people. Much more important than growth is *faithfulness!* It is dangerous for people to be so committed to growth that they are willing to abandon God's ways or even His truth in order to achieve what seems to be growth. Some have.

Under many conditions, however, faithfulness on the part of God's people will result in growth of the church. It must be admitted that the problem in many cases involves the lack of faithfulness much more than it involves difficult or impossible situations. And this faithfulness includes more than carefulness to believe and practice certain Biblical doctrines; it includes faithfulness to be obedient to the great commission and to love the souls of men. In too many cases we have made a preacher responsible for church growth, and other church members feel that they have done their bit by supporting him financially and by being present in the church services once in a while. Except for those cases where outside factors are at work, I doubt that there is any noteworthy church growth until a significant part of the congregation gets concerned about bringing in visitors, going out of the way to talk to the unsaved concerning spiritual things, and in general fulfilling the role of witnesses to which the Lord has called all of us. It is significant that in the early church everyone felt the need for reaching people, and even persecution and scattering resulted in the spreading of the gospel (Acts 8:4). Maybe too few of us really believe in the "lostness" of the man out of Christ or in the great importance of the truths we claim to stand for. We have been infected with the idea that some kind of religion is enough and that maybe the unsaved will make it somehow.

The Loadicean type of Christianity is not very evangelistic. People whose lives are out of tune with the Lord are not very evangelistic, except as they become Pharisees building up a human program (cf. Matt. 23:15). David of old touched on one of the problems in Psalm 51. He was aware of his great sin and pleads with God for forgiveness and a clean heart. In vs. 12-13 we read: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee." One of the great needs, then, is for the church as a whole to live on a much closer plane with the Lord. If we are not able to effect this, we may nevertheless see to our own lives and do what we can.

Of course there is need for using the various means at our disposal. Schools are valuable. Radio work needs to be supported.

Much more needs to be done in the way of distributing good religious literature. Cottage meetings are often effective. Congregations ought to make the community aware of their presence. But the fact remains that until the members of a congregation in general get aroused to the need, most programs are limited. We must get back to the "every member" evangelism that characterized the early church.

Does obedience to parents really bestow long life?

Included in the ten commandments is the admonition, "Honor thy father and thy mother," and the promise, "That thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee" (Exod. 20:12). The apostle Paul, in Ephesians (6:2-3), urges upon his hearers the honoring of parents and repeats the promise, slightly changed, "That thou mayest live long on the earth." The Old Testament commandment, given to the people of Israel, promised long life in the land promised to the Jew. As an inspired man Paul is used by the Holy Spirit to make the slight change, promising long life on the earth.

It is not difficult to see how, without any direct intervention from God, this principle would work to confer long life. Parents were meant to provide guidance to children, and this often involves restraint on youthful follies that would shorten many a life. In spite of the glorification of youth and the despising of the wisdom of the past ages which is so prevalent today, there is generally a natural benefit bestowed in those who do not have to experience everything for themselves. I can think of several youths who have died as a result of disobedience to parental instruction.

Perhaps our greatest problem with this promise comes from what seems to be the exceptions. Do all very old people attain those years because of obedience to parents? Do all who die early do so because of disobedience? Clearly this is not the case. Some die in infancy before obedience is an issue. Some very ungodly people may attain ripe years. While this is a principle of God's dealings with us, it is not His only guiding principle. Many other factors enter into His will, and we must not set these aside. This should be seen as a general rule, not as a mechanical and certain way to long life. Jesus died in early manhood because God's will for Him was something other than long life in the flesh. So we must not foolishly equate every early death with disobedience, nor every long life with obedience. But do not forget that this is a part of the whole. Obedience and honor to parents will improve one's chances of long life.

You have been giving a different address. Does this represent a permanent change?

I suppose it is as permanent as a preacher's address ever gets to be this side of heaven. The writer took up work with the Oakdale

Church of Christ on Sept. 14. Bro. Dennis LeDoux, who preached here for about six years, has moved to Jennings, where he has gone into business and is working with the Jennings church. We have found a good spirit on the part of the brethren here and believe there is a good opportunity for being used in the area. There are several small churches in this central Louisiana area, and we are enjoying the fellowship. The brethren at Oakdale have recently completed a lovely new building which is most comfortable and suitable. It is located on W. 7th Ave., about four blocks from U.S. 165, and just one block from La. 10 (6th Ave.) Visit with us.

113 N. 6th St., Oakdale, La. 71463

"Hot Lines"

J. H. McCaleb



Much has been written about the "hot line" from Washington to Moscow - from the White House to the Kremlin. This direct form of communication has been found expedient because of the long delays encountered when using the regular avenues of diplomatic contact. Too many people get in between. There is too much red tape.

A similar obstacle often projects itself into a Christian's path as he seeks to talk to God the Father. Quite often we surround ourselves with unnecessary intermediaries of formalized doctrine and human overlordship. We forget that we have a direct "hot line" to the throne of grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is God's chosen way.

"Seeing that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. . . . Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

God's family is made up of individuals. Each one has the right of direct communication through kinship with the great High Priest, Jesus Christ our Lord, who sits at the right hand of God, always ready to make intercession for us. Truly, here is found the genuine dignity of man for which each individual strives. It cannot be bought. It is free to all who, by faith, accept Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

Reprint:

In Him Was Life

H. L. Olmstead – 1918

“In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.” Jno. 1:4.
“I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.”
Jno. 10:10. “But these are written that ye may believe that Jesus
is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life
in his name.” Jno. 20:31.

These passages of Scripture are but a very few of the many which teach that the purpose of Jesus in coming into the world is to give men *life*. The need is apparent, if men will only let God describe and define their need. “Dead in trespasses and sins” is the divine diagnosis. Herein lies the great difference between Christianity and everything else which proposes to cure the ills of a suffering world. Christianity recognizes the helplessness, sinfulness, and spiritual death of the race and proceeds to meet the need, not with a system, a philosophy, or even with a code of rules or ethics, but with divine life. True, it has a code, a philosophy, and a system, but above all it imparts life. Confucianism and the religion of Zoroaster each have a very passable code of ethics but both fail at the point of man’s great need for power to do righteousness.

Some non-professing classes

False hopes are constantly held out and great numbers of people, like drowning men, clutch at these straws only to find them insufficient to support the soul in its hours of greatest danger. Forgetting that civilization is but the reflection of the thought of an age, men still believe in civilization as the “power that maketh for righteousness.” Others, unwilling to admit that man by searching cannot find out God, turn to their own reason and construct their own gods and therefore set up their own standards of right and still find themselves without power to do what reason dictates as right. Another class become religious anarchists, have no standards, and “follow their instincts.” This last class is becoming alarmingly large and has the advantage of appealing directly to the flesh as it proposes to let “nature” settle all questions of morals and religion. They can tell us how to train up a child in the way he should go by studying puppy dogs, they can give us the true light on the question of crime and sin by a system of skull measurements. In other words, it deduces all its laws from that which it observes in nature and in its observations it includes man’s fallen nature and

would lay down as rules for his guidance that which his fallen nature dictates. The result must necessarily be lawlessness in its worst form and calls to mind that "mystery of lawlessness" in its final manifestation in the man of sin.

Another class

This one is found among those who intellectually accept the fundamentals of Christianity. They mentally hold that the Christ is the divine Son of God, they hold as a religious tenet that the Bible is inspired, they observe its forms such as baptism, the Lord's Supper and the Lord's Day. They even "offer" prayers and are "posted" in the Scriptures and give of their substance a small amount that their plea may be presented to the world. What then is their great heresy? It is in this: the gospel is a form and its life consists of following the ethical code of Jesus. They know nothing of that divine life which is imparted to the believing soul. It teaches the high moral standard of Jesus Christ and the attendant Christian "duties" and leaves the man still powerless to perform them. Such teachers have a tendency to explain away all passages of Scripture which teach that we may be "strengthened by might through His Spirit in the inner man." The very grave danger is that the adherents of such a mutilated gospel will remain in the flesh and become sensual, not having the Spirit. The result of this lifeless religion is a lack of love, joy, and peace and a consequent increase of strife, division, evil surmising, and evil speaking. There is a dearth of joy in this heresy and an egotistical dependence upon one's own resources. Its chief characteristics are legalism and formality. It is the body of Christianity without its Spirit.

All these classes (and there are others) fail of the end to be attained because they leave the power of God out of their scheme of life. Men are asked to "assert their manhood," to "manifest a little back bone," and to "show a little more stamina." Now if the gospel of Christ holds out hope only for the strong, then it is no gospel for the weak. If all are strong enough naturally to live the life that God requires, then there is no need for the gospel at all. But if it is the purpose of the Christ, through the Gospel, to impart divine life and enabling power, then there is not only hope for all, but the Gospel is the Gospel (good news).

Life in the present tense

"He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Jno. 3:36. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life." Jno. 5:24. "And ye will not come unto me that ye may have life." Jno. 5:40. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth hath eternal life." Jno. 6:47. "He that eateth my flesh and drink-

eth my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up in the last day." Jno. 6:40. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand." Jno. 10:28. "God hath given to us eternal life." 1 Jno. 5:11. "He that hath the Son hath the life." 1 Jno. 5:12. This list by no means exhausts the passages which speak of eternal life in the present tense and are not to be arrayed against those which speak of it as being still in the future. Both facts are equally true. Eternal life, the very life of God, is imparted to the believer and it is this new thing in the lives of men that differentiates Christianity from everything else and makes possible the realization of its fruits.

Four Questions

Bill Butler

I vividly remember my arrival in Uganda 35 years ago, when as a young missionary I first became acquainted with some of the African brethren who had been so greatly blessed in the early days of the East African Revival. I had heard a good deal about them, and greatly looked forward to meeting them. I was taken aback when after the preliminary greetings they asked me what I felt was a surprising question to a newly arrived missionary. The question was, "Are you saved?"

I was amazed that they should ask a missionary that question, but was able quite happily to reply in the affirmative. Upon which they then asked me a second question: "When were you saved, and how?"

Again, though somewhat surprised, I was able to give them an answer, telling them that my parents had been missionaries in India and had introduced me at an early age to Jesus. Moreover, at the age of six I had quite definitely and consciously given my heart to Jesus and accepted him as my personal Saviour. We were getting along happily so far, but then came a third question which, I must confess, completely overwhelmed me. This time they wanted to know, "*And what's happening now?*"

I don't think anyone had ever asked me such a question before. In the evangelical circles in which I had moved, if a person had a clear testimony that he was saved and that he knew Christ as his personal Savior, that was enough. But here were these men asking me what was happening now, what was my up-to-date testimony? The honest answer, I am afraid, would have been that I hadn't got one; that I had been living on past experience; that underlying an apparently keen exterior lay a great deal of hidden sin

and defeat, particularly in the area of my thought life.

How I praise God for the love and concern which constrained those brethren to ask those three questions! In time the Holy Spirit was to show me practically what I already knew in theory, that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin; and where the blood has cleansed, the Holy Spirit can fill.

It was not until nearly two years later that some of my African brethren asked me a fourth and more searching question, which was to lead to a totally new dimension in my spiritual life. This time the question was, "*Is your cup running over?*" It was asked by some Africans who had just returned from a convention in Western Uganda, attended by over fifteen thousand people. They had been reminded of Christ's words in John 7:37, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."

They had been invited to hold out their hands as though they were the cups of their lives, and picture Jesus in their midst with the Water of Life, the thirst-quenching fulness of his Holy Spirit. They were reminded, however, that the Holy Spirit could never fill vessels that were unclean. Only as they were cleansed could they be filled.

Then they were reminded of another cup, the cup of which Jesus spoke when his sweat was as it were great drops of blood as he knelt in the Garden of Gethsemane: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." They saw that cup as the conglomerate cup of all the sin and the failure and the backsliding and disobedience of Christians, as well as pagans. They were reminded that Jesus tasted death for every man; that on the cross he who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Such a simple picture and yet so profound! I saw my African friends with their cups manifestly running over with the fulness of the Holy Spirit, rejoicing in the power of the blood to cleanse and set them free, not only from the guilt and penalty, but from the power and dominion of sin. And I realized that I too could have a cup running over, not as a once-for-all crisis only, but as a continual and continuing process.

How I praise God for those four questions which have meant so much to me and which I believe are so relevant to every Christian believer, Are you saved? When were you saved? Are you sure about it? What's happening now? Is your cup running over? And if it isn't, why not?

—From *Decision*, copyright 1974 by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association

Message delivered to the College-Career session, North American Christian Convention, July 11, 1975.

Alternatives for the Church

J. Robert Ross

This message scares me to death. Why? Because right at this moment in history our greatest need is to be the church and not to talk about the church. In talking about the church we may condemn our failure—including specifically *my* failure—to be *the church*.

Our crying need is not for more sermons about the church but for *more church*, which is itself a sermon to the world of the power and wisdom of God. And without this sermon in deed all our sermons in word are only so much hot air. Perhaps the most serious question about the church in the twentieth century is the question of how to find it. In spite of a proliferation of “church” buildings and church meetings it is entirely problematic whether the church is being clearly demonstrated to the world, whether the church is, indeed, a happening or only theological jargon to the world and a vague memory in the minds of religious people.

Whether or not the church happens, whether or not it becomes a visible, disturbing reality in our time depends upon your decision regarding three alternatives which confront the church in this fourth quarter of the second millennium A.D., Anno Domini, the year of our Lord. In one sense these alternatives are not new, any more than the difference between night and day is new. But the particular forms in which the alternatives appear and the need for a personal decision in regard to each of them is always “new” to each generation. In other words, we cannot depend upon the choices made by Peter, James, and John, or Luther and Calvin or Alexander Campbell. Each generation of professing Christians must decide whether it will be (1) a religious circus or the servant body of Christ, (2) a collection of free lance Christians or a covenant community sharing a life and death commitment to each other and (3) a cheap prostitute or the faithful bride of Christ.

1. A religious circus or the servant body of Christ

In the New Testament the church is described as the body of Christ, an organic unity vivified by the Holy Spirit with individual members each serving in his or her unique manner according to the specific gift which each receives from the Spirit (1 Cor. 12). In other words the church is a functioning organism whose purpose is to continue the ministry of Christ in the world through the particular ministries fulfilled by each member of the body. Today, however, we are tempted to turn the church into a religious circus

with “the minister” serving as ringmaster and star performer in the center ring. There are a few supporting performers in the side rings: the organist, the choir, the “elders” who “preside” at the Lord’s table and the “deacons” who “serve” the emblems. But the church as a whole sits in the bleachers as passive spectators. And they are not even permitted to cheer a good performance. The only response they can make is to shake the preacher’s hand at the door on the way out.

Returning home one Sunday from their local religious circus a certain family was commenting on the Performance. Dad said he was so bored with the sermon that he slept through most of it. Mom asked if everyone else had noticed the short miniskirt on the organist. And big sister said her high school choir could sing better than the church choir. About that time little brother chimed in, “I thought it was a pretty good show for a dollar.”

Well, sometimes the show is lousy, sometimes pretty good, and if you can hire the right ringmaster and one or two super stars you can attract really big crowds to the Sunday morning performance. But whether the show is good, bad, or mediocre it is still a religious circus. And that is not church. Church is *not* what happens on Sunday morning. Our language betrays our misunderstanding of the New Testament reality. When we say, “Let’s go to church,” we evidently mean “Let’s attend this week’s religious performance” or, even worse, let’s go to a certain *building*, which we call “church.”

This does not mean that the assembly of the church on Sunday morning and its celebration of the resurrection life and power of Jesus is not very important. On the contrary. It is essential to the life of the body. But what happens Sunday morning must help the church become the servant body of Christ. Otherwise it does more harm than good.

And what does it mean to be the servant body of Christ? Primarily this means a revolution in our concept and practice of ministry and of “church work.” We have fallen into the habit of calling one or two men our “ministers,” and we understand they are supposed to do the ministry of the church. Indeed, they often become defensive if a spectator makes an effort to become a performer. But according to the New Testament concept of ministry, ministry is a function of the entire body and a function of each individual believer. To minister is to serve, to be involved in what the New Testament calls *diakonia*. This ministry or “priesthood” of all believers is sometimes attempted on the model of big business. The managers (i.e. paid ministers) decide what needs to be done, and then they recruit “workers” to fill the slots they have in their particular organization. But according to 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 the ministry of the individual believer depends upon the particular spiritual gift which he has received from God. Apart from the power of the Spirit, apart from His leading and

equipping the individual believer there is no true spiritual ministry. Indeed, the church is no longer the body of Christ apart from the functioning of individual members exercising their particular gifts for the building up of the entire body. Membership in a body implies a function within that body. And that function in the body of Christ is determined solely by the Holy Spirit. "There are varieties of service (ministry), but the same Lord; . . . To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor. 12: 5, 7).

Of course, there are places within the body for the ministries of shepherding, teaching, and administration. The Holy Spirit has placed me at Eastern Illinois University to fulfill these functions and to serve the body of Christ there with these gifts. I too am a minister. But I am not by any means *the* campus minister at Eastern Illinois University. My gifts may be compared to those of the coach of a football team. But a team cannot play with a coach alone even if the coach is a *player-coach*. It takes at least eleven players to make a team, 22 with platoon football. In the same way campus ministry is carried out on our campus by a whole body of believers. Ministry happens where they are at: in the dorm, in the classroom, on the athletic field. If the effect of our ministry on campus were limited to what I can do, there would be almost no real fruit. But with 100 ministers serving one another and ministering to their friends we can and do have a significant impact on our campus.

In the second place in order to escape being simply a religious circus we must come up with a more biblical understanding of "church work." Among church leaders we sometimes hear a member judged either as faithful or unfaithful to the church. What this means is that he either attends the meetings regularly or irregularly. And when the preacher talks about "church work" we all know that he is referring to playing the piano, washing the communion cups, teaching VBS or standing at the communion table on Sunday morning. True, these things have to be done, but this is *not* the work of the church. These things may be necessary to facilitate our corporate worship or our teaching programs. But the *work* to which Christ calls the church is a ministry in and to the world for which he died. To love our neighbors, to visit the prisoner, to feed the hungry in Bangladesh and preach good news to the oppressed—this is the work of the church for it is the work of Christ himself which we continue as his representatives on this earth. Thus we must decide: shall the church become a religious circus or will it be the servant body of Christ on earth?

2. A collection of free lance Christians or a covenant community sharing a life and death commitment.

Perhaps a personal anecdote will explain the difference between being a free-lance Christian and belonging to a covenant community

sharing a life and death commitment. Shortly after Doris and I were married—we were both just over twenty-one—we had attended a Bible lectureship at the school we had both attended for two years, Southeastern Christian College. We were returning to our home in Knoxville, Tenn. along route U.S. 25 through Kentucky. Just outside of Livingstone a local policeman dressed in blue jeans and a tee shirt stopped us and charged me with passing on a yellow line. He took us back to the local JP, who fined me \$20.00. I had only \$6.00 or \$7.00, which I gave to Doris to catch a bus to return to Knoxville while the local officials locked me up in their jail.

There was no alternative. The town did not even have a telephone so that I could call Dad and ask him to send me some money. I will never forget my feeling of loneliness and God-forsakenness as Doris left, tears rolling down her cheeks, to catch a bus for home while they took me off to jail. I thought of contacting the local Christian church for help, but I realized that no one there really knew me. And even though I belonged to the church, that did not mean that Christians in a strange town had a responsibility to help me in my distress. In other words, even though I “belonged to the church,” in reality, that is when it really counted, I was on my own. The church, whatever it might be, was not a family to which I could turn in a time of trouble. Now maybe I was wrong. If I had contacted the local body of Christ in Livingstone perhaps they would have been glad to loan me \$20.00 to pay my fine and allow me to continue my trip home. But the point is that I *did not perceive the church as a community in which I could assume a mutual life and death commitment.*

But this situation is no longer tolerable. Either the church becomes such a covenant community or else it will lose all hope of affecting and transforming the loneliness, isolation and alienation which torments modern man. This is a special challenge for the conservative, doctrinally orthodox church, which has boasted of its faithfulness to the Word of God. But as Francis Schaeffer has reminded us there is an orthodoxy of practice as well as an orthodoxy of teaching. “In the 20th century people all over the world will not listen if we have the right doctrine, the right polity, but are not exhibiting community.”^o

Tom Skinner is right when he says that we have distorted and forgotten the biblical meaning of *ecclesia*, which is usually translated “church.” We have almost completely restricted the church to the congregation, the collection of people who gather on Sunday mornings to observe the weekly performance of their preacher. The New Testament *ecclesia* was a community of believers who were joined together in heart and soul by one Lord, one faith, one baptism, etc. (Eph. 4:4-6). In other words, the *ecclesia*, although

^oThe Church at the End of the Twentieth Century (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1970), p. 73.

it was perhaps most visible in its assembly, nevertheless in its essence was not an assembly; it was a *koinonia*, a sharing of a common life in Jesus Christ. And until we recover this unity of life and purpose and until it is expressed in a life and death commitment to one another we cannot claim to have restored the New Testament church.

Today we have reduced the biblical *koinonia* to "fellowship," and that is something we reserve for a "fellowship supper" which we eat in a "fellowship hall" on one night a month. And this really is nothing more than a few likeminded friends socializing on the same level as the Thursday afternoon bridge club.

But the early church knew *koinonia* as a sharing of one's entire life in Jesus Christ. This meant, first of all, an unconditional acceptance of one another without regard to social, economic, racial or religious origins. The church was the *only* place in the first century where slave and master, man and woman, rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, Pharisee and publican all received one another as brothers and sisters in one family—and only because they had all been adopted by one Father through his Son Jesus Christ. The church today has a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate the power of the love of God through the mutual acceptance of the many antagonistic groups which are at enmity apart from the reconciling deed of Christ. Would not Detroit sit up and take notice, would not the NACC be splashed across the front pages of this city's newspapers, if we were here this week, not as look alike, smell alike, dress alike midwesterners, but if we were one body of blacks and whites, Anglo-Saxons and Poles and Italians, if our fellowship included a contingent of released convicts, of workingmen and corporation executives, of Indians, Chicanos, and Mexican Americans. Yes, Detroit would notice such a meeting. The world would wonder with eyes wide open that such people could love one another, pray together, sing together, and laugh and cry together. But the sad fact is that we have not demonstrated such unity, and so the world does not pay us much attention.

In the second place biblical *koinonia* means mutual submission to and service of one another. The model for such self-giving is the Lord of the church, who girded himself with a towel and got down on his knees to wash the feet of his own disciples. To **know** Jesus, to have him wash our feet, is to learn to wash one another's feet, to "love one another with brotherly affection" and to "outdo one another in showing honor" (Rom. 12:10). It means that each of us counts the other better than himself and that we look out for our brother's interests, not our own (Phil. 2:3,4). I do not say that this does not happen today in the church. I only say that it happens too rarely and that the very being of the church depends upon it happening more and more. Submission is not something we emphasize in modern America, especially to people who are rich or

powerful. But the submission which is the essence of the church has the master serving the slave, the man serving the woman and the "righteous" serving the "sinner."

In the third place, biblical *koinonia* means discipline. To be committed to one another means that we really care about one another. So we have to care when a member of our family is messing himself up. Divine discipline is a sign of genuine sonship (Heb. 12:7-8). Not to correct and chasten a child implies that we have no special relationship to him or that we have rejected our commitment for his welfare. Likewise in the fellowship we must learn anew the meaning of "church discipline." This will not be as hard as we think if we have met the first two criteria of Christian fellowship, unconditional acceptance and mutual submission and service. It is obvious today that discipline in the average church would be almost meaningless. To refuse fellowship to a member for committing adultery would predictably have little effect because the fellowship which is withdrawn from him means so little to him. And the fact that we have been so little concerned with his ongoing life before the act of discipline means that we possess little or no authority to interfere in his life at the point of his sin against God and neighbor. When we learn to love one another, to become deeply involved in every dimension of one another's life, we will discover that we have achieved a moral authority over one another. Discipline from those who have given their lives to us is meaningful. And best of all, it is redemptive.

In the fourth place, biblical *koinonia* means a sharing of our lives on the material and economic level. In the early church this economic interdependence led to a common treasury, and those who had property gladly sold it in order to share with their fellow believers who had any need (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32; 6:1ff). This economic fellowship in the church at Jerusalem is usually interpreted as a rather unusual, even aberrant, practice which was soon discontinued and, therefore, has no relevance for us today. However, a close reading of the Corinthian correspondence demonstrates that the Apostle Paul took it for granted that Christians would always share with one another. The Apostle expects that "as a matter of equality" those who had plenty should share with those who had little (2 Cor. 8:14). And it is not as though he were introducing some radically new economic principle, for even the Old Testament had laid down the principle of equality among the people of God: "He who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered little had no lack" (Ex. 16:18 quoted in 2 Cor. 8:15).

Our lack of true biblical fellowship is most clearly and damningly manifested in our economic independence. I do not wish to lay down rules here for the exact manner in which we must begin to demonstrate true fellowship in this level. (Can fellowship be

legislated?) But I suggest as a bare minimum that we begin with financial disclosures. Let us at least trust one another with how well or how poorly we are doing and how we are spending the money which passes through our hands. For those who are interested in exploring some contemporary models of Christian economic fellowship I recommend the book *Living Together in a World Falling Apart* by Dave and Neta Jackson (Creation House, 1974).

The alternatives which the church confronts here have the potential for either the saving or the losing of her soul. *The Church is covenant community*, and we must make that real. And if someone asks how to start, here is Francis Schaeffer's suggestion:

Don't start a big program. Don't suddenly think you can add to your church budget and begin. Start personally and start in your homes. I dare you. I dare you in the name of Jesus Christ. Do what I am going to suggest. Begin by opening your home for community.

I have seen white evangelicals sit and clap their heads off when black evangelicals get up to talk at conference times. How they clap! That's nice because six years ago the evangelicals would not have been clapping. But I want to ask you something if you are white. In the past year, how many blacks have felt at home in your home? And if you haven't had any blacks in your home, shut up about the blacks. On the basis of Scripture, open your home to the blacks, and if they invite you, go with joy into their homes. Have them feel at home in your home. Then you will be able to begin to talk with them and your church can jump across this division as it should, but not before. And if you are a black Christian, it all cuts equally the other way: How many whites have you invited to your home in the last year? How many have eaten at your table?

How many times have you risked an unantiseptic situation by having a girl who might easily have a sexual disease sleep between your sheets? We have girls come to our homes who have three or four abortions by the time they are 17. Is it possible they have venereal disease? Of course. But they sleep between our sheets. How many times have you let this happen in your home? Don't you see this is where we must begin? This is what the love of God means. This is the admonition to the elder—that he be given to hospitality. Are you an elder? Are you given to hospitality? If no, keep quiet. There is no use talking. But you can begin.

There is a different kind of unantiseptic situation. How many times have you had a drug taker come into your

home? Sure it is a danger to your family, and you must be careful. But have you ever risked it? If you don't risk it, what are you talking about the drug problem for if in the name of Christ you have not tried to help somebody in this horrible situation?

If you have never done any of these things or things of this nature, if you have been married for years and years and had a home (or even a room) and none of this has ever occurred, if you have been quiet especially as our culture is crumbling about us, if this is so—do you really believe that, how can you stand and say, “I have never paid the price to open my living place and do the things that I can do”?

I have a question in my mind about us as evangelicals. We fight the liberals when they say there is no hell. But do we really believe people are going to hell?°

3. A cheap prostitute or the faithful bride of Christ.

A certain French skeptic is reported to have once said, “I could receive Christ if he did not bring his leprous bride with him.” This is both a shocking and sober critique not only of French Catholicism but of most of Christendom. Indeed, God himself is tormented by the anguish which a leprous and adulterous bride causes him. The most vivid and scathing denunciation of Israel's infidelity is recorded by the prophet Ezekiel using the imagery of an unfaithful wife. In chapter 16 he describes how God had discovered the infant people of Israel: “As for your birth, on the day you were born your navel string was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you, nor rubbed with salt, nor swathed with bands. No eye pitied you, to do any of these things to you out of compassion for you; but you were cast out on the open field, for you were abhorred, on the day that you were born” (16: 4-5). The Lord then describes how he tenderly adopted this abandoned child and how he nourished her until she grew into a beautiful young woman. Following the metaphor of sexual development and marriage he says, “When I passed by you again and looked upon you, behold you were at the age for love; and I spread my skirt over you, and covered your nakedness: yea, I plighted my troth to you and entered into a covenant with you, says Yahweh God, and you became mine” (16:8).

As God's wife, Israel flourished, and her beauty became famous among the nations. “But you trusted in your beauty,” God accuses her, “and played the harlot because of your renown, and lavished your harlotries on any passer-by” (16:15). The prophet describes in bitter metaphorical detail how Israel flaunted and cheapened

°op. cit., pp. 107-108, 108-109.

herself among the nations of the world. Indeed, Israel degraded herself even more than the ordinary street walker because she refused payment for her services. Thus the Lord reproaches her: "Men give gifts to all harlots; but you gave your gifts to all your lovers, bribing them to come to you from every side for your harlotries: none solicited you to play the harlot; and you gave hire, while no hire was given to you" (16:33-34).

Spiritual prostitution by the people of God is not limited to ancient Israel. Revelation depicts the corruption of modern religion under the figure of a great harlot called Babylon, who consorts with the Satanic political power called the Beast and who becomes intoxicated on the blood of the saints of God (ch. 17). Thus the church today confronts the alternative. Will she become a cheap prostitute or will she be the faithful bride of Christ?

There are many ways in which the church can and has compromised herself in the modern world. One way is to prostitute the substance of the gospel either intellectually or culturally. The liberal churches have prostituted the gospel intellectually by falling in love with every new form of modern thought and attempting to make the gospel compatible with it. When the church has compromised the reality of the atonement or the resurrection of Christ in an attempt to be intellectually respectable she has thereby become an adulteress with the world. Rational and mystical forms of thought continue to tempt the church. And many of us are so ignorant of the truth of the gospel or so bedazzled by the vaunted superiority of the empiricist ideal of truth that we are naive suckers, ready to fall into bed with any modern denial of the gospel of Christ.

But there is a cultural as well as an intellectual prostitution of the gospel. To be faithful to Christ implies a certain life style as well as certain beliefs. Some parts of Christendom are already embracing homosexuality, fornication and marital infidelity as expressive of a liberated life style. And many other Christians who do not advocate moral slavery under the guise of freedom, nevertheless, are ready to take pleasure at the grossest forms of moral depravity via book, screen and boob tube.

Many other parts of Christendom, especially fundamentalist churches, have become culturally conformed to the social patterns of this world. Racial discrimination is doubtlessly one of the most lewd forms of social prostitution in which the church of Christ has engaged in our own time. A friend of mine and a member of a fundamentalist church brazenly argues that the church should not attempt to become integrated in a segregated society. Rather, he says, the church should merely conform itself in these "social" matters to the pattern set by the world. Such conformity is open spiritual prostitution. Even the world sneers at our nakedness

when we talk about "God's love of all men" and "unity in Christ" and then refuse permission to an interracial couple to become married in our church building, as my home church did.

There are other ways the church prostitutes its allegiance to Christ in seeking the favors of modern culture. In America mammon, material wealth, is perhaps Christ's most powerful and seductive enemy. Israel had the same problem with the temptations and enticements offered by mammon. Not that God is an ascetic who wishes to keep his wife in rags! Indeed, the Lord reminded Israel, "I clothed you also with embroidered cloth and shod you with leather, I swathed you in fine linen and silk" (Ezek. 16:10). The problem is that a beautiful, well-dressed woman finds it much easier to attract lovers, and so her temptation to adultery becomes greater. Israel, Ezekiel tells us, took her jewels of gold and silver and made images, "and with them played the harlot" (16:17). Like Israel, the American church is decked out in the finest clothing: million dollar buildings, large weekly contributions, members who enjoy a standard of living which Solomon might have envied. But what shall we do with our wealth? Shall we spend it on our own pleasures, or shall we help the starving nations of the world to develop the bare agricultural resources necessary to maintain life? Shall we continue to waste the world's limited resources of fuel and metal, or shall we learn to use the wealth as stewards of God who must give account to Him. Shall the church become a model of frugal living using her abundance to feed, clothe and shelter the poor, or shall it ape the vulgar conspicuous consumption of a world that worships mechanical gadgets, ridiculous fashions and fattening food?

Finally, the church is tempted to prostitute herself by playing footsie with Caesar. The harlot of Revelation 17 is pictured as riding on the back of the Beast, the symbol of pagan, self-serving government. However, the Beast has no respect for the religious harlot who has prostituted herself to him, and in the end the Beast turns against her to make her "desolate and naked." The Beast in the end wishes to be God and he will not tolerate any other worship. I have great fear for our bicentennial year. There are already signs that American Christians will use this time as an excuse to flirt with Caesar, to shamelessly curry his favors and to boast in her spiritual intercourse with him. We already fly Caesar's flag beside the Christian flag, and to add insult to injury we always give the American flag the place of superior honor—on the right side or at the top of the pole. It is certainly in order to thank God for the unique blessings Americans enjoy. But fidelity to Christ means that we are proud of America with certain definite reservations, reservations regarding the history of slavery, reservations regarding our robbery of native Americans, reservations regarding our imperialist expansion into territory owned by others, Mexico,

for example, and reservations regarding our arrogant use of military and economic power in our own time. Let us read again the Revelation, and let us consider ourselves fairly warned. If we seek the favors of Caesar and cuddle up to him with sweet words of praise, in the end he will despise us and will require us to unclothe ourselves in his presence or be destroyed by him.

Perhaps the most awesome, the most humbling aspect of redemption is the way God has focused his eternal purposes in the church—of all things. According to Ephesians the eternal purpose and wisdom of God are now made known to the universe in and through the church (3:9,10). In other words God intends to draw us together here in Detroit—or Chicago, or Los Angeles, or Bone Gap, Ill.—in order to demonstrate his power to overcome the social, political and spiritual sickness which afflicts the human race. Just like industrialists often construct small pilot plants to demonstrate the methodology and feasibility of a new manufacturing process so God through Christ calls together a people, a colony of heaven on earth, to embody the reality of the New Creation right now on this old, sin cursed globe called Earth.

Fantastic! A privilege that none of us could ever have imagined in our most ambitious dreams. To be the servant body of Christ, to be a covenant community with a life and death commitment to each other, to be the faithful bride of Christ—this is our opportunity, this is our privilege. This is God's gift to us through the victorious, reconciling deed of Jesus Christ.

"Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, to him be the glory in the church" (Eph. 3:20,21).

In the Dark Ages of Europe, He Was A Shining Light.

Raimund Lull

Edwin Fesche

Raimund Lull, born on the island of Majorca in the year 1236, until the age of 30 enjoyed the life of a courtier to the king of the Balearic Islands. Then one night, while composing a love song, he saw an image of the crucified Savior. The memory of this encounter never left him. After this experience, which the remainder of his life proved to be a genuine conversion, he became deeply exercised as to how he should serve the Lord. Heretofore his life had been decidedly impure. He was so captivated by divine grace that he refused to allow his past to be any obstacle to his future service.

In the thirteenth century Christendom was still smarting over the inroads of Islam, so for two centuries the sword was made the arbiter

of Christianity versus Islam. To the consternation of the Crusaders the different Arabic tribes became the permanent possessors of Jerusalem, and the long and expensive wars to liberate the holy places only succeeded in polarizing and embittering the so-called infidels.

The Saracens being laid on Lull's heart, he now made a labored study of the Islamic religion and wrote a book comparing it with revealed religion. Twice he sought the patronage of the Pope to establish language schools and stimulate missions, but to no avail. Lull soon became aware that if there were to be any missionaries to North Africa he would have to set the example.

After studies in Arabic, he went to Genoa in 1287 with the purpose of sailing to Tunis, but he was so overcome with fear of torture and martyrdom that he failed to sail on the ship that awaited him. This inner conflict resulted in a complete physical breakdown. When a second sailing was announced, he had friends carry him to the ship, and as soon as he was at sea he bounced back into mental and physical health.

In Tunis he assembled the Mohammedan doctors and explained that he was anxious to debate their religion versus his; also that he was open to conversion if their arguments proved to be the stronger. Lull was given a forum and contact with large numbers of intellectuals anxious to convert him. In an atmosphere of candor all was going well until a fanatic secured the ear of the king and Lull was put into prison. He would have been put to death but for the intercession of a more moderate doctor who praised the spirit of Lull and lamented that the Mohammedans nowhere displayed such a spirit toward Christians. The authorities speedily saw to his deportation and warned that if he ever returned to the country he would be stoned to death.

Upon his return to Italy he spent several years lecturing and promoting the cause of Christian missions. He had access to the universities and monasteries of Europe and appears also to have won fame in scientific studies. Next he labored among the Saracens and Jews in his native Majorca. Later he moved all over the Near East, including Cyprus and Armenia, laboring principally among the small Christian sects that were directly under the heel of Islam. The historian Neander tells us: "All of this he undertook with only one associate, without being able to gain the assistance of the powerful and opulent."

In the years 1306 and 1307 he was back in North Africa and again he narrowly escaped being stoned to death. He was saved from this fate by a Mufti who later asked him how he could act so madly by publicly denouncing the doctrine of Mohammed. Lull replied, "A genuine servant of Christ who has experienced in himself the truth of his faith feels no dread of death if he can secure his soul's salvation." Compelled to return to Italy, he began laboring with the pen—one

book for inquiring Mohammedans, and the other for the conscience of Christendom. His devotional writings reveal a reverence and depth that is all too rare.

In 1314 he again crossed over to Africa and at first labored in secret among a small circle of persons that he appears to have won to Christianity during his former visits. Unable to suppress an inward desire for martyrdom, he began to make public appearances. Amid the excitement such daring created, he warned his persecutors of divine judgment if they refused to renounce Mohammedanism. He was attacked by fanatical Moslems and stoned to death.

In anticipation of this he had already written, "Men die of old age; die owing to the want of natural warmth and in excess of cold; and, therefore, may thy servant, if it please Thee, not die such a death. I have often shivered from great cold and fright, but when will that day and hour be, when my body will tremble, owing to the great glow of love, and its great desire to die for its Savior?"

Lull was in many respects a child of his day; he worked within the Christian system prevailing in the Western World. To him Christianity was destined to conquer all minds and become the universal religion. The famous universities and converts of his day were challenged by his personal enthusiasm for Christian missions. The use of the sword, so popular in his day, Lull lamented. His was a lone voice crying in a wilderness of religious pomp and ritual. The heroes of the day were the knights in armor with huge crosses emblazoned on their shields. Lull was done with such things and he shines the brighter since his lot was cast in the so-called "dark ages."

—In *Missions*

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Alvin Hobby

Livingstone, Zambia

December 1.

Our rains at Livingstone have not started properly yet, although Kalomo and some other areas have had some good rains. The total rainfall here at our place for the month of November was only .26 inch. This is not enough to permit plowing and planting to be started; and if this cannot be done soon, the crops will be poor. In all my years in Africa, I can remember only one other year like this.

On Monday morning, November 3rd, Georgia and I and preach-

er Joseph went to Syandazya Village, about 16 miles from here, in the absence of the Mitchells, to teach Bible classes for the men and for the women. After the classes were finished, two women wanted to be baptized. So we went to a water-hole about a mile away for the baptizing, before coming back here.

In my work with the Tonga Bible translation program, I have been reading and checking the Tonga manuscripts of several of the minor prophets and the book of 1 Samuel.

Since the schools are in the process of closing just now, we and the Mitchells wanted to give a supper party for the young teachers-in-training from David Livingstone Teacher Training College who have been helping us with the Sunday school classes at the church here, and those who will be helping us next year. So on Friday evening, the 21st, Georgia and I went to the school, collected fourteen of the teachers-in-training and took them out to Mitchells' for games, supper, and devotional.

Ten of the teachers have graduated now and have been posted by the government to all parts of Zambia. Some of them requested Bible teaching aids to take with them, since they will teach Bible classes in regular school session as well as on Sundays. Georgia spent considerable time over three weeks preparing materials which she and the teachers thought would be helpful to them.

The number of children in the Sunday School classes seems to be increasing. On Sunday the 23rd, there were 135 present.

Shichiro, Nakahara

Shizuoka City Japan

December 1.

We remained busy until last week, for we had a revival meeting planned before I left for America and when I got back home, I found myself with lots of work needed to be taken care of in way of preparation. We had three young souls, two boys and a girl, come forward, confessing their sins and wishing to be baptized. Our young people, while I was away, worked very hard and did a wonderful job in planning as well as carrying it out, and the Lord has richly rewarded their effort and service unto Him with much deepening spiritual experience.

I'm indeed grateful to God for the wonderful trip He gave me and the opportunities to renew our friendships with so many good old acquaintances who have so long supported us and the work with both prayer and contribution.

T. W. Hartle

Capetown, South Africa

November 12.

Our series of gospel meetings held October 22-26 was a great success to the glory of God, with attendances each evening very good. On the evening of the 25th, while the invitation hymn was being

sung three young people came forward requesting to be baptized—two sisters and a brother. Their parents are Christians, and it must have been a joy for them to witness their son and two daughters being baptized. But we also know that there was great rejoicing in heaven among the angels of God, and we can just pray that God might bless these three young people to the intent that they might set the example by leading others to Christ.

We are still busy during the week with cottage meetings and many of them are in new homes. We are thankful for the eagerness of these families wanting to hear the Word. We are just praying that the results of cottage meetings, tract-drives at hospitals, occasional film-strip classes, services which I conduct at the two hospitals and also the Old Age Home, may be fruit-bearing to the glory of God.

And we give God the praise, for the admirable men we have within the congregation, who are the instruments used in reaching the lost, because of the fact, that they have the right vision for evangelism. We thank God too, we have now a fence erected around our new building site permanently as a good start.

We have as yet not started the wayside Sunday school and open air services on the building site; but this is all in the programme. We trust we shall be able to start soon.

Our regular services remain fairly commendable, with decreases off and on. Many members have been ill, but up to date, praise God, many of them are well again.

George Galanis

Athens, Greece

Oct.-Dec. Newsletter

I greet you all my good friends in His precious name and want to report wonderful things that the Lord has been working among us.

In only forty-five days we have passed out fifty thousand advertisement pamphlets for our Bible correspondence course. Three hundred fifty responded for enrollment. I have already started visiting the new souls and it is wonderful to find them be thirsty for the word of God.

Now we have ordered new pamphlets to throw them all under the doors. We expect to receive close to a thousand responses. We concentrate at a certain area of Athens at a time in order to do systematic work. From only one neighborhood we have received seventy responses. We will try to organize these souls into Bible study circles and eventually into local churches.

God has given us a tremendous opportunity to evangelise our countrymen. Please pray for us and be a partner in this great missionary enterprise.

Addie Brown

Salisbury, Rhodesia

November 19.

We women had another good study yesterday morning. We are studying Hebrews and without a good knowledge of the Old Testament it is difficult, but one or two wanted to study it. It surely has a good message for us and is very relevant to our times when many are falling away. If we can truly get our eyes upon Christ and appreciate our High Priest and His work for us we will have learned well. Then we won't be so slow about going to the throne of grace for help and mercy. The invitation is to come boldly!

Donald Harris

Salisbury, Rhodesia

November 21.

I am still working on the Home plans, but Lord willing, will soon be finished. It may be that some of our members here are shaping up, as they are beginning to take a little more active part. I have stepped back a bit to give them a chance to serve the Lord better themselves. If I keep doing it all for them, they never will take hold, so please be in prayer for the Arcadia Church and the Spiritual growth they need. The Lord does still work, for the young people seem to be interested. Now, if the older ones can muster up an example for them, the work will surely go forward.

Motoyuki Nomura

Tokyo, Japan

December 3.

Ever since I lost my teaching job at the Tokyo YMCA English School suddenly about 15 months ago, and ever since my dearest Korean minister, a Jin Hong Kim of Hwalbin Church in the worst slum in the city of Seoul, Korea, was arrested and sent to jail due to his Christian conviction against the Park government, God gave me a deeper understanding of meaning of Christian life through sufferings and hardships of the world. Since these two took place in 1974, my family and our small Hachimanyama church have suffered greatly and desperately in financial needs, but we have learned precious lessons from the Lord and have grown up greatly in our faith in Jesus Christ, our Lord and Coming Hopec.

My earnest search for a deeper meaning and understanding of life that started from that time on has been well rewarding so far and I sincerely pray that God will teach me more and more of His precious lessons one by one through the years of Cross bearing that is yet to come in the future. I want to ask you to pray for my spiritual growth and for my ministry in Asia.

Hachimanyama church has grown up considerably as a self-giving and life-sharing church with those who are in needs, although we ourselves are a smallest group of Christians and poor and weak. Many of our members got married and started their own new Christian homes here and there, doing similar cottage meetings like what

I have been doing. A couple works inside a juvenile reformatory while another works for the lowest income class factory workers. Many students went to Southeastern Christian College in Winchester, Kentucky, and then to other schools. I know some of them are still studying the Word of God in other Christian institutions in USA with a hope that they will be better equipped soldiers of Christ someday in Japan and Asia. I don't remember just how many went to S.C.C. so far, perhaps about 40 or 50. Your ministry for them is greatly appreciated.

The remaining members here are small. There are about five or six faithful members that support our entire church work, including our Sunday school work with about 20 elementary school children and about a half dozen junior high school students. Every adult member shares quite a heavy burden of our church work and does a lot of financial sacrifice constantly. In addition to our own church maintenance, they give considerable amount to Korean ministry. They are not rich people but a great people in the Lord. They also pray a lot, including prayers for Christians in America, too. God gave me indeed a wonderful bunch of friends.

The Christian Church in Asia tends to be self preserving and self centered organization instead of self giving organism. It often serves for the intellectuals and the elites in Asia and/or becomes a Sunday morning accessory for the upper class people. It became a self centered and self preserving fraternity instead of self giving living organism full of joy and love and happiness for the peoples of all classes and kinds. Thus Church is powerless and irrelevant to our societies and cultures. Something is wrong with us.

We must become love filled, love giving Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. We must present Jesus Christ as our only Hope of the world, the sin forgiving Savior, the Redeemer and Coming Prince. I want to be an effective and faithful worker for the Lord in Asia. I need your encouragement, advice, suggestion, and fellowship. I can not work alone. It has to be a team work of mutual trust and confidence, it has to be motivated by the love of Christ and by the love for Christ and His Church. Also, I need co-workers and co-laborers together in the Lord, especially the younger ones. What has happened with the young people in American churches today? Why no missionary vision and passion? Why no missionary candidates? Why no sincere desire to participate in the world of the Kingdom of God? If no vision, then His Church perishes. That is why I am praying for the churches in USA earnestly each day that God will bless them and give them a new sense of Christian responsibility and of Christian joy in sharing and participating in the Kingdom of God. May we all become more earnest in following His way. Send us dedicated young workers for there is plenty of work for our Lord and His Church here. Two-thirds of the people of the world cannot read and write due to poverty, and this great amount

of illiteracy means no Bible for them. And most of them are in Asia. Send us your young men and women who love His Kingdom. Life is rich in Asia with Jesus Christ.

I made two quick missionary trips to Korea this fall to be with the faithful Christians in the slum. If you want to know more about this special mission work, please do write me. I have plenty of slides and photographs as well as many interesting and challenging stories I want to share with you. If we do not win the millions of poor peoples of Asia with Christ's message, then the communists will win them with their message.

Ernest Lyon is a professor of music at the University of Louisville and minister of the Highland Church of Christ.



Viewing the News

Ernest E. Lyon

AN ORDINANCE against a church worshipping in a single-family dwelling in Vienna, Va., a suburb of Washington, D. C., is being used to stop a Catholic priest from celebrating the Mass in Latin. The Rev. Joseph E. Gerda is using the 400-year-old Tridentine Latin Mass, which the Pope has ordered shall be used only for private prayer. Two groups of people are rushing to Gerda's defense—those who feel the civil courts are being used to enforce the Pope's rule and those who feel the civil courts are persecuting religion. You may choose sides as you wish!

BISHOPS of the Anglican Church of Canada voted last fall to give individual bishops power to admit "qualified" women to the priesthood beginning this coming Nov. 1.

11,500 "DECISIONS for Christ" were made in a five-day Billy Graham meeting in Taiwan, the Nationalist Chinese state, in November, 1975. Contrast that to services in Red China, and then note that we are seeking relations with Red China and gradually phasing out our relations with Taiwan.

LEBANON continues to be in the

news with its "religious" war. It is interesting to note the religious make-up of the country. Maronite Catholics make up about 30 percent of the population (that is an Eastern-rite church in submission to Rome). The Greek Orthodox Church has about 13 percent of the population and Protestants number 1 percent. Muslims are in the majority, about equally divided between two of the sects that split in 657 over the successor to Muhammad. In the early 1940s, based on a census in the 1930s, Christians were given the dominant position in the government when an agreement was made that the president would be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, the speaker of the legislature a Shi'i Muslim, and the commander of the army a Christian. The army has a good many Christians in command positions but the majority of the soldiers are Muslim; hence the inability of the army to help with the fights between the Catholics and the Muslims.

BELIEVE IT or not, there is a very strong movement among the Roman Catholics in this country to have women ordained as deacons. A meet-

ing of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops last November discussed this possibility and an unofficial conference on ordination of women was held in Detroit the last of November. I have had no report on the latter meeting. At the NCCB meeting John Cardinal Krol made a lengthy statement about Catholic relations to Jews, reinforcing the trend to take away all guilt for the death of Christ from the Jews (I wonder when they will take away the guilt of the Gentiles also!) and when questioned made the significant statement that Jews do not need to "believe in Jesus" as the Messiah for salvation if they already believe in God. How he can ignore Jesus' statement that to deny Him is to deny the Father and the statement that He and the Father were one is something I can not say in case he is acquainted with the New Testament.

ANOTHER REPORT of the persecution of religion in the Soviet Union was repeated in the news letter of the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade from the Australian magazine News Weekly in the news letter of December 1, 1975. "A Ukrainian priest, Fr. Michael Luckyj, of Drohovyč, in the Ukraine, was warned three times by the KGB—the Soviet secret police—that these activities were illegal. Plainclothes KGB officers called at his home and asked him to come with them and visit a sick parishoner. He was taken out and hanged." His parishoners would have some doubts about detente if they heard about it!

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND lost one million communicants in 20 years, has closed 500 parishes in one year, has 2,500 fewer parish priests than in 1969, and expects to lose another 3,000 by 1980 according to religious news items I have seen. Attendance is down so much that a 13,000-member parish averages 20 per Sunday.

DO NOT CONFUSE the "Reverend Jesse Jackson" and the Rev. J. H. Jackson, both of Chicago. The former is a radical, but the latter is a Chicago Baptist clergyman who has won 22 consecutive elections as president of the largest black organization in the United States—the 6.5 million-member National Baptist Convention, and he is a strong and outspoken con-

servative who speaks out against the enemies of Christ and the enemies of this country.

A GOOD WAY to stop the spread of Transcendental Meditation was used in Fairfield, Iowa. The Fairfield "ledger" printed an English translation of the "puja," the Vedic hymn of worship sung in Sanskrit by TM instructors during compulsory initiation rites for new meditators (at least, so compelled at the TM training center in Fairfield). The translation reveals the previously secret puja to be worship of Guru Dev, Maharishi's dead master. Thanks to "Evangelical Newsletter" for this information and for the fact that seven Fairfield ministers have asked the Iowa Attorney General to prosecute TM on charges of consumer fraud for marketing TM as a "scientific practice." Unfortunately TM is still being pushed by lots of people in high places without having this knowledge.

AN INDIANA reader has protested my statement in the October issue that Mrs. Ford, wife of President Ford, "indicated she was willing for her family to go along with the lowered morals of the day." I respect his opinion that her statements did not indicate that and apologize if I have misjudged her. However, statements she made in other interviews have led many people to agree with my column, and I had read those interviews. In one interview in the White House she suggested that a previous interviewer had not asked how often she slept with her husband. The interviewer then present asked that and she replied, "As often as possible." Now I am not criticizing the relations of the president and his wife, but it hardly seems a suitable conversation point for the news media. I hope she is just unwise and that my reading of the interviews was incorrect.

MANY EXPERTS in the field of national defense are saying that the Soviet Union is using detente and every other kind of means to increase its war-making machine as fast as possible. They feel that the U.S.A. is fast becoming a second-rate power and that in a very few years we will not be able to threaten retaliation when the U.S.S.R. moves to take over other countries and that one of those countries could be our own.

Look for such reports, usually buried in the back pages of your newspaper if present at all, but conservative papers and magazines have been giving full reports of the warnings.

HAVE YOU RECEIVED material from People's Bicentennial Commission? It is a Marxist organization that declares it is trying to put "an end to free enterprise" and is working for "a Socialist economy." Yet, 2,000 library systems are using their materials, as are 5,000 school systems, and 65,000 churches! Remember the name of the commission and warn people against it.

SEVERAL NEWS sources have said that the Libyan government has sent about \$100 million to continue the street warfare in Lebanon. That country has also sent money to the Irish Republican Army and to some organizations in this country.

DO YOU WANT to know what the "Establishment Insiders" have in mind to do next in this country? Then read "Foreign Affairs," the magazine put out by the Council on Foreign Relations.

THE AMERICAN Medical Association on December 3 reversed its long-time ethics code and now allows collective bargaining, especially for interns and other hospital doctors. Maybe when the AMA applauded abortions done by doctors the move was completed to one of money only instead of interest in patients. I hope I don't have to wait for a heart operation while the doctors bargain with the hospital! And my apologies in advance to the many dedicated physicians who deplore such moves as this and should not be classed with the ones taking the lead in such things. Would a doctor like to reply to defend the collective bargaining decision?

TWO RUSSIAN intellectuals are now trying to warn the West against Detente, the writer Solzhenitsyn and the physicist Andrei Sakharov. So far their warnings have been ignored by the men in Washington who are speeding us toward a collective government. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger seems to be the one who has kept Solzhenitsyn from speaking to the President. **The Scott Report,**

as reproduced in "The Coming Storm" publication of the Christian Heritage Center, reported on last November 12 that Kissinger has even blocked Solzhenitsyn from becoming an honorary U.S. citizen. The bill to do this was unanimously passed by the Senate and, at last report, was pending in a House Judiciary Subcommittee.

MANY OF THOSE now smearing the name of J. Edgar Hoover may be sincere persons who feel that Hoover overstepped his authority in trying to stem the tide of communist advance here and in other parts of the world, but most of them are simply smearing his name because he was a conservative patriotic man. On the other hand, in spite of the gains black people feel are due to Martin Luther King (many blacks feel as I do that what he did set back their advancement), it seems to me that because he was associated with many communists (11 or 12 of his close associates were so identified and a black FBI agent, Julia Brown, identified King himself as a communist leader) he should not be praised and a holiday made out of his birthday. The surveillance of King by the FBI is one of the things that is being held so much against Hoover today.

INTERESTING QUOTE FOR THE BICENTENNIAL: "I place economy among the first and most important virtues, and public debt as the greatest danger to be feared. To preserve our independence, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our choice between economy and liberty, or profusion and servitude. If we run into debt, we must be taxed on our meat and drink, on our necessities and our comforts, in our labors and in our amusements. If we can prevent the government from wasting the labor of the people under the pretense of caring for them, they will be happy."—Thomas Jefferson.

I've gone over my allotted space again, and I apologize for the news not included, but please keep it coming so I can have a column each month. Send your questions, your news, and your objections to

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NEWS AND NOTES

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

East Jefferson Street Church, Louisville, Ky.: The church closed its winter meeting on December 21st. We had no conversions, but two rededications to the Lord and several raised their hands for prayer and a closer walk with God. We learned several valuable lessons and made a large number of contacts that we hope will yield some fruit in the future. Brother David Tapp, our evangelist, brought us good messages. The response of the church from the standpoint of attendance was excellent.

It is our hope and prayer of the church to win the lost to Christ as Savior and Lord, and for God's grace to the saints to do greater things for Him. —James L. Wilson

WATCH NIGHT SERVICE

The gathering at Portland this year was especially good. They seem to grow better each year. The attendance was lower than usual, but the Spirit of the Lord gave a closeness in the fellowship that was a blessing.

Brother Jesse Z. Wood of Winchester was the guest speaker for the occasion. The Scripture read by Bro. C. V. Wilson was Isaiah 62:1-7. Brother Wood warned us that he would probably ramble—and he did, but somehow we kept on his trail and enjoyed the "ramble." It ranged from many interesting incidents in the past (they were more than reminiscences for they pointed up the lovingkindness of the Lord) to the Israel of prophecy. Brother Wood's remarks were pertinent to the present situation in the Middle East and at the same time pointed back to the Old Testament prophets. The fact that Brother Wood was going by a watch that was an hour behind time here did not mean a thing for the message was worth it.

A brief time for refreshment was followed by a return to the auditorium to sing and pray under direction of Brother Dennis Allen till the midnight bells rang. They were a background accompaniment (unsolicited) to our final jovous song of praise, "O, Praise the Lord, All Ye Nations." What a blessing it would

be if all nations would praise the Lord "who made and preserved us a nation."

Highview church, Louisville: About 22 Highview young people visited Maple Manor on December 22. They had a good time of worship with the senior division of the home before they left leaving gifts and good cheer behind them. Highview is planning to have a weekend seminar in March. Dates were not given yet.

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING SERVICE

The annual Thanksgiving service was held at Louisville's Atherton High School on November 27. Mac LeDoux addressed the gathering of about 950 persons. The offering for Christian education exceeded \$5200. Thanks to God the gracious Giver.

Henryville, Indiana: All from the Sellersburg Children's Home (Maple Manor, Jr. Division) were snowbound in Dugger, Indiana, November 26 and had to stay over all night. Brothers Howard Marsh and Joe White, who were in charge of the group, and some of the boys slept on the floor of the church building. They had made the trip in response to an annual invitation at Thanksgiving time to have a real Thanksgiving dinner. Afterward they participated in the evening service by repeating from memory many Scripture passages learned for the occasion. They expected to return as usual right after the service. But God overruled and they arrived back home at about 11:30 the next morning. They had left about five inches of snow in Dugger to find none in Sellersburg.

Many thanks to all who have taken a little time out of a busy day to send bulletins or write or call the news directly in while it is fresh. Needless to say the latter method comes nearer getting the message out while it is news than the former. Since Word and Work has no phone you may call 778-7422 or write to me at 2415 St. Xavier St., Zip 40212.

—Mary W. Knecht

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