

THE WORD AND WORK

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God's Family

W. R. H.

BLIND TO THE ISSUES

For those who live in Kentucky, at this time there is an important issue developing that will have most severe effects upon young Christians, if it is decided by the courts in an adverse way. It is the question of truancy (or alleged truancy) on the part of students who attend Christian schools that are not accredited by the state. This very week there is talk of jailing the parents of such students in the area of Owensboro, and some other out-state schools are also being pressured. Our own Portland Christian School has been accredited for many years, even since the days when I attended, in the early 1930's. With God's help we hope to keep it so. Scholastically, it continues to measure up very favorably in the various test records, and spiritually, of course, God has helped to maintain the real reason it exists—the implanting of the Word of God.

Many are blind to what is happening in Kentucky, however. The busing issue has thrown dust into the air, until many think that there is no other reason to have a private school. And the authorities make good use of this distraction, thereby passing off their own failure to have a state curriculum and discipline that effectively prepares students for life. There has been little challenging of the textbooks that are being supplied, since many of these books are not permitted to be taken home, and parents are really quite in the dark about what is going on.

The dictionary gives two meanings for the word *truant*: "(1) formerly, a lazy, idle person; hence (2) a pupil who stays away from school without permission." When a student in an un-accredited private school is called (by the court) truant, then the authority is saying that the private school is no school at all. Parents are cited for contributing to the delinquency of minors. That is saying that the child's hours spent in school are less than nothing, and the child is "failing to do what duty or law requires, guilty of fault or misdeed" (the definition of delinquent).

For citizens (Christian citizens, at that) to be threatened with jailing on such a flimsy charge brings to our attention the momentous times in which we are living. So many judgments today are not handed down by courts, judges, and juries, but by bureaus and boards. Citizens are brought before the Revenue Service, O.S.H.A., the Food and Drug Administration, the Zoning Commission, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, the Federal Trade Commission, the State Public Service Commission, the Equal Opportunity Office, and now it is the State Board of Education. Perhaps you agree with me that we as citizens need to be waking up from our pipe dreams about freedom.

But there are spiritual issues that are more vital than the domestic ones of our day, and there is even greater blindness about them. Paul tells the reason for this in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4: "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that perish: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is in the image of God, should not dawn upon them." Satan, then, also throws up a dust cloud or a smoke screen, so that the workings he does behind the scenes will go un-noticed by us until we are completely encompassed. Again he uses usurped authority to do violence to those who lean toward God and the things of righteousness.

Just as the issue in Kenucky education is "who has authority over my children?" so the spiritual issue of our day is "who has authority over my life?" We conclude that, with the schools, the parents should be holding the final authority over their children. The parents have a love for their offspring that the state can never have. We can further conclude that in spiritual matters, again, the Father is the rightful authority over His children. Ephesians 4:6 tells us that there is one God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all. His love for His children is such that no other love can compare.

As a concerned parent, you may be fully aware of the truancy issue and feel that you should talk to neighbors, in order that they, too, can be helped to see while there is still time to be actively concerned. As a concerned Christian, you have seen the spiritual issues and made the proper choices. But, again, there may be neighbors who do not see the outcome ahead for them if they continue in their spiritual blindness, and thus need to be helped to see those issues which are a thousand times more important. State or federal issues might well mean the loss of freedom for the rest of our lives, but spiritual issues will mean the gaining or losing of life forever—eternal life, a life beyond compare for those who flee unto their Father.

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Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

Please comment on the statement by Jesus: "Many are called but few chosen."

These words appear in Matt. 22:14, and in the King James at Matt. 20:16. It is now believed there is no good textual authority for the words at 20:16, and they do not appear in many of the later translations. There seems to be no textual question about those at 22:14, however.

The word translated "chosen" is the same Greek word which is often translated "elect." A good translation of this passage could read, "Many are invited, but few elected." Williams translates: "Many are invited, but few are selected."

Since Jesus says these words immediately following His parable of the guest who did not wear the wedding garment, we can expect that parable to shed some light on them. Eastern custom at wedding feasts was for the host to provide suitable garments. The man in the parable, therefore, was not a victim of circumstances, was not too poor to have the proper clothing, nor could he have had any reason for his conduct except a scorn for his host. We do not know whether this was an open and evident attitude of which he was aware or whether he thought so highly of himself that he ignored the feelings of others. Perhaps he felt he was doing the host a favor just in being there and, hence, supposed he could lay down his own terms. In any case, he could not even offer the semblance of an excuse when confronted with his misdeed. He was speechless. This man accepted the invitation up to a point. He did come to the place of the marriage feast, but for some reason would not wear the wedding garment. He is typical of the many who want salvation and who are not willing to make some concessions toward receiving it, but they want it on their own terms and are not willing to glorify and honor God in the matter. Since our wedding garment is the righteousness of Christ, a refusal to wear it speaks of a refusal to seek salvation through Christ. This man is typical then of those who want salvation apart from Christ. They have realized something of their need and have some desire for salvation, but they want it according to some scheme of their own—a good life, various human works, their position, etc.

This man was called or invited. The servants had done that, by the authority of the king. The invitation had been to whosoever would come. The parallel to this seems to be the gospel preaching which our King causes His servants to do. Going into all the world, these messengers invite men and women to be saved. Some respond as did the earlier guests (Jews) and do not even make a pretense of going to the feast. Some Gentiles also refuse the invitation, being consumed with cares of this life. But others accept the invitation up to a point. They do become aware of God in some sense. But they do not have a committed, obedient faith in Christ. To be chosen, or one of the elect, one must receive the salvation God has prepared in Christ.

We could explain Jesus' statement in this way: All who hear the gospel are invited, but only those who are obedient to it and abide in Christ are chosen. God's choosing is based somewhat on our choosing. The gospel call is to "whosoever will." Some will to accept the Lord Jesus. In choosing Him these become the chosen.

There is the revelation here that many more hear than believe. However much it may grieve our hearts, the truth remains that it is the relative few who enter the narrow gate (Matt. 7:14), or who in choosing Christ are the chosen. Not all religion is salvation. Not all contact with holy things means eternal blessing. Many people who have had great opportunity will be lost (*are* lost, in fact). What carefulness ought to be in our lives that we have, indeed, been dressed in the righteousness of Christ.

What about people who leave one congregation in a huff and start attending another, being received with open arms at the latter place? Should this be encouraged or allowed, or is this a necessary practice?

This question is one that was profitably discussed by one of the speakers at a recent gathering of Christian families. This is a persistent problem where several congregations exist within driving distance in any one area. There are those who move from place to place, not for convenience, or opportunity for greater growth, or in a search for the will of God, but because of some incident or person who angered them, because of some restraint imposed which they did not like, or such like.

Now there is certainly a freedom of choice (within the will of God) allowed the Christian as to which of several congregations he may wish to attend. Perhaps no one would insist we must attend the closest or that our choice must be dictated in some other mechanical way. There are good, God-honoring reasons why a person might drive all the way across town to be a regular part of the work of a faithful congregation, even though another one committed to New Testament truth, holding to the whole counsel of God, is nearby. We are not here dealing with those who in good faith and with a proper sense of brotherhood do this. We are not

dealing with those who, in a true search for doctrinal truth or scriptural practice, may peaceably leave one work for another. We are not even dealing here with those who may follow their favorite preacher from place to place, although this latter practice generally speaks of a childishness and an insufficient concern for the fellowship and the program of any one congregation and certainly ought to be discouraged.

The problem in view is the person who may have been rebuked in some way at one congregation, who in fact is a suitable subject for righteous church discipline, but who flees to another sister congregation where he is graciously received with open arms and is thrust into activity and responsibility to help "hold him." New Testament congregations are independent so far as church government is concerned, and one congregation cannot run the affairs of another. There is certainly a place, however, for cooperation and for a mutually satisfactory handling of such a case as we have cited. It is a short sighted policy which allows such a problem to corrupt the individual concerned and to create hard feelings between the congregations. It would surely be an exercise of wisdom to insist that before such persons could be received into full fellowship they must make things right concerning the problem at the other place. Our zeal for growth must not blind us to the need of the erring individual nor cause us to undermine the efforts of a sister congregation. We may pay for our indiscretion later by discovering that some of these people are trouble makers.

Now it is conceded that sometimes this may happen unawares. Problems may have arisen of which we were ignorant. Like the Gibeonites of old (Josh. 9), these people may deceive us, leading us to believe that their conduct in leaving another place was honorable. It may be only when the situation is near the point of no return that we discover our error. This would suggest therefore that we make some inquiries before we "lay hands" on such ones hastily (1 Tim. 5:22). We may wish to avoid the formality and the hypocrisy which can characterize "church letters" but the principle is not all bad.

Sometimes the problem arises out of a fear that anything less than a whole-hearted reception might cause the person to go to a denominational church or to drop out of going at all. It is better to accept them, it is argued, than to drive them away. It is conceded that in our day one of the difficulties of church discipline is the lack of conviction, the basic immaturity of those with whom we may have to deal, and the ease with which many can go to "the sectarians." But we face a similar problem in the discipline of our children in an age when many parents do not discipline; we have to take into account the immaturity and the prevailing conditions, but we cannot abandon the discipline. Fear that "our children will not love us" has kept many parents from exercising needed discipline, and fear of offending has kept many a church from

needed, righteous, God-ordained correction and discipline. Fear of the child who threatens to leave home does not lead to a healthy home life, and fear to deal with the threats of carnal Christians to "run away" should not paralyze us into inactivity or make us act foolishly and "pet" them by thrusting them into the limelight.

Now we do not wish to discourage the worst of sinners from attending the church services where they will hear the word of God proclaimed, but we must so order our dealings with both alien sinners and erring Christians that these do not become deceived about their status.

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Repentance – A Rare Experience

Billy Ray Lewter

Usually I say, "I'm working on it," when I become aware of specific personal problems. But rarely do I repent.

I mistake conviction of sin for repentance. Recognition of sin, even guilt over it, is not repentance. When Paul preached to King Agrippa, Agrippa said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." But he never repented. At times I have even welcomed guilt. I have expected to be made to feel guilty when I went to church. Guilt is a form of punishment that soothes the conscience. A good tongue-lashing from a respected preacher seems to fill the bill exactly. It's a way of paying for sin without repenting of it. I went home feeling better because I had felt guilty.

I mistake confession of sin for repentance. Sometimes guilt compels me to confess to God, to someone close to me, even publicly in church. Although this is hard for me, other than a temporary emotional feeling, not much happens. The problem remains, and with renewed awareness, guilt returns.

I mistake religious service for repentance. Cain and Saul were religious, offering sacrifices, but they went their way instead of God's. Simon (Acts 8) made a profession of faith and was baptized. But he hadn't repented; Peter rebuked him, "Your heart is not right before God." The Pharisees prayed four times a day, yet Jesus said to them, "Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:30). I often respond to guilt with renewed service, *yet still fall short of repentance.

I mistake sorrow for repentance. Cain and Saul were sorry, because of the consequences. Judas was sorry. He hanged himself. Often my sorrow is over the consequences, more than the sin itself, and the separation from God. Sorrow for consequences sometimes produces a secret envy of those who can "get away"

with something. It sometimes leads to secret, fantasy wish-fulfillment. Sorrow for personal sin is not repentance.

What is repentance? The Greek word, literally translated, means "to turn around." It's a conscious *change!* Isaiah 55:7 describes it well, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord."

Repentance includes conviction and confession of sin, as is shown in Psalms 32 and 51. Repentance includes sorrow, that is the Godly sorrow Paul distinguished in 2 Cor. 7:9, 10. Repentance also includes certain activities of service, "putting off" my way and "putting on" God's way, as in Colossians 3:1-14.

How can I repent? How can I actually change? How can I overcome the problem?

First, I need to agree with God. 1 John 1:9 says to "confess" our sins. The Greek word translated confess literally means "agree with." Agree with God concerning the fact that I have sinned. Jeremiah 17:9 says the heart is deceitful above all things. Agree with God, "Lord what I just did proves how accurate your Word really is." Spiritual growth comes through successive re-discoveries of my total dependence on God's grace and forgiveness.

Secondly, I need to remember the root cause of my failure—pride! I have a natural tendency toward going my own way (Isaiah 53:6). But when I become aware of that, the devil tries to get me to focus on the failure and the consequences. Guilt, he doesn't mind. He doesn't want me to look at the cause—pride, running my own life. There's no hope for repentance until I admit the cause and choose to let God be God. To call Jesus "Lord" means He is Boss! Without dealing with the root cause I only battle symptoms. That's why I fail to change.

Thirdly, I need to realize the truth of 1 Corinthians 10:13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it." This includes several things, including: my problems aren't unique; anytime I sin, I choose to; and God is faithful, so there is *hope* of *complete* repentance.

Finally, I need to visualize the *spiritual* consequences of sin: "He was wounded for our transgressions" (Isa. 53:5). My sin helped put Jesus on the Cross! He died in my place! By that death, however, I was redeemed! I was bought—and now belong to God. Visualizing that should bring gratefulness. Gratefulness and appreciation for that will motivate me to change, to look for God's solutions in His Word to my particular problem, to worship, to surrender, and to "Go to thy house and thy friends,

and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and how he had mercy on thee" (Mark 5:19).

Incomplete repentance leads to years of regret, grief, and continued failure—I've learned the hard way—a terrible price to pay when there is hope of *change!*

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



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

OBEDIENCE OF FAITH

It is somewhat strange, but there are many who misunderstand faith and grace so much that they do not think that the word "obedience" belongs in the Christian vocabulary. Yet Paul says in Romans 1:5 that through Jesus Christ our Lord he had received "grace and apostleship, unto obedience of faith among all the nations for His Name's sake."

The King James translation of v. 5 says "obedience to the faith," but in 11:26 when the same Greek expression is used the translation is like the Revised translation here, "obedience of faith." Regardless of the correct translation of the phrase, there are "grace and apostleship" that Paul had received.

First of all there is the obedience to the Lord that arises because one believes on Him. When we believe His gospel, His good news that He "died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" and has proved this by His appearances in the forty days on the earth and then to Paul after His ascension; then, if we have true faith, we respond to that faith in the turning from our sins, confessing His Name, and being buried with Him in baptism. Since the first work of the apostles was to proclaim the gospel so that lost men could so respond, I presume that this is the primary meaning here. To come to Christ in the way He has appointed is a glorious thing that brings a man into a living, vital relationship with the Son of God, becoming himself then a true son of God, heir of God and joint-heir with Christ Jesus. What a wonderful thing that "obedience of faith" is! Paul later in Romans pointed out that

the trouble with the majority of his brethren in the flesh (the Jews), was that they had missed this wonderful blessing because they "did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God." Let us be in subjection and truly submit to Him. I feel that similar uses of "obedience in Acts 6:7, Romans 6:17, 2 Thesalonians 1:8, and 1 Peter 1:2 confirm this.

But the term "obedience of faith" carries a wider connotation than that of the "primary obedience" that we have been speaking of. It speaks of any obedience that arises out of faith and expresses faith, contrasted thus to the obedience of the keeping of ceremonies, as under the Law. Haldane, in his exposition of Romans, well says that "unbelief is rebellion against God. Faith, on the other hand, is an act of submission, or surrender of ourselves to God, contrary to the natural opposition of our minds, in order that He may possess and conduct us and make us whatever He pleases." He becomes our Lord and Master to Whom all obedience is due and He dwells in us and we in Him that He may give us the power to make this obedience and faith a normal thing. So fundamental to "living the Christ life" is this that when John says in 1 John 3:4b that "sin is lawlessness," (not "transgression of the Law" as incorrectly translated in the King James) he is saying that the root nature of sin is a refusal to be controlled by God—a refusal to follow the bidding of faith and obey Him.

This is the right path to true joy in the Lord. Thousands sing, "Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey," without any dedication of their bodies to the Lord as a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service (Romans 12:1). Believe on Him and let Him be your Commander Whom you love and obey.

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

DONALD HARRIS

Salisbury, Rhodesia

8-31-77

We still have not quite completed the slab floor on the home, but we will try to get this done during the holidays. All the children are away from the home at the moment, except one who goes around with us, young Joshua. So we are going to try to get the home completed. We've had new rulings in the home and soon we will have some more new rulings, I suspect. Today is election day in this country and many are going to the poles because there are three different parties running for elections here.

The children will be returning to the children's home by September 13 to get ready to go back to school again. They have the school term here set up in three terms a year, and they have the vacation time in between those terms. It's not like ours in the States.

ADDIE BROWN

Salisbury, Rhodesia 8-25-77

Our meetings continue with quite good interest. Daddy Brown has brought good messages on unfulfilled prophecy the past five weeks. Last Sunday David's message was being ready for Christ's return—as per Luke 12—which was quite challenging. There is a prayer meeting at the church building at 5:30 in the morning each day for those who can and wish to come.

There were eleven of us—two were away—at the ladies' Tuesday meeting this week. We always have good classes. Sis. Mingle led the lesson this week, and she did well. We are studying the letters of John.

The Church In Prophecy

Larry Miles

Is the church of Christ an afterthought? Is the church an accident? The answer to these two questions is emphatically, NO! The church of Christ was in the eternal purpose and plan of the ages. The Apostle Paul writes these words in Ephesians 3:8-11, "Unto me, who am less than the least of the saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things: to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus." (ASV.)

Although the dispensationalist will tell you that the Church was an accident, the Bible does not teach that as the preceding verse so explicitly states. Although I do believe in the premillennial return of the Lord Jesus, I am not a Dispensationalist! The Apostle Paul writes in Colossians 1:13, "It is God who has delivered us out of the dominion of darkness and has transferred us into the kingdom of His dearly loved Son," (Williams Version).

Bro. Robert H. Boll, for 52 years the minister of the Portland Avenue Church of Christ, wrote these words concerning our subject: "I believe and teach that Jesus is King now, and the kingdom was established on the day of Pentecost; that the Church is all there is of the Kingdom on earth now; that all who are in the Church are in the Kingdom, and that that is the only way in which anyone can get into the Kingdom. But I also believe that there is to be a

future manifestation of the Kingdom—that those who are in the Kingdom now are taught that through much tribulation they must enter into the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22); and that for the faithful there will be an abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:11).

I want to cite a passage that has been taken to show that the church of Christ was spoken of prophetically in the Old Testament. Are all the passages concerning the kingdom fulfilled in the church? NO! I believe that in some contexts these passages may have a dual meaning. They may be in a sense fulfilled in the church partially and later fulfilled completely in the future manifestation of the Kingdom. In Daniel 2:44, we read these words: "And in the days of those kings, the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all the kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever." (RSV.) Is this passage talking about the Kingdom or the Church? Can it be that in a certain sense it is speaking of both? I want to give two views of this passage from two different viewpoints. From the view of the Dispensationalist, we will be quoting from the Harper Study Bible as edited by Dr. Harold Lindsell, current editor of Christianity Today. On the view that the Church is all there is of the Kingdom, we quote Bro. Reuel Lemmons, current editor of the Firm Foundation. The words of both of these men are not necessarily the words of the writer of this article.

In the footnote in the Harper Study Bible concerning Daniel 2:44, Dr. Lindsell writes these comments: "Some hold that this verse lends itself to the millennial interpretation. Nothing in history has yet approximated the ten toes of the image. Therefore, this aspect of the prophecy appears to be definitely future. At that time the kingdom which now exists only in a spiritual sense and not in a literal sense will become dominant in the world scene, attaining supremacy over all the earth." The writer here (Lindsell), makes a distinction between the Kingdom and the Church. They are not identical. Bro. Lemmons writes the following in his book, *The King and His Kingdoms*: "Daniel spoke concerning the endurance of the kingdom, that it 'shall never be destroyed: the kingdom shall not be left to another people...and it shall stand forever.' Jesus, in a parallel prophecy recorded in Matthew 16, promised the gates of Hades shall not prevail against the church. If Jesus here spoke the truth, the church is everlasting. If the kingdom were one thing and the church another, then the kingdom might be everlasting and the church purely temporal. This is the view of the average Protestant."

We have here two different renderings that are on the surface seemingly contradictory. Must both viewpoints be totally wrong in all aspects? Is there another dimension to this perplexing problem? I want to quote again from our late Brother

in the Lord, Robert H. Boll, concerning a possible answer to this dilemma. Bro. Boll writes, "Wherever we see two such contrasting positions on a great Bible doctrine strongly held and defended by opposing parties, it is safe to conclude that both find some support in the scriptures, and that to that extent both are right; and that both fail to take into account all that the scriptures have to say on the subject, and to that extent both are wrong."

It is in this light that I see the passage in Daniel 2:44 and the passages our a-millennial brethren will cite to us saying that these passages deal with the view that the Church and Kingdom are identical. I must again confess that I cannot accept the viewpoint that tells me that the Church is identical, in all meanings of the word, with the Kingdom. I do believe, however, that both the church of Christ and the Kingdom were established on the day of Pentecost, A.D. 30. I also believe that both were in the plan of God forever. But they are not identical.

By using this passage in Daniel 2:44 and others, we see that the church was in the mind of God from the foundations of the world. So, in a certain sense, some of the Old Testament passages that are dealing primarily with the Kingdom in its future manifestation may have some reference to the church of Christ. But, let us not get caught up with the idea that the Lord has totally turned His back on His chosen people, the Jews, and that we in the church of Christ are the heirs to all the promises concerning the Kingdom. If we have obeyed the Gospel, we become members or citizens of the present manifestation of the Kingdom of God today, the church of Christ.

Let us heed the Word of God. Let us not be afraid to teach and study for ourselves the whole counsel of God on all subjects. The main thing to be concerned with here in the dispensation of grace is not whether Jesus is going to rule for a thousand years in Jerusalem on the throne of David, although I believe He will. The most important priority in our Christian lives and service to the Lord of glory is to be ready when He comes for His church, the ransomed bride of Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). If we are ready to meet Him, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Let us conclude now with the words of the apostle Paul to Titus in the second chapter, verses 11-13: "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who 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" (ASV).

MARANATHA!

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Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

QUOTED FROM EVANGELICAL NEWSLETTER: "I doubt whether many conservative Christians recognize how much they have adopted of what they called 'the world' only twenty-five years ago," remarks church historian Martin Marty in *Context* (July 15) on the changes he has observed in the religious world since his ordination in 1952

"Then their sex manuals were primly Victorian. Beauty contests were the devil's instrument for promoting lust. The 'missionary position' reigned supreme. Now the conservatives are obsessively hedonistic, 'the flesh' has its day, unnatural birth control is now positive policy, Bible believers usually win beauty contests and are set forth as norms for the young'uns, and the evangelicals tout the joys of oral-genital sex.

"There are attempts to hold certain lines: against homosexuality, against extramarital intercourse. But on almost all fronts there have been reversals so sudden that our new generation cannot even picture the values of 1952."

We could all do some soul searching with regard to Mr. Marty's observation. It seems to me that the Lord's word for it is "backsliding." Our word for it often is "rationalizing." There still is no other way "to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."

A NEW BOOK entitled *The Myth of God Incarnate* has come under attack by theologians and religious writers. The seven Protestant theologians whose essays make up the content of the book argue that Jesus was a real man with a normal father

and mother and a limited human mind. They call his divinity a myth, "a story which is not literally true... but which invites a particular attitude in its hearers."

Columnist George Gale writing in the *Spectator* said: "I do not myself see how a man can be a Christian in any normal or useful sense of the word and maintain that there was nothing supernatural about Jesus."

The essay singled out for attack by Gale was written by Maurice Wiles, a canon of the Church of England. "Wiles is very much in step with present university orthodoxy, which is so concerned to make Christianity acceptable to those who challenge its fundamental precepts that it is constantly throwing the baby out with the bath water, then slithering around on the bathroom floor, trying to pick it up and put it back in again" (as quoted in the *Calgary Herald*). The above item is from *The Prairie Overcomer* (Sept., 1977).

FROM THE PHILIPPINES comes a clipping of an article by Franklin H. Williams, writer for the *New York Times*. Mr. Williams identifies President Idi Amin of Uganda as the perpetrator of atrocities that have claimed from 50,000 to 300,000 murder victims. (I call your attention that these are blacks, and mostly Ugandans.) He says many protests have been registered against Idi's regime, but they have been fruitless. However, Williams suggests that the American housewife has a powerful weapon in her arsenal which just may topple this tyrant.

It seems that the murderous exploits

"The western world and America have abandoned the old ideas of good government and individual initiative to meet the communist propaganda..."

"Partidge said, 'The United States and the democracies have a blind faith in and obsession with the principle of one man, one vote.'

"This parrot cry of 'one man, one vote' which the Russians use to insure that a government to their liking is put in power, and which the Americans and the socialists agree to regardless of its effect, really means in essence a deprivation of individual freedom.

"Western countries seek to use Rhodesia as a pawn to buy the good will of African states, and are promoting universal suffrage to obtain the support and the friendship of the Third World..."

THE PANAMA CANAL is a case in point. The state department is determined to do what America's enemies want them to do, and to express the kind of thoughts the enemies want them to think. I say "determined" because every poll is overwhelmingly in opposition to the state department's arbitrary course to give the canal to the enemy.

A quartet of former Chiefs of Naval Operations—Admirals Robert B. Carney, George W. Anderson, Arleigh A. Burke, and Thomas H. Moorer (also a former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff)—have urged President Carter not to relinquish United States control of the Panama Canal and the Canal Zone that surrounds it. "Con- tary to what we read about the declining strategic and economic value of the Canal," they said in a letter to the President, "the truth is that this interoceanic waterway is as im- portant, if not more so, to the U. S. than ever." Advising the President that "hundreds of combatants, from submarines to cruisers, can be fun- nelled through the transit as can be the vital fleet train needed to sustain the combatants," they said our ability to shift naval forces through the Canal from one ocean to another is increasingly important now in view of the reduced size of the U.S. At- lantic and Pacific fleets."

of Amin are financed by the lovely but wealth-creating coffee bean. The coffee bean is Uganda's major cash crop. The cash that is returned to Uganda is used almost exclusively to maintain its mercenary army and Amin's notorious State Research Bu- reau, the key agency responsible for liquidating his opponents.

This clipping informs us that both the army and the Bureau are com- posed of 55 per cent foreigners. Their loyalties are as long- or short-lived as the cash supply. Cut off the cash supply and Idi is in real trouble!

The United States supplied one- third of the gold that flowed into Uganda last year, 99 per cent of it from coffee purchases. The figure is expected to increase this year.

Chief purchasers are Maxwell, a subsidiary of General Foods, Nestle, and Woodhouse, Drake and Carey, Inc. If you prefer human rights to coffee, join in with others to send a flood of letters to these companies declaring a boycott of their products (not only coffee) unless they cease trading with this law breaker. Also write your sentiments to President Carter and your representatives in Congress, letting them know that nothing short of a total economic boycott of Uganda by our government will satisfy the outrage you feel.

AN INTERESTING UPI ARTICLE of June 9 quotes the defense minister of Rhodesia as saying that the United States has lost the war with Com- munism, but the Rhodesians will not surrender to international Communism. The UPI article reported: "In a speech to a group of Rhodesian indus- trialists, Defense Minister Mark Par- tridge said the United States and the western democracies had abandoned their ideals. 'The major trend in the world today is the expansion of Russian Communism and the collapse of the Western world,' Partidge said. 'I would go so far as to say that the psychological war between Com- munist and democracy has ended. The object of a psychological war is to insure that one's enemies think what you want them to, and thereafter do what you want them to do.'

However, our enemies want us to think and act contrary to this sound advice.

LABOR DAY WAS FIRST established in 1882. At that time it was not uncommon for employed people to work from 60 to 80 hours a week for low pay. There was no Social Security, no pension program, no unemployment insurance, no workmen's compensation. Today, people in this country work under greatly improved conditions, with all of the above benefits provided by business as a result of greatly increased capital investment resulting in higher productivity.

In Communist Russia laborers must work seven times as long as those in America to buy the same amount

of food. And, even in advanced European countries, wage earners must work between 20 and 50 per cent longer than those in this country for the same return. We must continue to work as hard in the years to come as during the years since our first Labor Day to maintain what we have gained, as well as to make greater gains in this regard. It is no accident with only six per cent of the world's population, the U.S. accounts for a third of the world's total productivity.

"To God be the glory," should fill every canyon and re-echo from sea to sea across this great land of ours. God has blessed, and it is our prayer that He will continue to do so. And, let us pray for a better world, too.

Bible Exposition -- Matthew

S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

THE LORD'S PRAYER — A PRIMER FOR PRAYER

Introduction

There are many prayers of the saints recorded in the Word of God. We have those of Paul, and we have even more from that great Old Testament prayer warrior, King David. We have the prayers of Moses, of Daniel, of Elijah, and of others. And, of course, we have our Lord's great high-priestly petition in John 17, together with others of His. It is doubtful, however, that there is any prayer in all of the Bible that is more misunderstood, insofar as its interpretation is concerned, than the Lord's Prayer of Matthew six. In the first place, it is a definitely Messianic prayer, being a petition for the coming of the world-wide earthly kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be introduced at His Second Advent. In the light of the biblical force of the term *kingdom* in previous revelation to this point, that must be the meaning of the brief petition, "Thy kingdom come" (cf. Matt. 6:10).

In the second place, it is clear from the words introducing the prayer, "After this manner, therefore, pray ye," that the Lord's Prayer is a *model* prayer, a *pattern* for prayer. While there is nothing wrong in making this prayer a regular congregational prayer, provided its historical meaning is fully understood, and provided it is prayed in sincerity, it does seem a little strange that we should have made it a prayer to be repeated in our congregational meetings every Lord's Day, since the Lord has just admonished the disciples in these words, "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do" (v. 7)! If the use of

the Lord's Prayer in congregational worship has become ritualistic, its use should be abandoned. And, further, its model character must be remembered; there are other prayers that are acceptable prayers in our meetings.

The tendency of repetitious prayers to become meaningless is illustrated by a wager two men once made. One of them bet the other that he could repeat the Lord's Prayer without a mistake. The other took him up on the bet and, after the terms had been arranged and completed, the recitation began, "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. And if I die before I awake, I pray the Lord my soul to take. Amen." The other, listening intently until he had finished, said, "Well, here's your money. I sure didn't think you could say it!"

In one sense the prayer may have been misnamed. It is commonly called the Lord's Prayer, largely because He is the author. That, however, seems to be the only sense in which it is His. It may just as well be called the Disciple's Model Prayer. It certainly is not the Lord's Prayer because He prayed it. My good friend, Dr. J. Vernon McGee, calls it, "The Prayer Our Lord Did Not Pray," underlining the fact that it is a pattern for prayer. In fact, in the light of verse twelve, it is a prayer our Lord could not pray. It is a prayer He gave His disciples to pray, but it is one that He could not pray since He is the divine Son of God. Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer used to tell his students that the true Lord's Prayer was the great high-priestly prayer which our Lord prayed before His crucifixion, and which is recorded in John seventeen. That is a beautiful and significant prayer, but Dr. Chafer's suggestion is fruitless, for the model prayer of Matthew six is too deeply ingrained in the Christian terminology for it to be changed. We will have to live with it.

There is one other point we must bear in mind before we turn to an exposition of the Lord's Prayer. It is a prayer that was given to guide the disciples of the King during the period of time when the King was present and offering His royal empire to the theocratic nation, Israel, according to the Old Testament promises (cf. Rom. 15:7-13). That is borne out by the immediately preceding verses, as well as by its content. It has, of course, important implications for us in this age by way of application. We shall seek to point them out in the exposition.

I THE PETITIONS FOR GOD'S GLORY

The prayer for sanctification (6:9). The first three of the petitions have to do with God and the glory of God, while the second part of the prayer has to do with man and his need.

The emphasis of the first petition revolves around the word *Father*, which some have said is a compact summary of the entire Christian faith. It is a word that, for the Christian, is

the right answer to Lessing's query, "Is this a friendly universe?" It settles our relationship to the visible and the invisible worlds. The expression, "our Father," makes this a prayer of disciples, and it reminds us of the directions in prayer that Jesus gave later, such as, "Whatever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you" (John 16:23).

The additional words, "who art in heaven," remind us of the infinite distance between the natures of the Father and the Son, for it suggests His holiness, His separation from the sinners of this world (cf. Heb. 7:26).

The petition itself, "Hallowed be thy name," is an extremely important one. The words *to hallow* mean simply *to sanctify*, that is, *to regard as different, to set apart*. And the word *name* refers to the *nature*, or the *character*, of a person. It does not refer simply to the word by which a person is identified or called (cf. Psa. 9:10; 20:7). The petition, then, means that the nature and character of God are to be given the unique place that they deserve in the thoughts and minds of the intelligent beings of God's universe. A full exposition of the meaning of the petition would demand a full review of the attributes and works of the Father. A study of the names and titles of God would be most helpful in elucidating this petition.

The prayer for sovereignty (6:10a). The second petition is for the coming of the Messianic Kingdom, the kingdom promised in the Scriptures. It is important to notice that the Lord does not redefine the term *kingdom*. That means we are to give it its common Old Testament force, that of the Messianic Kingdom. Further, it could not be a reference to the eternal kingdom of God, His rule in the hearts of men throughout the ages, for that is always present. What our Lord refers to is that referred to by John the Baptist, when he preached, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (cf. 3:2; 4:17). Its historical coming is future to us, and John the Apostle refers to that coming when he writes in the Revelation of the sounding of the seventh trumpet of judgment, "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

In the light of this, how ludicrous is the use of the Lord's Prayer as a liturgical exercise by unbelieving professing Christians in our churches! And how pathetic that they are not taught the meaning of their petitions by their ministers. An example of this failure to understand is seen in Professor William Barclay's contention that the next statement of our Lord, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," is a petition parallel with "Thy kingdom come" and means the same thing.

The tense of the verb translated, "come," is aorist in Greek,

and this suggests that the coming is a definite event, which is in harmony with the view that the Lord is speaking of the Second Advent and the divine inauguration of the Kingdom of God (cf. Dan. 2:1-45).

The prayer for submission (6:10b). The final petition of the first part of the prayer has to do with the will of God. There are two wills in theological thinking, God's *decretive* will and His *preceptive* will. His *decretive* will has to do with His decree by which He determines all that is going to come to pass. Daniel refers to His decretive will when he writes, giving the enlightened words of Nebuchadnezzar, "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and HE DOETH ACCORDING TO HIS WILL in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35). Paul refers to the decretive will when he writes that God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own WILL" (Eph. 1:11). There is no way that men can frustrate the accomplishment of God's decretive will. He is a sovereign God.

His *preceptive* will is that which pleases Him, and His preceptive will is recorded for us in Holy Scripture in its account of the things that please and displease our Father.

In the light of this it is evident that the petition has to do with the preceptive will of God. By it we pray that God may hasten the day of the advent and the consequent kingdom, in which the citizens shall obey the will of the Ruler, our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a prayer that righteousness and peace may come to this troubled globe, and it is a prayer that it may come accompanied by the joy and submission of the disciples of the King. A man may utter the words, "Thy will be done," in a mood of bitterness and rebellion, but that is not the spirit of this petition. "Swinburne," Barclay comments, "spoke of men feeling the trampling of the iron feet of God. He speaks of the supreme evil, God. Beethoven died all alone; and it is said that when they found his body his lips were drawn back in a snarl and his fists clenched as if he were shaking his fists in the very face of God and of high heaven. A man may feel that God is his enemy, and yet an enemy so strong that he cannot resist. He may therefore accept God's will, but he may accept it with bitter resentment and smouldering anger." It should be evident that this is not the spirit of this petition.

To sum up this opening part of the prayer, there is a request, made to the Father, that His Name be given its rightful place in the hearts of men and angels, that His Kingdom come, with its submission of men's wills to His one perfect will. What wonderful and encouraging petitions! And especially encouraging is our Lord's affirmation of the Fatherhood of our great God, a fatherhood over the spirits of those who belong to the family

of faith. And how wonderful to realize that our Father is also the sovereign God, separate from us in His holiness and in His omnipotence. I am reminded of a story of a man who was offering a lengthy prayer to God, but going all around Robin Hood's barn in expressing his requests. Finally, an elderly female saint, exasperated at his failure to come to the point, called out, "Call Him 'Father,' and ask Him for something!" That's not a bad practice at all and, in the light of the character of our God, we're sure we'll have an answer.

II THE PETITIONS FOR MAN'S NEED

The prayer for provision (6:11). If the emphasis in the first set of petitions is upon the Father, the emphasis in the second set is upon the family. And the first of the second is, "Give us this day our daily bread." Someone has said, "It is 'daily bread,' not daily cake," and it is true that this promise is not that we shall have the luxuries of life, but that we shall have the necessities of life. The Apostle Paul refers to this when he writes the Philippians and says, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (4:19). The God who met Elijah's needs through the ravens (cf. 1 Kings 17:6), and then through the widow (cf. 17:16) supplies the needs of His people, although by means opposed to human reason upon occasion.

There is a very delightful story concerning God's provision for one of John Wesley's friends. One of his associates, Samuel Bradburn, was a very fine preacher, an excellent man, and highly esteemed for his work. At one time when he was in desperate need, Wesley sent him a five pound sterling note, with the following letter. "Dear Sammy: Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." Yours affectionately, John Wesley." Bradburn promptly replied: "Rev. and Dear Sir: I have often been struck with the beauty of the passage of scripture quoted in your letter, but I must confess that I never saw such useful expository notes on it before. I am, Reverend and Dear Sir, your obedient and grateful servant, S. Bradburn."

The word translated "daily" was until recently of doubtful meaning. Until just a short time ago, there was no other occurrence of this word in the whole of Greek literature, so far as we knew. Not very long ago, however, it turned up on a papyrus fragment, which was a woman's shopping list. And against an item on the list was the word *epiousios*, the word found here. It was a note to remind her to buy supplies of a certain food for the coming day. Thus, the text means, "Give me what I need for this coming day," and the implication is that that is just what God will do.

The prayer for pardon (6:12). The first petition of this second section of the prayer had to do with the present and the Father. This one has to do with the past and the Son. "Give" is followed by "forgive," it has been said.

The petition has raised a question due to the apparent conditional nature of the petition. The solution suggested by the notes in the New Scofield Reference Edition of the Authorized Version is generally acceptable, it seems to me. The note reads, "The problem raised by the conditional nature of this petition for forgiveness may be explained as follows: In the fully developed doctrine of Christian salvation there are two areas of divine forgiveness. The first area is that of the forgiveness that comes to the sinner at the time of justification, and deals with the guilt of his sins in a total sense (Eph. 1:7). To this forgiveness there is attached but one condition, i.e. to receive it once for all by faith in Christ (Rom. 4:5-8). The second area of forgiveness covers the relation of the divine Father to those who have become His children and deals specifically with the matter of fellowship whenever it is broken by sin. To obtain such forgiveness we must confess and forsake the sin (1 Jn. 1:9; cp. Ps. 66:18 and Prov. 28:13). The forgiveness mentioned here in verse 12 belongs in this second area, because it occurs in a prayer given to disciples of Christ (5:2) who could call upon God as their Father (6:9, 26). The ultimate motive for forgiving our debtors is based upon the grace of God, and appears later in the progress of revelation (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13)." In other words the text has to do with paternal forgiveness, not judicial forgiveness (cf. Acts 10:43).

The prayer for protection (6:13). This petition has to do with the future, and perhaps with the Spirit of God since guidance is mentioned. The word translated "temptation" really means *trial*, or *testing*. It is a request to be delivered from testing. In addition, the word translated "evil" is probably masculine in gender instead of neuter (the forms in the original language are the same) and, thus, it should be rendered, *the Evil One*. The reference is to Satan.

The petition, then, is a request that one not be brought into testing, and particularly into that which concerns Satan. No Christian should desire to be tested by the power of evil, although it often falls his lot to experience it. One of the famous incidents of testing is described in Genesis 22:1, where we read, "And it came to pass that God did *tempt* (the word is really *test* in the original text) Abraham." Cf. Matthew 3:1.

Fortunately for us the Apostle Paul has something very comforting to say about testing in 1 Corinthians 10:13, "There hath no *temptation* (the same word as is that found in Matt. 6:13) taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not permit you to be tempted above that ye are able,

REPRINTS:

BIBLE QUERIES ANSWERED —1945

J. Edward Boyd

From a brother in Tennessee we have three queries, which are considered in an order slightly different from that in which they appear in this letter.

1. *"Can you be saved outside the Church of Christ?"*

Only in Christ is there salvation. "For neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Those who are "sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" have been baptized into Him (Gal. 3:26, 27). So the children of God—the saved—are "all one in Christ Jesus" (v. 28); and being in Him, they are in His body—members of the "one body in Christ" (Rom. 12:4, 5; 1 Cor. 12:12, 27; Eph. 1:22, 23). And this body is expressly declared to be the church, of which He is the head (Col. 1:18, 24). This church (as the Greek word signifies) is made up of the "called-out ones"—the saved; and of course it takes in every one of them, even all those who respond to the invitation to come out of the world into Christ. And this is the church of which He said to Peter: "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). It is His—His church, His body, and if you are saved you are a part of it.

This should be sufficient answer; yet, in view of the confusion of thought that is so prevalent, more should perhaps be said. There may indeed be some who are sincere believers in the Lord Jesus, who have become "obedient from the heart to the form of teaching whereunto they were delivered," and who therefore have been baptized into Christ and so are members of His body, but who are not identified with any group which is known simply as a "Church of Christ." Perhaps they have not seen the possibility, or realized the importance, of being simple, undenominational Christians, just that and nothing more. We believe that all the Lord's people should stand together on this New Testament ground; and when one such comes indicating his desire to do so, we gladly receive him upon his own testimony ("for who knows the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him?") that he is a child of God with the desire to be a Christian only. Such being the case, he does not now become a member of the church of Christ—he has already done so, perhaps long ago; but he is merely walking in additional light that has shown upon his pathway.

Again, in these days of many sects and many names, it is quite possible that the name "Church of Christ" is sometimes

used in a sectarian sense. Such is indeed the case with the fully scriptural name "Church of God." So, if someone should ask, "Does a person have to be a member of the Church of God to be saved?" the answer would be "yes" or "no," according to whether the querist means the entire body of Christ as spoken of in the New Testament or the present-day sect which is known by that name. Thus it is in the case before us: if our querist means some group of Christians who have drawn lines of fellowship for which there is no scriptural justification and by which they exclude other children of God, the answer is a positive "No!" You do not have to belong to that sort of Church of Christ to be saved.

Nor does it matter that they are in the right concerning the issues involved. For instance: in the church at Rome there were "meat-eaters" and "non-meat-eaters." They disagreed about whether it was right to eat certain meats (Rom. 14). The "eaters" were in the right, as Paul expressly declares (v. 14). The others were in error on this point. But it was not the sort of disagreement that justifies separation. Now suppose the "eaters" had drawn the line against their "non-eating" brethren and refused to fellowship them on the ground that they were in error. They would thereby have made of themselves a sect, although they might have loudly proclaimed themselves to be "THE Church of Christ" in Rome. They would have been going directly contrary to Paul's instruction in verse 1: "But him that is weak in faith RECEIVE YE..." (Of course the "non-eaters" could have formed themselves into a sect in like manner; in either case it would have been very wrong.) You do not have to belong to that sort of Church of Christ to be saved. We fear that there is much of that sort of thing going on in our day—brethren drawing lines and excluding others when they should be in full fellowship in spite of the differences involved.

Yes, one must be in the church of Christ to be saved—one of that great body of souls which He purchased with His own blood; but not of any sect just because it boasts of that name.

PRIDE

There is one vice of which no man on earth is free; which everyone in the world loathes when he sees it in someone else; and of which hardly any people, except Christians, ever imagine that they are guilty themselves. —C. S. Lewis

If you want to find out how proud you are the easiest way is to ask yourself, 'How much do I dislike it when other people snub me, or refuse to take any notice of me, or patronize me, or show off?' Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. —C. S. Lewis

THE EVANGELICAL ENIGMA

Linden W. Heath

Evangelicals are feeling good these days. During the United States Bicentennial year the evangelical movement came into its own. The two main contenders for the presidency both claimed a born-again experience. George Gallup called it "the year of the evangelical." Malcomb MacDougall, who directed advertising for President Ford's campaign, said: "Reborn Christians and the evangelical movement are the strongest force in the country today."

"The strongest force in the United States"—think of it! Evangelical Christians represent more people, more churches, more Sunday schools, more seminaries, more books and magazines than all other religious groups. We are so strong that politicians who once ignored us are now anxious to communicate and to be identified with us.

As an evangelical Christian I should be ecstatic. But, frankly, I am deeply disturbed.

Certainly I rejoice in all the advances the church has made during the past twenty-five to thirty years. We have grown up—become more intellectually respectable and socially acceptable.

Then what disturbs me? Simply that during the same period of evangelical growth we have witnessed the greatest increase of crime and immorality in the history of the United States. From the White House to the county courthouse, government officials have betrayed their trust by dishonesty, graft and moral corruption. And the caliber of elected officials only reflects the caliber of those who elect them.

Since 1960 the rate of serious crime in the United States has risen 180 percent. In 1975 there were approximately 11,250,000 serious crimes reported to the police. (Many others were never reported.) They included 20,510 murders, 56,090 forcible rapes, 464,970 robberies, 484,710 aggravated assaults, 3,252,100 burglaries, 5,977,700 larceny thefts, and 1,000,500 motor vehicle thefts.

Politicians and the American public have never faced the issue that our moral bankruptcy is the basic cause of our inflationary economic bankruptcy. According to the *U. S. News and World Report* (January 10 issue), criminals are taking bigger and bigger chunks out of business profits. At least four million offenses are committed against companies each year at a cost to the American public of \$40 billion, and they are increasing at the rate of 10 percent a year. In the past five years the cost of business crimes has jumped 75 percent.

In other areas the picture is equally discouraging. Alcoholism

is increasing at an alarming rate. It costs the taxpayers of California alone nearly \$4 billion a year. The misuse of narcotics adds over \$10 billion a year to our cost of living. The crime bill of the United States is well over \$100 billion a year.

While Canada has a markedly lower crime rate than the United States, it suffers a similar dilemma. Active membership in churches increased last year by well over a million, yet the overall crime rate has been increasing as well. Illegal drug traffic is becoming a major activity of organized crime along with loansharking and labor union racketeering. The Canadian Police Association is lobbying for corporal punishment, feeling strongly that the present trend is due to the inadequate severity of the penalties.

Television, radio, movies and magazines reveal the tragic breakdown in moral standards. Infidelity, dishonesty, violence, cheating, robbing, raping and swearing are inundating the American people through the media. By the time a child graduates from high school he has watched 15,000 hours and has witnessed 18,000 video murders. No wonder the land is filled with violence! We are educating our children to lie, steal and murder to get what they want.

At the same time evangelicals have become "the strongest force in the country"! Unbelievable! Incongruous! While charismatics are enjoying their baptism of the Spirit, Western civilization is indulging in a baptism of moral filth. While evangelicals are enjoying their new popularity, society is debauching itself in dissipation, degradation and demonism.

Something is tragically wrong! It just does not add up that evangelical Christianity could become so powerful and yet wickedness be so prevalent.

Have we so diluted the truth by becoming Pharisaical devotees to the letter of the Scripture that we have weakened the Spirit's power to transform lives, unite families and change communities? Are people turning to evangelicalism simply as an escape from the crumbling foundations of society, just as millions are turning for the same reason to communes, cults and collecting antiques? Since the gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16) we must ask ourselves why this dynamic force is not more evident in causing the evangelical church to be more effective as the salt of society and the light of the world.

Certainly the church is not directly responsible for the world's moral decadence. In fact, it is probably one of the few forces left preventing total moral collapse. Still one thing is evident: Christianity has made almost no perceptible impact on the ethics of modern man. Praise God, there are individual exceptions. But the overall picture is one of sad impotence in the face of the record-setting increase of wickedness.

While we know the Bible states that wickedness shall increase in the "last days," if we leave it at that, are we not using prophecy as an excuse for our evident ineffectiveness? To be called the strongest force in the nation by secular observers and at the same time to have evil proliferate in record intensity is to acknowledge the evangelical enigma.

Why has this happened? What are the reasons for this seemingly contradictory situation?

Some things are evident. We are so busy organizing that we have no time to agonize over lost men and women. Does our evangelistic zeal consist of trying to get people to accept our dogma without confronting our Diety; to be converted to our culture rather than our Christ; to join our church and become "active," instead of uniting with the Body of Christ and becoming holy?

I fear much of modern evangelicalism is like what Jesus denounced: "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of a son of hell as you are" (Matther 23:15 NIV). Converts to religion simply exchange living in a heathen hell for living in a religious one. What a tragedy!

One senses that the church's priorities have become contaminated. We appear to be more interested in building temples to impress the world than in being temples to redeem the world. We want the world to take notice of us, and it has. People are impressed with our material wealth and numerical strength, but they are unaware of a spiritual dynamic that stands in contradiction to violence, immorality and the selfish wasting and polluting of our natural resources.

It is sad but true that in our greatest hour of opportunity evangelicals are failing to challenge the world, the flesh and the devil. In fact, it seems the devil is not at all worried about the growth of evangelical Christianity. All the evidence suggests that we present no significant threat to his kingdom.

May God grant us repentance, renewal and the restoraton of spiritual pwer in order to be His authentic people in the world today, causing the heavens to rejoice and the forces of evil to tremble.

—In *The Alliance Witness*

People who are depressed need human contact—make yourself available to them. It can be emotionally taxing, but when you are with them, don't give them lectures. That isn't contact. Listen to their pain, worries and cares. Often human contact can be the best tranquilizer in the world. —Shafii.

The Padded Cross

(Musings of a would-be disciple)

Carlyle L. Saylor

"Well, here I am, Lord. You said, 'Take up your cross,' and I'm here to do it. It's not easy, you know, this self-denial thing. I mean to go through with it though, yes Sir. I'll bet You wish more people were willing to be disciples like me. I've counted the cost and surrendered my life and . . . (sings) 'It's not an easy road . . .'

"You mind if I look over these crosses? I'd kind of like a new one. I'm not fussy, You understand, but a disciple has to be *relevant* these days. I was wondering—are there any that are *lined* padded? I'm thinking of attracting others, see, and if I could show them a comfortable cross I'm sure I could win a lot more. Got to keep up with the population explosion and all. And I need something *lasting* so I can treasure it always. Oh. Is there one that's sort of flat so it would fit under my coat? One shouldn't be *too* obvious.

"Funny, there doesn't seem to be much choice here. Just that coarse, rough wood. I mean, that would *hurt!* Don't You have something more distinctive, Lord? I can tell You right now, none of *my* friends are going to be impressed by this shoddy workmanship! They will think I'm some kind of nut or something! And my family will be just mortified!

"What's that? It's either one of these or forget the whole thing? But *Lord*. I want to be Your disciple! I mean, just being with You, that's all that counts. But life has to have a *balance*, too . . . But You don't understand; *nobody* lives that way today! Who's going to be attracted by this self-denial bit? I mean, I want to, but let's not overdo it! Start getting radical like this and they'll have me off to the funny farm—know what I mean?

"I mean, being a disciple is challenging and exciting and I want to do it, but I have *some* rights, You know! Now let's see. No blood. O.K.? I just can't stand the thought of *that*. *Lord* . . . *Lord?*

"Jesus? Now where do you suppose He went?"

"Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:27)

One hears much today about discipling, making disciples for Christ, one-to-one discipling, etc. This could be commended but for one crucial lack: one hears little about the Cross in connection with it. A true disciple is a learner of the Lord Jesus—on His terms.

For the development of scriptural discipleship, "it is not only a

matter of that which is sinful as opposed to that which is holy; it is that which is human as opposed to that which is divine." Hence the Cross is central to discipleship, for that is the only means whereby the old man is superceded by the new man in Christ Jesus.

• • • •

20th Century Leahs

The Genesis story of Leah and Rachel and the disappointment of their lives touched my young heart as I sat in Sunday school class. Somehow I grew up blaming Leah, feeling that her sad marriage was her own fault, for I thought she had been deceitful. Little did I know that one day God would grant to me the special privilege of living with, and loving 20th century Leahs and Rachels in the Muslim world. He allowed me to learn first hand what must have throbbled in the hearts of those girls.

In Genesis 29:17 we read, "Leah was tender eyed but Rachel was beautiful and well-favored." Living in the Middle East, we have often been asked, "Which of your children do you love most?" In many Middle Eastern homes one child is honored above the others. Parents will do all they can to grant the desires of this favored one.

The Genesis story continues with the marriage of Jacob and Leah. And in the morning Jacob said to Laban, "What sort of trick is this? I worked seven years for Rachel. What do you mean by this trickery?" Laban answered him. "It is not our custom to marry off a younger daughter ahead of her sister" (v. 25, 26). This father, bound by custom and tradition, deceived his son-in-law and led his own daughter, Leah, into an unfair marriage relationship. Seven days later Rachel also became part of this already troubled marriage. Many Middle Eastern fathers have not changed from Laban's day.

Can you visualize the heartaches of sharing a husband's affection with another; the strife between the wives (who will carry the water? who will cook? who will clean the house? which one will serve the husband tea when he comes home?); the envy as children are born to one and not to the other; the attitudes of one wife's children toward the barren one; the deep heartcry for a love that will satisfy?

I have watched the sadness in the eyes of my Muslim neighbor as she said to me, "If only he would love me as he loves her. If only he would love my children as he loves hers." Again I felt the heartache as I sat with the second wife who exclaimed, "He only loves her. He doesn't provide for me or my children. I have no money, no sugar for my tea!" Imagine the tensions, the bitter-

ness, the insecurity in such a home. Yet this picture can be multiplied a thousand times over.

To reach out and touch their hurts with Jesus' love; to show them that God's perfect love, manifested in Jesus Christ, will satisfy their hungering hearts, must not this be part of our vision today?

In Worldwide Thrust

Christ Is Coming

"Surely I come quickly" (Rev. 22:20)

He is Coming! He is Coming!
Our long-looked-for, absent Lord!
He is Coming for His people,
As He promised in His Word.

He is Coming! He is Coming!
Don't you feel that He is near?
He is on the very threshold,
Soon His voice will greet your ear.

He is Coming! O what rapture!
Our beloved One is near.
He is Coming! He is Coming!
Soon His loving voice you'll hear.

He is Coming! Are you ready?
Is your lamp all trimmed and bright?
Are you waiting for the Morning?
Are you looking toward the light?

He is Coming! He is Coming!
Hark His footsteps drawing near!
How it thrills your very being,
As you list His voice to hear!

Lo, the eastern sky is glowing,
Soon the glorious Day will break,
Soon He'll burst upon our vision—
O, ye sleeping saints, Awake!

Soon the "trump of God" will call us
Soon we'll meet Him in the air;
Him the "altogether lovely,"
And the fairest of the fair.

He is Coming! He is Coming!
Cast the shades of Night away!
He is Coming! Our Beloved!
Dawns at last the glorious Day.

NEWS AND NOTES

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

Cramer & Hanover Church, Lexington, Kentucky: It was good to spend a few days in Jacksonville, Florida, with the Southside Church—good also to be home again. Let us remember in prayer each of the six congregations in Florida.—Bennie Hill

Henryville Church, Indiana: Brother Marsh gave a glowing account of his recent meeting in Alexandria, La. The Lord and the Holy Spirit were present from the first service and continued throughout the entire time. All praised the Lord and gave Him the glory. There were many responses to the invitation, and the church was truly revived.

Stanford Broussard is to preach for one week at Henryville, beginning Sunday morning, October 2.

The Henryville ladies' meeting is taking on renewed emphasis. It meets on Monday evenings at 7:00. Linda Hobbs is the one to contact if you are interested.

Highview Church, Louisville: Homecoming Day was September 18.

Fourteen of our young people took part in Teen Week at Echo Valley. During the week there were nine open responses to the invitation. We praise the Lord for the good week we had.

Buechel Church, Kentucky: Dr. Kurfees spoke at the morning service, August 29, on the twenty-third psalm. The Sunday evening service was led by Rick Murphy, a student at the School of Biblical Studies this past year. Both guest speakers were much appreciated.

The School of Biblical Studies opened for classes on September 13.

During October there is to be a series of sermons on the different cults that are becoming so intriguing to young people. We will learn of ways to combat the influence that the Unification church, or "Hare Krishna" is having on young people.

Prayer is requested by Buechel for the East Jefferson Street church for good results from the meeting that closed there recently and the work now being done there.

Gallatin Church, Tennessee: Homecoming is scheduled for October 15-17, with Paul Knecht speaking. The homecoming dinner will be on the 16th after the morning service.

Bro. Hovan was out of town September 16-23 for a meeting in Crowley, Louisiana.

The kindergarten report revealed \$65,000 spent on the new building thus far. We have a full house of three-, four-, and five-year-olds and school children. The building should be complete in a few days.

WORDS OF LIFE will be heard on two new stations, one in New Orleans, sponsored by the Seventh & Camp Streets church. The program is also scheduled to begin on October 9 in Gallatin, Tennessee. Starting on November 6, Words of Life will again be heard over DXUM in Davao City, Philippines. A fire interrupted the broadcasts there until another station took up the work through the interest of two preachers who had studied prophecy with Brother Boyd via correspondence.

Bro. Boyd is to preach at the Belmont church in Winchester, Kentucky, October 23-28.

Maple Manor Children's Home: We are happy to welcome some newcomers to the staff of the Maple Manor Home. Mrs. Joyce Schuler from the Waterford congregation is now matron of senior girls. Mrs. Dessie Moody is now in charge of the junior girls. Serving as house parents of the senior boys are Bro. and Sis. Joe Stone. They are also from the Waterford congregation. Another new employee, Miss Roberta Jackson, is serving as extra help wherever she is needed. We are thankful for these. Pray for their adjustment with the children.

Portland Avenue Church, Louisville: Sunday, October 9, will be Home-coming Day with a fellowship dinner after the morning service. All are invited.

The reader who contributed the following quotation made this comment: We rely on singing to express our praise, but is that "getting the job done"?!

A Quotation About Massive Congregational Praise

It is generally recognized that one of the fastest growing segments of the Christian community is that group of churches and congregations which are of the Pentecostal persuasion. It is customary for Pentecostals to attribute this rapid expansion to their doctrinal distinctives and specifically to their emphasis on glossolalia as the initial evidence of the baptism with the Holy Ghost. Many outside and some within the movement have their reservations upon this point. But whatever one's position may be, it cannot be denied that the Pentecostal groups have rediscovered, for this day and age, the importance and power of praise. To the order of public worship, including periods of congregational singing, public prayer, and a gospel message, they have added another co-equal with these: a period of united worship and vocal praise. Almost universally, at some point in the service (usually preceding the spoken word) time is given specifically for the purpose of worshipping and praising the Lord. At a given signal, usually by the pastor, the entire group raises hands to heaven and, with uplifted faces, enters into adoration and praise. This is not a subjective thing, an attempt to "work up" an ecstatic emotionalism for the sake of the thrill. But the objective thrust of the united praise and worship of Him Who alone is worthy often results in an inundation of the Holy Spirit's presence which is nothing short of heavenly, for it echoes the praises of the celestial throng around the throne.

It is the writer's considered judgment that it is this thoroughly scriptural program of *massive praise* which is responsible for the burgeoning growth of this movement, rather than its doctrinal distinctive. Regardless of one's position on the subject of tongues there is nothing to hinder any group from adopting the scriptural practice of massive praise. The Church at large should sincerely repent of its failure to comprehend the overwhelming content of the Word on praise, and render due thanks to God for those instrumental in its rediscovery.

—Billheimer in *Destined for the Throne*

I am master of my unspoken words and slave to those that should have remained unsaid.

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