

THE WORD AND WORK

"A monthly magazine set to declare the whole counsel of God."

Wm. Robert Heid, Editor

The Word and Work (USPS 691-460) is published monthly except December for \$4 per year, bundles of 10 or more to one address \$3.50, by the Word and Work, 2518 Portland Ave., Louisville, Ky. 40212. Second class postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Word and Work, 2518 Portland Ave., Louisville, Ky. 40212

Vol. LXXVI

JULY, 1982

No. 7

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God's Family

W. R. H.

"IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME"

To all Christians, the phrase quoted for a title of this editorial quickly introduces the service of the "Lord's Supper;" the communion time that is so dear to all who have a covenant relationship with Him who shed His blood that we might live. Only four words, it stands as the sum and substance of the part of our public meeting that we deem to be the high point of the entire week.

The vital importance and blessing of this communion goes without saying. Instituted by the Lord Himself, it has often been called the only "ordinance of the Church." (Baptism, the initiatory step of obedience, is not a rite that is performed repeatedly.) While it does not preclude prayer, scripture reading, singing, preaching, witnessing, giving, etc., it has the distinction of "a communion with the very body and blood of our Lord," and has a tie with the Spirit realm that is beyond our comprehension. It is then, a real privilege to be included among the partakers. If only all of the saints could feel the true blessing to their souls, the Sunday Services would become each one's first priority. Without such appreciation, we can hardly expect folks to make much effort. How then can this closeness to Jesus be taught and brought about?

THE ONE PRESIDING

There in the upper room, it was Jesus, instituting and presiding. He it was who took the loaf (set there beforehand) and broke it. When He had blessed (invoked a blessing upon it), He gave it to the disciples. He must have served at the table as well as presided. Giving thanks then for the cup, He gave unto them saying "Drink ye all (each one) of it."

We have concluded that in order to repeat this supper, there must be those to do these services, and rightly so. It is a real honor to all who serve as well as he who presides, since they are all doing a part of the service that Jesus Himself did. He evidently ate and drank with them, and so all in the pews are also doing a part of what Jesus did that night. Let none who partake and worship, fail to realize the privilege that we share together, nor to forget that He "will take it new with us in the Father's kingdom," ere long.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Aside from the mechanics of the eating and drinking, the real purpose as Jesus has stated it, is the remembrance of Him. How this

can be accomplished should be the burden of every worshipping heart. The moments of silent meditation that are to be, will probably follow along the line in which our minds and thoughts are being readied. And here comes a great opportunity and responsibility for him who "presides." Consider, if you will these observations:

If we are to remember Him, then the remarks must be about Him. Surely their thoughts that night were emotional and varied. What had recently happened? The transfiguration. The raising of Lazarus. The triumphal entry. The lament over Jerusalem. Cleansing the temple. The fig tree. Words of His impending death. Jesus washing the disciples feet. The great prophetic sermon of Matt. 24. This last passover. As yet they knew not Gethsemane or Calvary, nor the empty tomb. But what they did know and soon were to experience, would be their remembrance of Him. As they saw the symbolism of the broken bread (His body), and the wine (His blood), their thoughts would surely gather in that area, along with the blessed hope, that was to be born of His resurrection from death. In the future it would only take a word to bring things to their minds. Words such as "cross," "thorns," "broken body," the utterances from the cross, the "empty tomb," and the "ascension." These thoughts would motivate their minds as they recalled all that they could compress into a brief period of meditation. Such recollection would perfect praise unto both the Father and the Son. And moreover, it would lead them to self examination from time to time, yielding themselves afresh unto the sway of the Holy Spirit.

Those leading us in this glorious time of worship, around the Lord's table, have a solemn obligation. These suggestions may well help to set it forth:

Let us submit these moments to the full will of God's Holy Spirit.

May we have no reputation of our own to maintain, but See Jesus.

Reinforcing or rebuttal of the preceding sermon is not in order, generally.

Fewer remarks will beget deeper thought and sweeter communion, as the communion is really between each individual worshipper and the Lord.

Time should be given for amply-long prayers of thanksgiving (and these prayers should be loud enough for all to say "amen.")

An appropriate introductory hymn, or the reading of the words of one, may well be all of the comment needed.

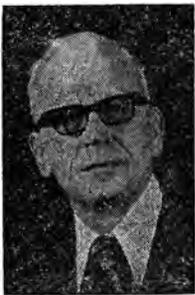
The scriptures that may be read, also, ought to be chosen with a view of helping us remember Jesus. Long, involved reading or arguments do not bless this particular time of worship.

Personal anecdotes are usually a deterrent to proper worshipfulness.

Longer moments for meditation, after the elements have been served, are needed if we are to arrive at worship. For those being served last, effort should be made to concentrate on Jesus, rather than the progress of the serving. This is not an easy matter. Hence, some time afterwards, will be a benefit to all.

May Jesus help us to properly worship.

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



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

“Standing in Grace”

Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.
(Romans 5:1, 2; NASB)

Before we get into the subject indicated by the title given above, I think it would be helpful if you would read again the first eleven verses of the chapter from which they are quoted in order to see how the Holy Spirit guided Paul to condense into a small space so very many things of encouragement to us. We commented on having peace with God last month. In the second verse quoted we are told we are introduced into this grace in which we stand and are exulting in hope of obtaining the glory of God. In verse three we are put forth as rejoicing in tribulations because of the wonderful things they do for so—working steadfastness, which works approvedness (a sense of being approved of God), and out of that arises hope, and that a hope that “putteth not to shame” (“does not shame us by ending in disappointment”). The reason for this is given (verse 5) as being that the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Paul then demonstrates the truth there by pointing out that while we were weak and ungodly (verse 6) and sinners (verse 8) and enemies of God (verse 10) Christ died for us. So, he naturally concludes, we can be more sure that since we have been reconciled to God by what Christ did for us then, we now have the greatest of confidence in what He will do and we can even rejoice in God. If you want to know how far this wonderful letter has taken us with God, turn back again and read 1:18 - 3:20 and then imagine actually rejoicing in God! What a change when God in Christ took charge.

The New American Standard Bible says in verse two that we are introduced through Christ into this grace in which we stand. The word translated “introduced” here is most often translated “have access”. The word is used only here and in Ephesians in the New Testament. The French have a word that probably translates this best, and we have taken it into the English language—we have our “entree” into this grace. Entree has the idea of a free access, a cordial

welcome. In this case, God wants us to have entree into His unmeritable favor that He might not only enter us into His salvation but let us stand by that same unmeritable favor the rest of our lives. Some of the original manuscripts leave out the words "by faith" after "access" or "entree" or "introduction". I am no research scholar, but I am inclined to feel that someone added the words "by faith" because it does not take an extra spurt of faith to give us this access. The very time we trust Christ completely for our salvation and receive salvation by faith is the time that we are "introduced" into this grace and start standing in it immediately.

I think it wise for us to look up the other two uses of this word "access" or "entree" in Ephesians so we can understand more fully our subject. In Ephesians 2:18 we read: "for through him (Christ) we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father" (ASV). This verse tells us that we are not at all like Esther was in her relationship to her husband the king. She had to appeal for permission to come into his presence, you will remember. The Persian system was set up so that a separation was made between even a husband and a wife when the husband was the exalted king and she had to appeal (at risk of her life) to him to enter into his presence. This verse tells us that in the Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord, we have at all times the right to enter into our Heavenly Father's presence without any danger and without any hesitation. How could it be otherwise when we know that He is love and He is our Father? That freely we had access into the grace wherein we stand.

In Ephesians 3:12, speaking of "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord", Paul goes on to say: "in whom we have boldness and access in confidence through our faith in him." From this you can see why Thayer defines the Greek word translated "access" or "entree" as "that friendly relation to God whereby we are acceptable to Him and have assurance that He is favorably disposed toward us." Remember, we are speaking of the Creator of the universe, the Judge of the universe Who can do no wrong and cannot abide evil. But we have entree to Him and to His grace, His unmeritable favor, whereby we do not have to tremble and wonder if we are still pleasing Him enough to be in His presence. He loves us, He cleanses us, He bestows His righteousness on us and He is glad to have us in His presence. He looks upon us favorably and His ears are always open to our prayers; He is more ready to respond than we are to pray. Did not David, Who knew God's grace because God forgave his sin, say in Psalm 35:15: "The eyes of Jehovah are toward the righteous, And his ears are open unto their cry." Praise His Name. He is good to all who call on Him. I hope you have done so.

Jack Blaes preaches at the Antioch Church, Frankfort, Ky. and teaches at the Portland Christian School in Louisville.



Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

STATESMAN-SPORTSMAN "HAPPY" CHANDLER HONORED. Twice governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, a state senator, and a United States senator, a man of conviction and courage is named to receive the highest honor the sport of baseball has to offer. At last, after 31 years, A. B. "Happy" Chandler is to be installed into baseball's Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N. Y. He served one term as commissioner of baseball and, at the end of that term, the owners decided not to renew his contract. The final vote was 9-7 in favor of renewal which would have reelected his predecessor, Kenesaw Landis, but the owners had changed the rules for "Happy" so that he had to have 12 of the 16 owners voting for him. Why didn't they renew his contract, and why has it taken so long for baseball to acknowledge this man with the honor he certainly deserves? In my opinion it can be summed up in the words **character** and **decision**. In spite of his positions of leadership in local, state, and national politics, probably his most influential decision was to back Branch Rickey in naming a black player to the Brooklyn Dodger roster in 1947. In doing this he knew he was acting contrary to all the other owners, many, if not most, of the players, and lots of white American fans of the game. This took real courage—something we could use a lot more of in leadership today. Most observers feel that that decision cost him his job and his place in the Hall of Fame. Be that as it may, A. B. "Happy" Chandler's character would allow him no other decision then, and that same character issued this statement 31 years later: "... If I had it to do over again, I'd do everything the same way. They elected me to run it

and I ran it." Though he was hired by the owners, Chandler assessed his job thus: "That's not what the commissioner is there for, to please the owners. . . . The duty of the commissioner is to represent the American people, the ballplayers, and the owners—in that order." Interesting because it is so revealing is the way he reached his decision to go along with Rickey on breaking the 70 year-old color barrier in major league baseball. "... I said, 'I'm convinced that this fellow (Jackie Robinson) has talent and ability. I'm also of the opinion that I'm going to have to meet my Maker some day and if He asks me why I didn't let this boy play and I say because he was black, that might not be a satisfactory answer. You (Branch) bring him on in. I'll approve of the transfer, and we'll make the fight.'"

A RECENT COUNT SHOWS THAT 48.6 PERCENT of the nation's school-children are receiving free or reduced-price school lunches.

THE SOVIET UNION MARKED THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF the birth of President Franklin D. Roosevelt with what the *New York Times* described as "perhaps the most elaborate commemoration they (Soviet Authorities) have ever accorded an American political official." For two weeks the Communist press ran articles singing praises for F.D.R. as a "profound realist." There were memorial meetings of officials and academicians, a month-long display of Soviet books and articles, and other proofs of admiration for the former U.S. President. The *New York Times* declared that the effort "reflects what seems like a sincere appreciation of

Roosevelt." Jim Finnegan of the **Union Leader** in Manchester, N.H., asks: "Why the qualifier 'seems like'? We submit that the men in the Kremlin regard anyone who is a 'profound realist'—i.e. who recognizes that communism is the wave of the future—as richly deserving of appreciation. F.D.R. the more so for what he conceded to them at Yalta."

SENATOR S. I HAYAKAWA (R.—CA) SAID, "If the Sierra Club had come over on the **Mayflower**, all of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York would be wilderness and the rest of the country undiscovered."

SOUTH KINGSTOWN, RHODE ISLAND. The Federal Fish and Wildlife Service is facing a different kind of threat. Nude bathers and those who sneak out to get a look at them are (1,000 on a single day) trampling the fragile dune grass which destroys it thus allowing the winter storms to fill up the nearby coastal salt pond destroying tern and plover nests. Three species of birds aren't there any more because of the damage being done. The eggs are so well camouflaged that those walking along the beach can't see them until they have trampled them. The bathers are quite adamant about staying. This is one place some of the left-wing protestors could do some good if they just would.

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY, ONE OF THE LEADERS of the ERA movement over the past decade, says that it is a great victory for women, for men, for families, for the combat-effectiveness of our armed forces, and for our nation that ERA will not go into the U.S. Constitution. Mrs. Schlafly says that one reason the proposal failed was because the ERA'ers had no product to sell. They never could show any right, any benefit, any advantage to women in ERA. Another reason she gave for ERA's defeat was that the International Women's Year Commission spent \$5 million of taxpayer's funds to promote a "radical agenda that included tax-funded abortions, massive Federal child care for all children, rights for lesbians to teach in schools and adopt children, affirmative action to get women jobs instead of men, and a Federal spending

solution for every problem. It was clear that these goals are outside of the mainstream of what the American people want."

CONFUSED ABOUT WHAT IS GOING ON IN BEIRUT? Clearly, according to the news media, Israel is the culprit killing hospital patients and civilians on the streets, and acting without any kind of sanity whatsoever. War is never pretty, and never easy to defend. Who wouldn't like to live in a world without it? But peace is not always possible, it is very fragile and quite easily broken. "As much as in you lies," the scripture says, "be at peace with all men." But some will not allow you to enjoy peace. The PLO will not allow the Israelis to be at peace. The television cameras do not show the whole picture. The PLO terrorists have inflicted their damage against Israel and fled to the city for refuge. Unless they are soundly defeated they will be back to wreak havoc on Israel. Prime Minister Menachem Begin offers to let the 6,000 Palestinian terrorists of Yasser Arafat's, who are trapped in Beirut, leave the city with their Soviet-supplied Kalishnikov rifles if they withdraw totally from Lebanon. Speaking to the Knesset, Begin says, "We don't want to humiliate the terrorists. Of course, they don't deserve any respect—they're murderers—but they're human beings. So we don't want to humiliate them. Therefore, we didn't tell them to surrender to us." President Reagan says that the Israeli invasion of Lebanon cannot be compared with the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan because "we have a situation in Lebanon in which there was a force, the PLO, literally a government within a government, and with its own army. And they had pursued aggression themselves across a border by way of rocket firing and artillery barrages. We want to see the bloodshed brought to an end and the Lebanese factions to come together seeking a way to have a central government and have control of their country and to have a single Lebanese army. The other goal would be the guaranteeing of the southern border with Israel; that there would be no longer a force in Lebanon that could, when it chose, create acts of terror across that border."

Editor's Note: Bro. Robert Shank is author of the book "Until..." which was reviewed in last month's issue of W & W. Several have ordered copies of it, and we expect more response in light of this timely article. We regret that space does not permit us to include but the first installment this month.

SHOULD CHRISTIANS SUPPORT ISRAEL?

Robert Shank

Part I

When the horrors of Dachau, Buchenwald, Auschwitz, Belsen, Treblinka, and the other death camps became known at the close of World War II, the world recoiled in outrage against the Nazi murderers of six million Jews. "Never another Holocaust!" said the world.

In 1948 the blessing of most of the world was extended to the little nation Israel, born in the Land of Israel after nineteen centuries, a haven and homeland for many Jews.

Today, 34 years after her rebirth, Israel struggles for survival against the fanatical hatred of 21 Arab states, abetted by most of the Third World nations, and above all by Russia with her monstrous worldwide terrorist apparatus operating under many names and guises. "Death to Israel!" is the cry of the Arab world and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the terrorist arm of Islam (financed by Arab oil and armed and trained by Russia).

Awash in a sea of petro-dollars, the oil-rich Arabs have funded billions of dollars to finance worldwide anti-Semitism. They are using oil to buy up Third World nations and the United Nations General Assembly. They are using oil to pressure nations to adopt an anti-Israel stance. They are using financial clout to pressure banks and businesses in many nations to refuse to do business with Israel or with businesses conducted by Jews anywhere in the world. They are giving large grants to colleges and universities in many nations, including America, "with strings attached." They are building beautiful mosques in many cities of the world and financing Moslem missions. They really mean it when they say, "Death to Israel!" They are also quietly saying, "Death to Christianity, and to Western world leadership."

America is the last friend Israel has among the nations in the court of world opinion, and the strength of the friendship resides largely among the churches. The Arabs now have set about to destroy this last bastion of friendship for Israel. They have funded millions of dollars for a subtle, low-key campaign among churches in America to destroy friendship, love and support for Israel and the Jewish people.

With everything going their way, the Arabs are having a field day, and all the while Russia watches, smiles, and prepares for the day when she will sweep into the Middle East and seize little Israel, Egypt, and "many countries"—including the oil-rich Arab nations (you can read about it in the Bible).

Will Israel survive? Yes, because of God. Nothing less than God's intervention, nothing less than Armageddon and judgment at the coming of Messiah can finally settle the issue of survival for Israel and

peace for the world. There will be a false "settlement" of the Arab-Israel impasse (perhaps very soon) and a temporary "peace" in the Middle East and among the nations. But the "peace" will shatter in "sudden destruction" (1 Thess. 5:3) in Russia's invasion of the Middle East and the consequent explosion of World War III, which almost immediately will eventuate in Armageddon (again, you can read about it in the Bible). Armageddon is now on the horizon, and the world rushes toward it at an accelerating pace. The whole end-time scenario, disclosed in the prophetic Scriptures, will unfold in a rush of events.

But what of the present time . . . should Christians support Israel? Voices now heard in the churches say they should not. Such voices greatly encourage anti-Semitism, now rapidly gaining strength among churches.

Some say that Christians must condemn Israel and refuse support because of her "heartless treatment of the Palestinians." The real facts belie the libel that Israel has mistreated the Palestinians. Palestinians (Arabs) who remained in Israel received full citizenship and economic opportunities and social services, and their lot has been far better than it was during the Arab occupation of the land. Why else would there have been such a large influx of Arabs into the West Bank after it passed from occupation and control by Jordan to possession and administration by Israel after the Six-Day War in 1967? Present unrest among the Arab populace of the West Bank and Gaza Strip stems from agitation by PLO agents. The "humanitarian" argument against Christian support for Israel has no foundation in fact.

(It is strange that those who blame Israel for the plight of the Palestinians never ask why the oil-rich Arab nations who spend billions of dollars to buy up America and Europe and to promote worldwide anti-Semitism and hatred of Israel spend not one dollar for humanitarian assistance to their Islamic kinsfolk, the "poor displaced Palestinians." The plight of the displaced Palestinians—for whom there is plenty of room in the Arab countries—is a valuable propaganda ploy to use against Israel, and so the wealthy Arab nations spend not a cent of their trillions of petro-dollars to resettle the hapless Palestinians or to relieve their suffering, leaving them to the mercy of others who care enough to try to provide some relief.)

Some in the churches say, "We cannot support Israel because she resorts to violence instead of pursuing peaceful solutions to problems." But whose policy is violence? Four times Israel has fought wars for survival against her Arab neighbors who have said, "Come, let us destroy them as a nation, that the name of Israel be remembered no more" (Psa. 83:4). For 34 years Israel has been harrassed by shelling from across her borders and by terrorists within her borders and around the world. Against fearful odds, Israel has survived because God has plans for her future. Her military successes, which have astounded the world, are a fulfillment of God's word concerning Israel in the closing days of the age, the time of God's regathering of Israel from the ends of the earth back to her Land.

O Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, you descendants of Abraham my friend, I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I

called you. I said, "You are my servant." I have chosen you and have not rejected you. So do not fear, for I am with you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. All who rage against you will surely be ashamed and disgraced; those who oppose you will be as nothing and perish . . . Do not be afraid, O worm Jacob, O little Israel, for I myself will help you, declares the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. See, I will make you into a threshing sledge, new and sharp, with many teeth. You will thresh the mountains (nations, in Biblical imagery) and crush them, and reduce the hills to chaff. You will winnow them, the wind will pick them up, and a gale will blow them away. But you will rejoice in the Lord and glory in the Holy One of Israel. (Isa. 41:8-11, 14-16 NIV)

But now many nations are gathered against you. They say, "Let her be defiled, let our eyes gloat over Zion!" But they do not know the thoughts of the Lord; they do not understand his plan, he who gathers them like sheaves to the threshing floor. Rise and thresh, O Daughter of Zion, for I will give you hoofs of bronze and you will break to pieces many nations. (Mic. 4:11-13 NIV)

Israel will survive every attack and will "thresh" all her adversaries round about until the Arab-Israel issue is "resolved" and a false "peace" is established by a covenant (treaty) negotiated by a great new Leader (Antichrist), "guaranteeing" Israel's security. At the very end of the age, however, Israel will be devastated by Russia's swift invasion and conquest of the whole Middle East, including Israel, Egypt, and "many countries" (Dan. 11:40-45, Ezek. 38, 39). But the conquest will ignite World War III, whereupon God will "destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem" (Zech. 12:9) in the cataclysmic event of Armageddon.

Do not condemn Israel for being "too warlike." She is fulfilling God's word and his role for her in these last days of the age. It is God who has made little Israel "a threshing sledge, new and sharp, with many teeth" to thresh her adversaries round about her. If you must criticize someone for Israel's military prowess and successes, take the matter up with God, for he is responsible.

GLEANINGS

Larry Miles

THE URGENT CALL

The call goes forth for volunteers.
To gather in the harvest white,
To go into the harvest field
While it is day—soon comes the night.
The call may come to work at home,
To work in vineyards near at hand;
The call may come from faroff shores,
To labor in some foreign land.
To tarry long may be too late;
The call is urgent, don't delay;
Some soul is waiting for you now
To point him to the living way.
As we let the Spirit guide us,
As we stand yielded to His will;

Surely we will fear no evil,
For He with joy, our hearts will fill.
Going where God's Spirit leads us,
We become a source of blessing;
We shall reach a higher level
As we go Christ's Name confessing.

—Merton Andrus in the *Exhorter*

COME, LORD!

Come Lord, and tarry not
Bring the long looked-for Day;
O why these years of waiting here,
These ages of delay?
Come for Thy saints still wait;
Daily ascends their sigh:
The Spirit and the Bride say "Come";
Dost Thou not hear their cry?
Come, for Thy Israel pines,
An exile from Thy fold;
O call to mind Thy faithful Word
And bless them as of old.
Come and make all things new;
Build up Thy ruined earth;
Restore our faded Paradise;
Creation's second birth.
Come, and begin Thy reign
Of everlasting Peace;
Come, take the Kingdom to Thyself,
Great King of Righteousness.

—Horatius Bonar

REVIVAL

Revival comes to the man of God through the Word of God by the Spirit of God. Neither revival nor any other lasting blessing will be experienced when we believe or place faith in the experiences of others or conclude that God will do for me exactly what He did for someone else.

Experiences may illustrate and encourage, but revival comes only when I place my faith in the Word of God and find a new beginning of obedience to His commands.

—H. Bruce Leastman in *The Alliance Witness*

PERHAPS TODAY

Perhaps today the clouds will part asunder,
Reveal a glory brighter than the sun,
And we shall view with transport, joy, and wonder
The hope of earth and heaven's beloved One.
Perhaps today the trump of God resounding,
Shall wake the sleepers from their beds of clay,

And we with them our longed-for Lord surrounding,
Shall see His glorious face—perhaps today!

—Arthur Cook

FAITH

A faith that lasts only as long as immediate, visible results are evident is a weak faith. The strong faith is that which holds fast to God when all the visible evidence seems to deny God or His goodness. A faith that endures chastening is stronger than ever.

—Richard Ramsey in *The Exhorter*

WHAT A MAN BELIEVES ABOUT CHRIST

Again, it certainly makes a tremendous difference what one believes about Christ. “What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?” That is the great and paramount question, the answer to which decides a man’s destiny. “Except ye believe that I am He,” He said to the Jews, “ye shall die in your sins,” and “whither I go ye cannot come” (John 8:21, 24). At Caesarea Philippi He asked His disciples saying, “Who do men say the Son of man is?” Much hinged on that then; much hinges on it today. And blessed is the man who has received the truth and holds it fast. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

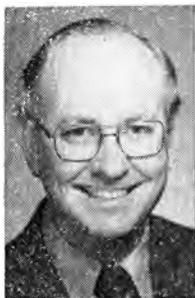
—R. H. Boll

THE BIBLE

This book is the unchangeable, unshakable, unmistakable Word of God, and you dare not neglect it. Think of it! Not man’s word, but God’s Word! If the Lord came personally to you, would you ignore Him? Today you stand before the Bible as one stands before a beautiful cathedral. You will never know its glory till you enter.

—George Sweeting

Until next time, **MARANATHA!**



The Holy Spirit ARE YOU CHARISMATIC?

Dr. David R. Reagan

I’m often asked that question, and when I am, I always respond by asking, “What do you mean by ‘charismatic?’”

The reason, of course, that I respond that way is because the word “charismatic” means different things to different people.

A CONFUSED TERM

I have found that most people have in mind only one thing when

they ask the question. They want to know if you speak in tongues. But I have learned that some people will label you as a "charismatic" if you simply believe in the continuing validity of miracles.

In other words, there is a lot of confusion as to what exactly constitutes a "charismatic." And the confusion becomes even more rampant when people try to differentiate between Pentecostals and Charismatics. Most people tend to lump the two groups together indiscriminately.

So before I answer the charismatic question regarding myself, and before you attempt to do so regarding yourself, let's try to clear the air of confusion by defining some terms.

PENTECOSTAL vs CHARISMATIC

A Pentecostal is a person who believes that you cannot be saved until you experience what is called "the baptism of the Holy Spirit." Pentecostals believe that this baptism in the Spirit is always confirmed by the gift of tongues. Faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior is not enough. Water baptism is also insufficient to bring about one's birth into the family of God. One must have a supernatural experience during which the person is immersed in the Holy Spirit and signifies this by speaking in tongues.

The Pentecostal doctrine of salvation is clearly heretical. It denies the saving power of the blood of Christ. It violates the teaching of Scripture. The Bible says we are "saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ." (Eph. 2:8) We are not saved by speaking in tongues.

THE CHARISMATIC POSITION

Charismatics adhere to the Scriptural doctrine of salvation. They reject the Pentecostal position that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is essential for one to become a child of God. But Charismatics, like Pentecostals, do believe that Christians should seek a "second experience" in the Lord which they call "the baptism in the Holy Spirit." They also argue, again like the Pentecostals, that this Holy Spirit baptism will always be validated by the gift of tongues. Although I must add, in all fairness, that more and more Charismatic leaders are moving away from the position that a manifestation of tongues must accompany a valid baptism in the Spirit.

To summarize, both Pentecostals and Charismatics believe in a supernatural experience called the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Both believe this experience will be evidenced by speaking in unknown tongues. But they differ as to the essentiality of this experience to salvation. Pentecostals argue it is absolutely essential. Charismatics disagree. Charismatics argue instead that a person is justified before God by faith in Christ. They relate the baptism in the Spirit to sanctification—the process of being shaped into the image of Jesus.

ANSWERING THE QUESTION

With these definitions in mind, let's go back to the original question.

If by "charismatic" you mean do I believe that a person must speak in tongues in order to be saved, then the answer is "No, I am not charismatic."

If by “charismatic” you mean do I believe that a person should seek a post-conversion experience in the Holy Spirit that will be validated by the gift of tongues, then the answer is “No, I am not charismatic.”

If by “charismatic” you mean do I personally have the gift of tongues, then the answer is “No, I am not charismatic.”

But if by “charismatic” you mean do I believe that God still performs miracles and that His Spirit still gives people supernatural gifts, including the gift of tongues, then my answer is “Yes, I am charismatic.”

A POWERLESS HERITAGE

The first twenty years I spent in the Church I was taught that God had retired in the First Century, and I believed it. I worshipped a “God of Nostalgia”—a God who once performed mighty miracles in behalf of His people but who could no longer do such things. I put God in a box, and through my unbelief I severely limited His power in my life.

I also had a perverted view of the Holy Spirit. I believed that the Holy Spirit was a great author who had also retired in the First Century after He had completed writing the Bible. In fact, I believed that the Holy Spirit was the Bible!

I had accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior, and I had become a child of God, but because of these misconceptions concerning God and His Spirit, my growth as a child of God was severely stunted. I was still a spiritual pygmy twenty years after my birth into the Family of God.

A DYNAMIC DISCOVERY

I had no one to blame but myself, because I had accepted the traditions of men without putting them to the test of God’s Word. When I finally stopped using the Bible as a source book for proof texts and began reading and studying it seriously to discern its message for my life, the Holy Spirit began to lead me to understand that God is alive and well and His Spirit is active in the world.

I can still remember how exciting those discoveries were. God is alive and well! God still hears and answers prayers! God still performs miracles! The Spirit of God is active in the world today—drawing people to Jesus, gifting those who respond, and then providing them with guidance and comfort and power. I could hardly contain my joy. I rushed out to share my discoveries with others. “God is alive! He still performs miracles! His Spirit is active in our lives!” I was greeted with either stony silence or the question: “Have you gone charismatic?”

And those reactions have continued to this day. How sad this is. Many Christians are robbing their lives of the power of God through their unbelief.

A BIBLICAL PARADOX

This is nothing new, of course. It took the Children of Israel 40 years to make an eleven day journey across the Sinai Desert (Deut. 1:2 & 3). The Bible says it was because “they limited God” by their un-

belief (Psalm 78:40-42). Jesus could perform no mighty miracles in His home town of Nazareth because His neighbors refused to believe (Mark 6:4 & 5).

In other words, the Bible clearly teaches a great paradox about the power of God. The paradox is this: although God is all-powerful, His power can be limited in our lives by our unbelief. I had this paradox impressed upon me one time when I was discussing healing with a man who claimed that God had miraculously healed him and other members of his family. I must have given him a skeptical look, because he asked me if I believed him.

Before I could respond, he asked, "Have you ever experienced a miraculous healing in your life or in your family's life?"

"No I haven't," I replied.

"Do you believe God can heal miraculously?" he asked.

"I don't think so," I said.

And then he responded with some words that cut right through me: "If you don't think God can perform miracles, then don't ever expect any in your life."

TODAY'S POWER VACUUM

The Bible says that the end times will particularly be characterized by unbelief among professing Christians. In II Timothy 3:5 Paul writes that in the "last days" people will "hold the form of religion but deny the power of it." As we look around us today, we can see abundant evidence that this prophecy has come true. Men have the form—the liturgies, the creeds, the doctrinal proof texts—but so many of them do not have the power. And the lack of power is reflected in the defeated, joyless lives they live.

CHRISTIANITY'S ANSWER

What is the power of Christianity? For the unbeliever it is the blood of Jesus (I Cor. 1:17 & 18). For the Believer, it is the Holy Spirit (I John 4:4). The Holy Spirit is God's gift to those who accept His Son as Lord and Savior (Acts 2:38 and Rom. 5:5). The Holy Spirit can do many things for the Believer. He can provide us with guidance (Rom. 8:14). He can comfort and encourage us (John 14:15-17, 25-27). He can pray for us (Rom. 8:26) and illuminate our minds so that we can understand the spiritual truths of God's Word (I John 2:27). He can help us resist Satan (Rom. 8:26 and I John 4:4).

Most important, He can shape us into the image of Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29 & 30). In fact, this is the goal of the Spirit's work in the life of each Believer (II Cor. 3:17 & 18).

THE CHOICE INVOLVED

But notice something. In all these statements about the work of the Spirit, I have used the word "can" instead of "will." The point is that we can resist (Acts 7:51), quench (I Thess. 5:19), and grieve the Spirit (Eph. 4:20).

Thus, even though the Spirit can provide us with guidance concerning every decision of life—both the big ones and the small ones—the Spirit will not force His guidance upon us. We must seek it. In

this regard, the Spirit is like an internal power plant which cannot supply us with any power unless we are willing to plug into the power source. And most of us are not willing to do that, either because we don't believe the power is there or because we insist, in our foolish pride, on living on our own power.

THE ROOT PROBLEM

The source of our unbelief is our rejection of what the Bible teaches about the Holy Spirit. Like King Jehoiakim, who took a pen-knife to the scroll of Jeremiah, cutting out those portions he did not like (Jer. 36:20-30), we have applied our scissors to the Scriptures, clipping out those portions concerning the Spirit which we don't want to believe. We have done this under the guise that the clipped portions "apply to the First Century only." The effect, as stated earlier, is that we have put the Holy Spirit into retirement.

Take James 5:13-15 as an example. Verse 13 says that if anyone is suffering he should pray. We shout "Amen!" Verse 13 also says if anyone is cheerful, he should sing. Again, we shout "Amen!" But when verse 14 says that a sick person should call for the elders to anoint him with oil and pray over him, we shout "First Century!" Why? Why do we play these childish games with God's Holy Word?

Or consider James 5:17 & 18. These verses state that "Elijah was a man of like nature with ourselves," and the clear teaching of the verses is that through faith we can experience miracles as great as the one Elijah experienced when he prayed that it would not rain for 3½ years. Yet we insist that "the Age of Miracles has ceased." Nonsense. Miracles have ceased only for those who refuse to believe.

Another example of our cut and paste approach to Scripture is to be found in I Corinthians 14. We strongly emphasize verse 34 which says that "women should keep silent in the churches." We say "Amen!" to verse 40 which exhorts us to do all things "decently and in order." But we apply our scissors to verse 39 because it says "do not forbid speaking in tongues." Once again we shout "First Century!" And in the process we end up repudiating a direct command of God.

OUR "JUSTIFICATION"

Of course we try to justify our mutilation of these passages by pointing to I Corinthians 13:8-10. I don't know what we would do without these verses. We have twisted them beyond recognition and have used them as our cornerstone argument to teach that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit have ceased.

We claim these verses teach that the gifts of prophecy and tongues—and other such miraculous gifts—ceased with the completion of the Bible. But the passage also speaks of knowledge passing away at the same time as prophecy and tongues. And the passage never mentions the Bible. It speaks instead of the "coming of that which is perfect," and verse 12 clearly implies that the "perfect" is Jesus Christ, for verse 12 relates "the coming of the perfect" to the time when we will stand "face to face." Paul uses the exact same imagery in I Cor. 4:5 and II Cor. 4:6, and in both of these passages it is crystal clear that he

is talking about the Second Coming of Christ. Furthermore, Paul begins the first Corinthian letter with the statement that Believers will not lack *any* spiritual gift as they await the coming of Christ (I Cor. 1:7).

UNOPENED GIFTS

Because we are so afraid of spiritual gifts, we have ignored them in our teaching. The result is that the average Christian in our heritage doesn't have the foggiest idea about the meaning and significance of spiritual gifts. Most would probably be shocked to learn that when they became a child of God, the Spirit gave them at least one supernatural gift (I Cor. 12:7 and Eph. 4:7).

Most Christians don't understand the difference in a talent and a gift. Most do not understand that *all* the gifts are supernatural in nature, and therefore, miraculous. Most could not identify even one gift that they have been given by the Spirit.

Yet the Bible teaches that all Christians are someday going to stand before Jesus and be judged for their works to determine the degree of their rewards in eternity (II Cor. 5:10). That means each of us will have to answer to Jesus for how we used our gifts to advance His Kingdom. For many of us that is going to be a most embarrassing moment. We are going to sound pretty pathetic when we stutter around for an answer and then finally reply: "Lord, I didn't even know I had any gifts."

A SPIRITUAL BAPTISM

What makes all this so tragic is that we live in an age when the gifts of the Spirit are being poured out in great abundance. In fact, the anointing of the Spirit which we are experiencing today is the greatest that the Church has received since the First Century. Yet so many of us seem unaware of it, or worse, seem intent on denying it.

This is a particularly strange reaction for a people with a rich prophetic heritage, for God's Prophetic Word clearly states that there will be a great outpouring of the Spirit in the end times.

JOEL'S PROPHECY

Take Joel 2 for example. Verse 28 says God's Spirit will be poured out on all flesh. We respond by saying that this prophecy was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost when the Apostles were baptized in the Spirit. As proof of that, we point to the fact that Peter referred to Joel's prophecy in his sermon (Acts 2:16-20).

But when you read the prophecy in its context in Joel 2, it becomes clear that the Day of Pentecost was only a partial fulfillment of what Joel foresaw. In verse 23 Joel speaks of an "early rain" and a "latter rain," implying two pourings out of the Spirit—a theme which James picks up on in his epistle (James 5:7-11). In verse 26 & 27 Joel speaks of the re-establishment of the Jews in their land of Israel, and verse 28 says that the ultimate pouring out of the Spirit will occur "afterward." Finally, verse 30 of Joel's prophecy makes it clear that the ultimate pouring out of the Spirit will occur immediately before the Day of the Lord.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES

As students of prophecy, we should be rejoicing over the great outpouring of God's Spirit which is occurring today, for it is one of the signs of the times. Further, we should be teaching our people about the Spirit and His gifts.

The reason the Spirit is being poured out is because Satan is intensifying his attack on individual Christians, their families, and the Church. Satan knows Bible prophecy. He can read the signs of the times. He knows his time is short. His activity is increasing in quantity and intensity as the end draws near.

This means that as never before Christians need to be prepared for spiritual warfare. But how can they be prepared when they are being taught that the Holy Spirit is a book and the age of miracles has ceased? How can they effectively resist Satan when they are ignorant of the spiritual power within them?

QUESTIONS FOR YOU

Are *you* ready for spiritual combat? Is your God alive and well? Is He performing miracles in your life? Are you using the gifts His Spirit has given you? Do you desire to receive all that God wants to give you?

Are you charismatic?



STUDIES ON PRAYER

Jesse Z. Wood

The English writer, Tennyson, wrote in his "Mort d'Arthur", "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

Many such fine things about prayer have been penned by men, some of which are worthy of quoting. Here are a few:

"Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance; rather, it is laying hold of His highest willingness." (Trench)

"Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit, for such things as God has promised." (Bunyan)

"Who goes to bed and doth not pray, maketh two nights of every day."

"My words fly up, My thoughts remain below: Words without thoughts never to heaven go." (Shakespeare, in "Hamlet")

"In prayer my lips ne'er act the winning part, without the sweet concurrence of the heart."—

Attention has been called, repeatedly, to multitudes of cases of answered prayer, revealed in the Bible, God's Word. Many "challenges to pray" have been noted. Numerous outstanding men and women of God in the Old Testament excelled in their "walk with God" because they constantly looked to Him in prayer and Praise.

In the New Testament, Prayer, like a golden thread is woven throughout the whole fabric of the Book.

Paul, especially was inspired to write on this wonderful privilege granted to the Lord's people. In Ephesians 6, Paul describes the Believer as a "Soldier", prepared for battle. "Put on the WHOLE armor of God", he writes. And, the reason? Our wrestling, or warfare is not against an ordinary enemy—our foe is Satan and all his hosts. Every piece of protective armor, and fighting equipment is given careful attention. But, after fully dressed for battle, and with sword in hand, well sharpened and ready for wielding,—still one mighty, and vitally needed aid, is PRAYER!—Prayer to God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, for Satan is an experienced Combatant—He's fought and won too many a battle,—and He still wins too many!

Verse 18 reads: "with ALL PRAYER, and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints."

"Resist the Devil and he will flee from you", says James 4:7, 8.

Someone has said, "Satan flees, when he sees, the weakest saint upon his knees."

Satan attacks our hearts, our thoughts, our imaginations. In 2 Cor. 10:3-5, Paul writes, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every THOUGHT into CAPTIVITY to the obedience of Christ."

Paul advised Timothy: "suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. 2:3)

Again: "Fight the good fight of Faith." (1 Tim. 6:12)

And to you who read these lines, I say: PRAYER IS our mightiest weapon against all that our mutual enemy can throw at us!

"Thanks be unto God who ALWAYS leadeth us in triumph in Christ." (2 Cor. 4:14)

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REPRINTS:

A Letter About Baptism

by R. H. Boll

There is among some very fine and devoted religious people, and among preachers and Bible-teachers whose sincerity and general Bible-knowledge is not to be questioned, a great misunderstanding

concerning the place and significance of Christian baptism. The misconception seems the more a hopeless one because it seems to be due to some sort of blinding prejudice (I speak in lowliness and kindness)—an apparent unwillingness to consider the teaching, to study it, to listen, to learn. They judge hastily concerning this subject and upon superficial data; nay—they have judged already, and set the whole question aside by an *a priori* verdict. If spoken to about it they are instantly on guard, and will not enter into the matter, for they do not want “controversy.” They can rarely be induced to take it up thoughtfully, patiently, and to give fair, free consideration to what the Lord has said concerning it. They are apt to turn away abruptly from one who, however kindly and humbly, broaches the subject; and to turn a very cold shoulder upon anyone that teaches it, be he ever so faithful to the word of God—not to say *because* he is faithful.. That is a serious evil. They may not realize that such an attitude is unfaithfulness toward the Lord Jesus Christ, and a rebellion (sometimes it may be, unconsciously, the very last citadel of rebellion) against His authority. Perhaps the chief significance of baptism lies in the utter submission (the “obedience of faith”) which baptism requires, to the will of Christ.

Here we print a letter from a great and able man, a preacher widely known and heard, which was written in answer to a question on baptism.

Answering your question about baptism. As far as the question of baptism is concerned I always refuse to go into it because God Himself tells us it is secondary. In Hebrews the sixth chapter, verse twelve, He tells us to leave the ABC's, including questions about baptism, and go on to more important things. Paul thanks God—of course, he was inspired by the Holy Spirit in his thanks—that he had baptized none of them, with one or two exceptions. Simon the magician was baptized by Philip and yet was a lost soul. The thief on the cross was not baptized at all but was saved.

The Bible tells us there is one baptism. This is evidently the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This happens at the identical moment of the new birth. One is baptized with the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ—the Church. The outward manifestation of this is water baptism. The form in which this is administered amounts to little. It is possible to receive water baptism of any kind without having been born again and without being in the body of Christ, as illustrated in the foregoing paragraph, and it is possible to be in the body of Christ, born again, without having been baptized. It is a sign of obedience, however, and I believe every believer should be baptized as a witness. I personally, follow the foremost Greek scholars of the world in believing that the word “baptizo,” while it has one meaning which means “to plunge,” does not necessarily mean immersion, and I practice sprinkling myself, although this is a point that is very secondary.

Donald Grey Barnhouse

It is simply inconceivable that a man of such intelligence and knowledge of the Scriptures as the author of this letter possesses could write such things as these. There is surely some blinding influence behind it. May I not, in the meekness and gentleness of Jesus Christ, point out some of the most evident misconceptions? It may be my words will come under the eyes of him who wrote the letter, and of others who think and talk as he does, and may be used of God to help them see and correct their error.

1. I know of no place where God says that the question of baptism is secondary. “The baptism of John, whence is it?” said our Lord to the scribes:—“Is it from heaven or from men?” Not from men

it was, but from heaven. If that much was true even of the inferior and preparatory baptism of John (and they who rejected it rejected the counsel of God against themselves, Luke 7:30)—is it not much more so in respect of the baptism which Christ commanded in His great commission, which is backed by His absolute authority? (Matt. 28:18-20) Baptism is not from men—as though it were some mere custom devised and agreed upon by men, a thing which may be changed, or set aside at pleasure: it is from heaven. It is therefore not secondary or unimportant. “It is a sign of obedience,” says Mr. Barnhouse. NayNay,, *it is obedience*; and to slight it and to induce others to think lightly of it, is disobedience toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The “first principles of the doctrine of Christ” in Heb. 6, of which, Mr. Barnhouse says, baptism is one, and which we are to leave behind, that we may press on to perfection—were certainly not unimportant, nor secondary in their place, nor were they to be *left* in the sense of being slighted or abandoned. The builder leaves the foundation, but he evermore builds on it. The child leaves his ABC’s and his multiplication table, but they enter continually into all his higher studies. So we do not abandon “repentance,” nor “faith toward God,” nor the teaching of “eternal judgment.” These things, though listed among the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, have permanent value. So also has the teaching of baptism. In Rom. 6:3, 4, 17, 18; in Gal. 3:26, 27; in Col. 2:12 and 3:1, it enters into the profoundest Christian truth.

3. “Paul thanks God that he had baptized none of them, with one or two exceptions.” Mr. Barnhouse here refers to 1 Cor. 1:14-17. But what conclusion does he mean for us to draw? That all the Corinthians were not baptized? That would be contradicted by Acts 18:8; also by 1 Cor. 1:13, the verse just preceeding, in which Paul himself appeals to the testimony of their baptism, that they were baptized, not in Paul’s name, but in Christ’s. He *personally* baptized only one or two. Others could attend to that. But it was attended to without delay or exception. Paul was glad now (in view of the party spirit in Corinth) that he himself, personally, baptized so few, lest any should say that the Corinthians had been baptized into his name. The apostle is as far as possible from discounting the importance of Christian baptism.

4. Simon the magician (Acts 8) was baptized, “yet was a lost soul.” What bearing has this? Does our friend mean that Simon had never been saved? To be sure if he was insincere in his faith and baptism he was not saved. But that would not be to the point. Moreover Mr. Barnhouse does not know that—unless he should take the position that a truly believing and baptized child of God can never again fall into any sin. Peter did not say to Simon that he had never been right. The word “still” so often interpolated (as though Peter had said, “Thou art *still* in the bond of iniquity, etc.”) is not there. And what has all this to do with the question of the importance of baptism? There is nothing in that whole account that could discredit the value of baptism.

5. “The thief on the cross was not baptized at all but was saved.”

Even if that were granted, how could such an example—the case of a man nailed to a tree—furnish an excuse to those who could walk about free, to forego baptism? But the case of the thief belongs to the yonderside of the covenant line. The Death had not taken place (Heb. 9:17, 18), the Spirit was not yet given; Christian baptism had not yet been commanded.

6. “The Bible tells us there is one baptism. This is evidently the baptism of the Holy Spirit.” May I ask how this is *evident*? It is perfectly evident that the baptism commanded in Matt. 28:19 is the baptism to be performed by men, therefore has reference to the baptism of water. Also that the baptism in Acts 2:38 and Acts 10:48 and 19:5—every instance where baptism is said to be “in” or “into” the name of the Lord Jesus—was water baptism, is perfectly evident. Some have tried to evade the force of this by drawing arbitrary dispensational lines, as though what applied to them does not apply now. But I trust Mr. Barnhouse is not one of those. Moreover the baptism practised in the case of the Eunuch (Acts 8), Lydia and the Jailor (Acts 16), was the baptism in water. So is that referred to in Rom. 6:4, for in it alone are we both buried and raised, and in it only do we *obey the pattern* (Rom. 6:17, 18). If there is but one baptism shall we then disobey this command of the Lord Jesus in order that we may receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which was not a command at all, but a promise? Or shall we trust and obey?

7. Finally—and for this I cannot at all account—Mr. Barnhouse declares that the foremost Greek scholars of the world say that though the word “baptizo” has “one meaning” which means “to plunge,” it does not necessarily mean immersion. My investigation of this point and search in all the lexicons I have consulted is that the Greek scholars and lexicographers are a unit in giving the word the one meaning of “plunge, dip, immerse, overwhelm,” *never* “sprinkle” or “pour.” I fear Mr. Barnhouse has not made any personal research on this point and is speaking on second-hand information. Or perhaps he refers to some scholar’s private opinion, rather than their official statements? But the undivided testimony of Greek scholarship is that the word “baptizo” which the Lord Jesus and his inspired apostles used for “baptize” means simply “to dip, to plunge, to immerse.” If it has secondary and remote meanings and figurative uses, as most all words have, these are all always based on its clear fundamental meaning. I should like to present Mr. Barnhouse with a copy of Shepherd’s Handbook on Baptism, in which the testimony of practically all Greek-English Lexicons is given.

The conviction grows upon me that the minds of many excellent people have been blinded upon this subject—a subject which is set forth in utmost plainness in the word of God; and that to their own incalculable hurt and loss. It may be that a mistaken conclusion based on the doctrine of the grace of God has something to do with it. Perhaps they think of baptism as a work, something aside from and superadded to faith, by which a man attains to salvation; and therefore they abhor it as though it might make void the grace of God. Perhaps the false teaching on this point by Rome (which made a

“sacrament” of baptism) and other religious bodies, is in part responsible for this evil impression. Baptism, however, is not a work—no more so than the blind man’s washing of his eyes in the pool of Siloam (John 9) or Naaman’s dipping himself in the Jordan (2 Kings 5). Not as much so, for the Lord does not allow a man to do even so much as baptize himself. It must be done for him. He simply yields to it. Baptism has no sacramental value; nor is there any virtue in water to save. But by faith we are saved; and baptism is both *the God-appointed test* and the expression and evidence of faith. It is not something different from faith and added to it, but it is faith, because it is included in it. (See Gal. 3:26, 27.) In the words of J. M. Stiffler, in his commentary on Romans, “Faith so far is not one thing and baptism another; they are the same thing. The faith that accepted Christ in Paul’s day was the faith that showed its acceptance in baptism. The water without the preceding faith was nothing. The faith without the water could not be allowed. Believers were baptized into Christ or they were not considered to be in Him. (Comm. on Rom. 6:4).

Would that Mr. Barnhouse and all others that respect the Lord Jesus Christ might see this, and that no good man would ever again say aught to belittle and discredit our Lord’s appointment and command of baptism, would rather urge every one that has not done so to be buried with Christ by baptism into death that he may be raised with him to walk in the newness of life!

Mr. Buford Smith is the Instructor for PSY 101 – Integration of Psychology and Bible – for the School of Biblical Studies.

The Bible: The Final Authority in the Study of the Human Nature

Buford Smith

The study of human nature has always been of prime interest to the public. Everyone wants to know what makes everybody else tick. The ancients desired to understand why the individual responded as he did to certain situations. Today’s generation is interested in knowing what it is that causes some to “make it” in sports or show business or whatever.

The interest in people and their actions is not surprising. Humans seem to have been born with that capacity called curiosity.

Our interest can be satisfied. Our God has provided the information in the Bible to lead us into an understanding of human nature that has not been offered by the leading theorist in the field of psychology.

The predominant problem with psychology experts is the refusal to accept the Biblical foundation as a consistent basis for interpretation of the activities of human nature. Without the consistency of the Bible each expert is left to conjecture any method of solving the problems of mankind.

In *Competent to Counsel*, Jay E. Adams insists that the Bible be the final authority when evaluating human activity and attempting to

give encouragement and advice to a person with difficulty. His emphasis is that difficulty results from sin in the thoughts and actions of the individuals, therefore sin is the source of problems and must be dealt with.

The integration of psychology and the Bible is not difficult when we realize that the Bible speaks to us about human experiences.

P. S. Christians would benefit from such a class. The nature of our calling—to witness to an unbelieving world—requires that we understand the feelings and thoughts of people. The determination to live “in Jesus” while functioning in this worldly society requires tactfulness on our part. To give the impression that we believe we are “better off” while not saying we are “better” than others requires effort that results from compassion and humility. We must strive to make the effort.

Most important for Believers is the need for self-examination. How we treat others largely results from how we view ourselves and our relationship to Jesus Christ. A study of psychology and the Bible would increase our understanding of ourselves and thus we could relate to others in their situations.

One of the important scriptures is that Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. I can relate to that—Jesus understands what I’m going through. That helps.

From any angle the answer is the same. Jesus Christ paid the price of sin. He is the one who will guide us into that straight and narrow path as we interact with people in this life.

We must receive our understanding and interpretation of human nature and the psychology of living from Him.



Joy Garrett

Harare, Zimbabwe

June 7th

Mother Garrett left Zimbabwe for New York June 2nd after 52 years serving God and being a wonderful example of Christian living. She spent her time, money and efforts to the furthering of the Gospel. Tribute was given her from the African sisters of 8 churches on her last Saturday afternoon. She spoke on the rearing of Children. They gave her gifts and we had a lovely tea.

On her last Sunday the Hatfield congregation had a party after the morning service. Many of the orphans she helped to raise were there. Bro. Abrahams spoke of her bravery and trust in God.

Mother has one blind eye and a cataract growing on the good one yet she taught her 5 scripture classes a week and saved for the poor continually. I'll inherit her classes.

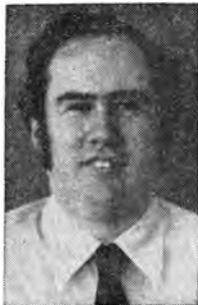
Two weeks ago we arrived back from South Africa with a new white 2½ ton Datsun Caball truck and a used car. Both are diesel which is half the price of the gasohol our present old truck uses. We thank all you who contributed and prayed about our transport problems. One is unable to buy a new vehicle in this country, but in South Africa they were thousands of dollars cheaper than they could have been purchased here.

Yesterday we went in the truck to Mondoro where the widowed Sister Mangena labors on for God. Her brother-in-law Joel and Time Masusa of Highfields went with us. They go out there at their own expense to preach the gospel as there are few men—mostly women. Time teaches Sunday School and directs the Youth choir. Bro. Joel Mangena of Harari led the singing and helps Time in the preaching. We have several other of our young men who go out preaching in the new country congregations.

My servant, Chapu Gumbato, returned today from a 3 month's leave of absence from his home in Mt. Darwin. He reported that he has two families and six youngsters attending church in his house there.

Continue to remember us and God's work here in your prayers.

Larry Miles, a member of the Portland Avenue congregation, is working in Cincinnati and has taken classes at Cincinnati Bible Seminary.



Studies in the Book of Acts

Larry Miles

Why The Early Church Grew

Acts 4:1-37

THE PERSECUTION: ACTS 4-1-7

Verse 1 tells us that the first persecution, that the early church experienced, came from the Sadducees. This was not all that unusual, in the fact that the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection from the dead. It was the resurrection of Jesus Christ that the apostles were proclaiming to the people that day. We have here the mention of the captain of the temple guard. He was second in command, on the grounds, to the High Priest. Rome allowed the Jews to police the Temple grounds. We would like to give you a comparison of the beliefs of the Pharisees and those of the Sadducees. Irving Jenson, professor of Bible at Bryan College in Dayton, Tennessee, gives us this account.

PHARISEES

SADDUCEES

a) name meant "the separated ones"

a) name may be from zaddikim "the righteous ones"

- b) largest and most influential sect
- c) extreme legalism
- d) little interest in politics
- e) operated principally in synagogues
- f) held these doctrines:
 - immortality
 - resurrection
 - spirits and angels
- g) regarded rabbinic tradition highly
- b) second to Pharisees in prominence
 - majority power in council at this time
 - the aristocratic minority
 - educated and wealthy class
- c) external legalism
- d) major concern was politics
- e) operated principally in the temple
- f) denied:
 - immortality
 - resurrection
 - spirits and angels
- g) accepted as authoritative only the written Old Testament

In verse 2, we see that the Sadducees could not stand to hear anyone proclaiming the resurrection from the dead. They just did not believe it. We're told that they put Peter and John into jail for the night. The reason was that the Mosaic Law forbade night trials. This was disregarded in the case of Jesus Christ. Verse 4 informs us that 5000 souls were added to the Body of Christ that day.

The Sanhedrin convened the next day. Some of the ones who were presiding over the proceedings had been the same ones who condemned Jesus. The Sanhedrin wanted to know by what authority Peter and John healed the lame man.

PETER'S DEFENSE: ACTS 4:8-22

Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, now presents his defense. He says that they were on trial for doing good. In verse 10, he says it was by the authority of Jesus Christ that this man was healed. He then refers to Psalm 118:22 where it says that the Messiah would be rejected. In verse 12, Peter emphasizes the fact that Jesus is the Hope of the world. Jesus is the Blessed Hope, as Paul calls Him in Titus 2:13. Only through Jesus can sinful mankind come to the Father. We think back to John 14:6 where the Record tells us that Jesus is "the way the truth, and the life."

The Sanhedrin took note of the fact that these men were unlearned. They were not trained in the rabbinic schools. They were not professional scholars. They recognized them as having been with Jesus. The lame man stood with them, witness to the fact that a miracle had taken place in his life. The Sanhedrin could not deny that a miracle had taken place.

In verse 15, the Bible tells us that the Sanhedrin ordered the apostles out of the chambers so that they could come to a decision. What shall they do with these men? They could not deny that a miracle had taken place. They decided to warn them never again to speak in the Name of Jesus. They brought Peter and John back to the Council chambers and gave them the decision. They were commanded, by the Sanhedrin, not to speak or teach in the Name of Jesus Christ.

In verses 19-20, Peter tells them that we can't stop preaching. The apostles had been commanded by the Risen Savior (Luke 24:48-

49) to proclaim His resurrection and to teach about Him. We are told that the Council ordered them set free. In verse 22 we are told the lame man's age was 40.

THE INFANT CHURCH WAS A PRAYING CHURCH: ACTS 4:23-31

After their release, by the Sanhedrin, the two apostles went back to the company of their companions. They went, in all probability, to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark. After relating the events of the trial to fellow-believers, they went to the Lord in prayer. They, first of all, acknowledged the sovereign power of God. In verse 25 is a quote from Psalm 2. God used human instruments to write the Bible, inspired by the Holy Spirit Himself. In verses 26-27 is a quote from Psalm 2:2. This brings out the fact that the responsibility for the death of Christ lay on both the Jew and the Gentile. A partial fulfillment of the passage in Psalm 2 took place in the days of Herod and Pilate. Also, it was taking place in the days of the apostles. The ultimate fulfillment of Psalm 2 is yet future. Verse 28 tells us that all this was in the eternal plan and purpose of God.

In their prayer, they prayed not for the persecution to stop, rather they prayed for the boldness to speak with confidence amidst the persecution. While they spoke the Word, God confirmed the Word with miracles. Verse 31 tells us that they were filled with the Holy Spirit. It is right and proper to pray for God's Holy Spirit to fill us.

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH SHARING THEIR POSSESSIONS: ACTS: 4:32-37

The early Christians shared what they had in common with each other. They said what is mine is yours. In verse 33, the twelve were continuing to proclaim the resurrection. If one was needy the rest of the believers came to her aid. Those who owned property would sell it and give the proceeds to the twelve to distribute to the needy. This was voluntary as we will see in the next chapter.

In verse 36, we have the first mention of Barnabus. He was a Levite, from Cyprus. His name means "Son Of Encouragement." He owned some land and sold it and gave to the apostles the proceeds to be used for feeding the needy. This is how chapter 4 ends. If there was a need the church met it. They helped their own.

As we said before, there will, at this time, be a special article in this series. It will be based on the 4th chapter. It will be titled "Five Reasons For Church Growth." The thoughts will be based on a message given by Carl Ketcherside at the Westside Church of Christ in Hamilton, Ohio. After this essay, we will continue with the 5th Chapter of Acts. That article will be titled "Trouble From Within and Without." Until next time, Maranatha!

The Gospel of John

THE SECRET OF JOY

S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

John 3:22-30

Part I

We all would like to possess joy, would we not? And, in the Christian context, I mean *spiritual* joy, of course. Webster defines it as, "the emotion provoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires." Included in the concept are such things as, "delight," "gaiety," and "bliss." Thinking spiritually, we might say that it is the emotion provoked by the sense of right relationship with God, eternally and temporally.

But, what is its secret? How may we obtain it? Spelled out in practical detail, what does it mean? We all know, that is, all we Christians know that Jesus urged His followers to rejoice in the Lord, and in fact He considered that one of the goals of His ministry was the provision of joy. "These things have I spoken unto you," He said in His Upper Room Discourse, "that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (cf. John 15:11). In this statement the joy that we are to have is His joy? And what was that?

Was His joy financial success? Well, no, for the Bible says that He said, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the son of man hath not where to lay his head" (cf. Luke 9:58). The problem of our day, that of coping with high interest rates in the purchase of a home, evidently was not His problem. He had no home, but the hills of Palestine most of His ministry.

Was His joy from personal success? "He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken," Isaiah the prophet said (cf. 53:8).

Was it social success, or as we might say, "peer approval"? Well, hardly, since He Himself said, "They hated me without a cause" (cf. John 15:25), thereby setting forth one of the principal effects of His ministry of grace and love.

Was it spiritual success, that is, in the eyes of the world? Of course, in our eyes and in the eyes of our Triune God His ministry was completely successful, but the world did not regard it in this way. The New Testament affirms, "When the chief priests, therefore, and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him! Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him; for I find no fault in him" (John 19:6). To the world He was a spiritual disaster,—and yet He was the epitome of joy.

The story of the Apostle Paul is similar. He, too, exhorted his readers to lay hold of joy with words such as, "Rejoice in the Lord

always; and again I say, Rejoice" (cf. Phil. 4:4). He affirmed that he too, possessed it, even in adverse circumstances, "What then? Notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached and in that I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice" (Phil. 1:18). "Fulfill ye my joy" was his later exhortation (2:2). Was the source of his joy financial success? Hardly, in the light of his comments to the Corinthians, "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place" (4:11; cf. Phil. 4:11). He had no personal success in the sense in which we use the term (cf. 1 Cor. 7:7), nor social success (cf. 2 Tim. 4:11). And as for spiritual success, according to worldly eyes, that was not his either. He wrote, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand" (cf. 2 Tim. 4:6), and his departure was not simply from old age or illness. Even the religious people considered him a failure, crying out against him, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place" (cf. Acts 21:28).

But Paul was a joyous believer. What was his secret? It certainly was not in the earthly things that bring our spurious delights, the material and the temporal things. George William writes of Mr. Tidbottom's spectacles, which revealed to those who looked at others through them what others really were. Used in this way, one man was a ledger, another, a billiard cue, still another a bank book, and another a jigger of whiskey. If you had used them of me in my student days, then you would have seen a golf ball, for that was my life, the game of golf. What would we have seen, if we had looked at you? Joy comes when we see Christ in believers as their life and concern. The man who said, "fulfill ye my joy," said in the same epistle, "For me to live is Christ" (cf. Phil. 1:21). The secret of joy is the life in Christ and with Christ.

Christianity, then, claims to contain the secret of joy and, in fact, commands it of its disciples. And, further, it makes much of joy, being in itself a way of life that may be characterized by joy. "A miserable Christianity is a contradiction in terms, a ludicrous caricature of the real thing," Sidlow Baxter wrote, adding, "Away with sepulchral sanctimoniousness! A religion which wears graveclothes begs to be buried, and the sooner the funeral the better!"

John the Baptist was said by Jesus to be one among those born of women, of whom it could be said that there had not risen a greater (cf. Matt. 11:9, 11). He, too, was in his words a man of joy. What was his secret? The answer is quite clear, and it is to that that we now turn.

THE HISTORICAL SITUATION

The time (John 3:22). Our Lord was in Judaea in the earlier days of His ministry. It had become clear in the beginning that His work would be rejected by the leaders of the people (cf. 2:23-25). The rejection at the headquarters of the ancient faith indicated that the divine judgment was beginning. In Matthew Jesus returns to

Galilee and begins His ministry there, but before He began the ministry, He stayed a few months in Judaea, moving out from the city to the land about the capital.

The place (John 3:22-23). The location of the ministry of the Baptist and of Jesus was somewhere near the juncture of Samaria, Peraea, and the Decapolis. The exact location of "Aenon, near to Salim," is not known. The fact that water was there is the reason for the locale of the ministry (is this an indication of the mode of baptism practiced by them?). Morris comments, "One suggestion for Aenon is a site about seven miles south of Beisan. If this is correct there is a striking accuracy in the statement that there was 'much water,' or better 'many waters,' there, for in this locality there are seven springs within a radius of a quarter of a mile."

The events (John 3:22, "baptized"). Both Jesus and John were baptizing in the area, and we may assume that, since their messages were similar their baptisms were also similar (cf. Matt. 3:2; 4:17). The fact that John says in 4:2, "Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples," has been a difficulty for some, but a simple solution is that He did not perform the act Himself, although His disciples did under His authority and direction. In that sense the responsibility for the act was His, and it could be rightly said that He baptized. "If those two passages were found in two different gospels," Godet remarks, "criticism would certainly find in them a contradiction."

THE REPORT OF JOHN'S DISCIPLES

The question (John 3:25). While these ministries were being carried on, a Jew, perhaps a Pharisee, seeking to upset John's disciples no doubt, commented upon the growing popularity of Jesus and His disciples. He used as an occasion a discussion of the subject of cleansing.

The query of John's disciples (John 3:26). The disciples of John came to their leader and put the question to him, "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond the Jordan, to whom thou (emphatic in the original) bearest witness, behold, the same (lit, *this one*, with a tinge of disparagement, it seems) baptizeth, and all men (another case of "all" not meaning all without exception; it is an instance of hyperbole) come to him." The phrasing of the question leaves the impression that they thought it was very discourteous of the Lord Jesus to usurp the place of John in the hearts of the people. In fact, there is the ring of truth about this, for his disciples had other problems in understanding the ministry of our Lord (cf. Matt. 9:14: they are still a bit dull, it seems; Acts 19:1-7).

THE RESPONSE OF THE BAPTIZER

The general principle: Everything is from God (John 3:27). The occasion would have been a very difficult thing for the Baptist. He had been a very successful servant of Yahweh, with large numbers of very influential people responding to his call for spiritual preparation for the coming of the Messiah (cf. Matt. 3:5; Luke 3:12, 14). He had had outstanding results (cf. Matt. 3:6). In addition, his ministry had been carried out with considerable sacrifice on his part of the normal comforts of family and life, for his place of origin was "the wilderness"

(cf. Luke 3:2). His very clothing and habits of eating accentuated both his sacrifices and his ministry as one of self-denying spiritual preparation for the coming King (cf. Mark 1:3-8). And, finally, there was every opportunity for John to be afflicted with a natural human jealousy, or at least a sense of self-pity over the fact that his disciples were already leaving him for a new hero. Andrew and John had left upon an earlier occasion, and now more were leaving, it seems (cf. John 1:35-42).

All of this makes the Ambassador's reply the more remarkable, "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." In fact, in the total reply that he makes to the query there are two emphases. First, there is emphasis on John, on "I" (vv. 27-30). And, second, there is an emphasis on Christ, on "He" (vv. 31:36).

Verse thirty is the turning point, and in it is the essence of the secret of joy, "He must increase, but I must decrease." In effect, what he says is, "That which is a source of vexation and tension to you is the very thing that gives me joy!"

John's great guiding principle is the secret of his response: Everything comes from God ultimately, for He is this universe's sovereign. And this principle, put into practice by the saints, is one of the most important and useful in the Bible. Job found it to be mainstay of his life, and from it he could say in one of Scripture's great utterances, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust him" (cf. 13:15), and also, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (1:21).

One is reminded of Paul's text in 1 Corinthians 4:7, which was the text that convinced Augustine that faith was a gift of God. "And it was chiefly by this testimony that I myself was convinced when I was in a similar error, thinking that faith whereby we believe on God is not God's gift, but that it is in us from ourselves, and that by it we obtain the gifts of God, where by we may live temperately and righteously and piously in this world. For I did not think that faith was preceded by God's grace, so that by its means would be given to us what we might profitably ask, except that we could not believe if the proclamation of the truth did not precede; but that we should consent when the gospel was preached to us I thought was our own doing, and came to us from ourselves." Augustine referred in the context to a statement of Cyprian's, "that we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own," and commented that Cyprian had appealed to 1 Corinthians 4:7, from which Augustine, then, learned the truth that faith is a gift of God, as are all other graces. John the Baptist would have agreed. We have nothing of worth, if it does not come from heaven.

Reasoning from this principle John did not find it a difficult thing to cope with the growing popularity of another servant of God,—nor should we.

To be continued

NEWS AND NOTES

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

I just finished reading Bro. Alex Wilson's May article on Baptism and the restoration Pioneers.

I have 3 things to say: AMEN! AMEN! AMEN! and some more besides.

We have all heard countless sermons on man's responses and countless sermons on what baptism is . . . however, I heard hardly a handful on the grace of God.

Ask any child in your congregation what they have to do to go to heaven. I can tell you the answer you'll get, "Get Baptized"! God help us . . . Have we not told them and taught them (by example) the desperate need we all have to believe in, repent toward and confess with our whole heart the sweetest name ever . . . JESUS? None of these are one time events or separate one from another. These should be daily occurrences . . . that we do not take lightly. I thought for a long time that all the "steps" were done once for all. Then, I thought they were everyday except baptism and it was a one time event. Bear with me, I'm still learning. Isn't baptism, a daily thing, too? Not the act but the result? "Clothed with Christ . . . immersed in Him . . . all the time, everyday.

I've so much to learn and I do want to learn but my salvation will always be in JESUS . . . not the scriptures, or the things I may or may not do.

As a child of God, I need to hear how He has worked lovingly in the past and be reminded of His loving faithfulness when the believers meet about His table on Sundays (and since it is His table, He is the **only** one who can invite or refuse communion). Any other rule would require a judgment on another's relationship to the King . . .

while I may inspect their fruit, I cannot judge their soul.

Satan wants us to hate others who love Jesus but do not as we do. If they (others who love Jesus) are the most horrible and degenerate folks we know, He has asked us to love them. Our intellectual pride sends a stink heavenward. We do have a good deal of Bible truths in our movement but we don't have them all . . . no one does. If we can love all we meet and impart a little truth, when they ask, in gentleness and reverence we'll be sending a sweet savor heavenward.

We have a lot of teaching to do, let's do it . . . in love and in spite of how we are treated.

Your friend & His servant,
Linda Easley

Please take the enclosed check and use as follows.

Bundle to Lt. Church in Johnson City for another year.

If any thing is left use it to send **Word & Work** to those who can't pay for it but need it.

We are still enjoying our stay here in Saudi Arabia. Our church group has increased to approximately 50 each Sunday.

Yours in Christ,
Doug & Joyce Broyles

My husband and I are very interested in your **Word and Work** book. We find it very rewarding and would like to begin receiving it in our home. I am enclosing a check for \$4.00 for a year's subscription.

In addition, I would like **Great Songs of the Church** song book for \$3.95

Thank you and may God bless you.
Mr. & Mrs. John W. Adams