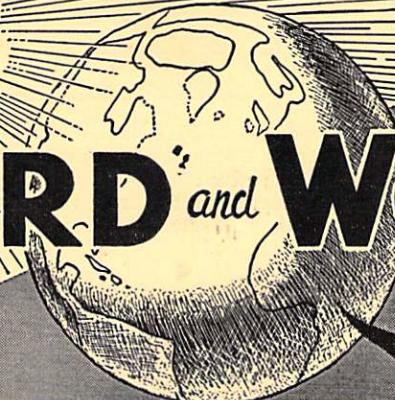


"Holding fast the faithful Word . . ."

The

WORD and WORK



"Holding forth the Word of life."

SEPTEMBER, 1988



SHICHIRO & TERUKO NAKAHARA, SHIZUOKA CITY, JAPAN

Brother Nakahara was promoted to Glory on Sept. 1, 1988.
"Well Done, Good and Faithful Servant!"

MISSIONS CONFERENCE

BELMONT CHURCH OF CHRIST, WINCHESTER, KENTUCKY

We are anticipating a wonderful MISSIONS CONFERENCE this year and hope you can join us! "Missions: Doors of Opportunity" will be held Friday evening and Saturday, October 21 and 22.

- Workshops—led by missions representatives from various ministries and areas.
- Key Speakers: Chuck Davis and Robert Garrett.
- Film — "The Wait of the World"
- Drama — Tim and Lisa Jones
- Youth Extravaganza — activities specially for youth beginning Friday night after the film

Please make reservations by Oct. 19 at the latest for the Banquet of the Continents (\$2.50) Friday evening and the catered lunch (\$2.50) Saturday.

For more information, call 606-744-5233, or write the church.

—Jonathan Garrett

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RESTORATION FORUM VI

NOVEMBER 1 - 3, AKRON, OHIO

Theme: WORKMEN TOGETHER FOR GOD

Subjects include "Preaching the Gospel Together"; "Dreaming Dreams Together"; "Endangered Heritage"; "Encouraging Signs."

Speakers & Discussion group leaders include Reuel Lemmens, Ed Bousman, Marvin Phillips, Don De Welt, Jack Cottrell, Alex Wilson, Walt Yancey.

These forums are attempts to explore and expand ways in which Churches of Christ, Christian Churches and others of God's people can work together to make known the Gospel of Christ to a perishing world, while respecting the conscience of individual believers and the freedom of local churches.

For More Information call John Fisk, 1-216-929-4717

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CENTRAL LOUISIANA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

NOVEMBER 14 - 17, 1988

Theme: The Joy Set Before Us

Monday Evening Session

7:00 p.m. Lay Aside . . . and Run

Nathan Burks

Tuesday Sessions

9:30 - 10:00	Prayer Time
10:00 - 10:50	Love Not This Present World
11:10 - 12:00	Bible Exposition: Philippians
1:30 - 2:20	Trials of Our Christian Ministry
7:00 p.m.	Without Vision We Perish

Robert Garrett
Julius Hovan
Ben Rake, Jr.
Jack Harris

Wednesday Sessions

9:30 - 10:00	Prayer Time
10:00 - 10:50	The Hope of His Calling
11:10 - 12:00	Bible Exposition: Philippians
1:30 - 2:20	Dying To Live
7:00 p.m.	Israel . . . Leader Among Nations

Vernon Lawyer
Julius Hovan
Stan Broussard
Kenneth Istre

Thursday Sessions

9:30 - 10:00	Prayer Time
10:00 - 10:50	Sacrifice of Praise to God
11:10 - 12:00	Bible Exposition: Philippians
1:30 - 2:00	My Reward Is With Me
7:00 p.m.	Joy of Things to Come

Harry Coultas
Julius Hovan
Alex Wilson
T. Y. Clark

For housing contact Dennis and Melva LeDoux, Glenmora Church of Christ, P. O. Box 314, Glenmora, Louisiana 71433. Phone (318) 748-4243.

THE WORD AND WORK

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

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

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In This Issue

Theme: BIBLICAL PROPHECY

"The Most Revealing Book in the Bible" — Alex V. Wilson	258
Are You a Man or a Mouse? — J. B. Phillips	260
Difficult Scriptures and a Hateful Enemy — Alex V. Wilson	261
Reprint: "Premillennialism"—What Is It? — R. H. Boll	265
Should Christians Be Disfellowshipped Over Prophecy? — David R. Reagan	267
Gorbachev's Game Plan — Robert Shank	272
A Tree or a Post? — Carl Kitzmiller	274
MISSIONARY MESSENGER	275
Questions Asked of Us — Carl Kitzmiller	277
Thoughts From Romans — "Clothe Yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ" — Ernest E. Lyon	278
Prime Time Holiness — David L. McKenna	280
Aliens in a Foreign Land — John R. W. Stott	282
Leviticus And Life Today — Leroy Birney	285
NEWS AND NOTES	287

Theme: Biblical Prophecy

"The Most Revealing Book in the Bible"

Alex V. Wilson

That's the title of a commentary someone wrote about the book of Revelation. But of course the entire Bible could be called the most revealing book in the *world*. Where else can we learn about the past all the way back to the Beginning? And where else can we learn about the future all the way up to the End?

Biblical prophecy is important, but also difficult. Because it is IMPORTANT, we should not neglect it, as many Christians do. (And the *main* truths—like Christ's return; resurrection; judgment; eternity—are *plain* truths, not hard to grasp.) Yet, because it is DIFFICULT, we should avoid dogmatism, closed-mindedness and intolerance of those who disagree with us. We should also avoid sensationalism, and that leads to my next point.

Date-setting and Fantastic Theories

It seems to me we need now as never before to heed Jesus' warning in His great prophetic discourse, "Watch out that no one deceives you" (Matt. 24:4). Also His repeated admonition, "Keep watch, for you don't know the day or hour when your Lord will come" (24:42, 44; 25:13).

Disregarding Christ's command, the cults have been notorious date-setters. The late Herbert W. Armstrong of *The Plain Truth* magazine wrote his book, 1975 *in Prophecy*, which of course turned out to be a false alarm. (Many of his other teachings were false too, and are still being spread by *The Plain Truth*.) The Jehovah's Witnesses time after time have pinpointed the year of the end, predicting that Armageddon, Christ's return and the resurrection would occur in 1914—oops, I mean, 1915—nope, make that 1918—er, now we've got it: 1925—finally, 1975...! When will they ever learn?

But the cults aren't the only ones. A century and a half ago the Adventist movement began and most of its members at that time were orthodox Bible-believing folks. William Miller got that ball rolling by figuring out from the book of Daniel that 1843 was the arrival time for the returning Christ. When that proved to be an error, he discovered a miscalculation and set the date for 1844. At least he later admitted being wrong, and apologized—which hasn't happened very often. But many thousands of sincere people had been misled.

Today we see the same story being rerun. By date-setting and extreme theorizing, various preachers are giving a bad name to anyone who takes prophecy seriously. I hate to name names, but how else can we warn the unwary? So here goes, reluctantly:

Edgar Whisenant says the rapture (Christ's coming) will be on September 11, 12 or 13 of this year... before you get this *Word and*

Work! But his forecasts are based on very elaborate calculations and on exact dates where exact dates are not known. For instance, he claims Jesus' birthday was Sept. 29, 4 B.C. and His baptism on Aug. 31, 26 A.D. But nobody knows for sure that those dates are accurate. Whisenant even says, "*The Chronological Bible* gives Adam's creation by God as Friday, 3975 and states that Adam was created at approximately 30 years of age. So 3975 B.C. less 30 years equals 4005 B.C. as the year that Adam would have been born, had Adam been born of a woman"—and then he builds his prophetic calculations on that timing. Horsefeathers! He quotes J. R. Church as stating that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel and Jesus were all born on the Jewish feast of Rosh-Hashana. But how does he know? By the way, I believe Church is the writer who figured out that Psalm 1 is a prophecy of what would occur in Israel in 1901, Psalm 2 tells about Israel in 1902, Psalm 3 = 1903, etc. More horsefeathers!

Whisenant also quotes Charles R. Taylor with approval. Taylor feels the U. S. is clearly identified and its future revealed in *Isaiah 18*, the entire chapter. Can you find it there? According to another paper I read, Taylor has predicted these dates for the rapture: Sept. 6, 1975; Sept. 11, 1980; and Sept. 29, 1981. When will he ever learn? Dear friends, beware. The Bible warns us against prophets whose predictions don't come to pass (*Deut. 18:22*).

Why so Many Differing Beliefs about Prophecy?

There are several answers to that question. 1st, since such a large proportion of the Bible is prophetic in nature, a vast amount of study is required to become familiar with it, much less to grasp it in depth. Depending on one's definition of prophecy, estimates vary from 1/6 to 1/3 of the Bible. Whatever the proportion, there is lots of material to master. 2nd, the field has many subtopics: Christ's return; Antichrist; the great tribulation; the Day of the Lord; the relationship between Israel and the Church; resurrection; judgment; the kingdom of God; the millennium; eternal destiny of the lost and of the saved; "signs of the times"; etc. etc. Whew!

3rd, much symbolism and figurative language is used, especially in the apocalyptic-style writings of Daniel, Zechariah, and Revelation. 4th, various schools of thought compete with one another in trying to explain those symbols: the preterists, historicists, idealists, futurists, etc. This can all be bewildering, especially to beginners.

5th, even *within* each of the four major systems of interpreting prophecy—historic premillennialism, dispensational premillennialism, postmillennialism, and amillennialism—there are wide variations. Let me illustrate this point from some recent research I did on beliefs within the "Restoration Movement" during its history. Alexander Campbell was a post-mill, yet strongly believed that the Jews would be restored to their land and also converted to Jesus as Messiah ("and so all Israel shall be saved," Rom. 11:26). Barton Stone was pre-mill, but agreed with Campbell on Israel's national restoration and conversion. (Note three beliefs here: regarding the 1,000 years, and Israel's restored statehood, and their conversion.) Others who later agreed with Stone on all three beliefs were James T. Barclay, Daniel

Sommer, and R. H. Boll. T.W. Brents was pre-mill too, but *disbelieved* in *both* Israel's national restoration and conversion; James Harding's view resembled Brents. Moses Lard differed from all the above, in that he was pre-mill, and *did* believe in Israel's conversion to Jesus but *not* its restoration to the land! Of the seven pre-mills just mentioned, only Boll (and possibly Barclay) believed in the rapture of the church *before* the great tribulation. The rest believed it would occur at the *end* of that time of persecution by Antichrist. Some other variations of beliefs could be mentioned as well.

If, because of these conflicting views, anyone decides to ignore prophecy altogether, he will be the loser for it. True, we should not over-emphasize it, as some do. Nor should we sensationalize it, as some do. But the Biblically undeniable fact that our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will come again (and probably soon) should stir up our hope, comfort, holiness, courage, and evangelistic zeal.

Thus in this month's magazine we provide you with food for thought on this theme. We start with elementary articles and lead on to those which are more advanced and open to debate. Prove all things by God's Word; reject whatever seems to be false, but hold firmly to all that is true. As for those matters where you are unsure, put them in your department of "Maybe so, maybe not"—and keep on studying and praying for enlightenment.

* * * * *

Are You a Man or a Mouse?

J. B. Phillips

Every year in the harvest fields of England there are thousands of little tragedies. The victims are those charming little creatures the harvest mice.

Earlier in the year the growing corn seems to them to be the ideal place in which to settle and bring up a family. Food, shelter, and building material are there in plenty, and everything seems perfectly adapted for their needs. The forest of innumerable cornstalks is their whole world, and in it they court and play, mate and bring up their families. Their happiness seems to be complete.

Until the harvest. For when the day comes for the owner of the field to reap his harvest, tragedy inevitably begins for the harvest mouse. The whole world of waving corn which seems so snug and secure, so specially designed for his comfort and nourishment, comes crashing about his ears. The field which he thought was his world never really belonged to him at all, and the fact that the growing corn was not meant for his food and shelter has, alas, not entered his tiny head.

The life of the harvest mouse is not a bad picture of the way in which some people live in this world. They too work and play, court and get married and bring up children, in the happy belief that it is their world, and that to believe in an eventual "harvest" is old-fashioned and silly. Yet Jesus Christ, who claimed to be the Son of

God, said quite plainly that this world is like a field that belongs to God and that it is moving inevitably toward a harvest. You can read his words about it in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 13, verses 24-43. For this little world is not, as some imagine, a permanent thing at all. When God decides that his great experiment has gone on long enough, he will reap the harvest. To quote Christ's words: "The harvest is the end of the world."

The field mouse is deceived because for months he is left to his own devices. He never sees the owner of the field and naturally knows nothing of the coming harvest. Many people allow themselves to be deceived because God, the Owner of the world, does not put in an appearance, and for the purposes of the experiment we call life he does not interfere with man's power to choose. Many of them imagine that the "field" belongs to man and that there is no such thing as an eventual "harvest."

But if Christ really was, as he claimed to be, God, then his statement about this world's being an experimental field with an inevitable harvest should surely be most seriously considered. No one could blame the little harvest mouse for not realizing the true purpose of the cornfield or the certainty of the eventual reaping. But what are we—mice or men?

—From *Is God at Home?*

* * * * *

Difficult Scriptures and a Hateful Enemy

Alex V. Wilson

The Christian professor's statement was painfully provoking. Over the years he had contact with a number of churches, so he spoke from experience. The statement I heard him make was this: "In all my life I have not seen more than one or two churches which give their young people the desire and ability to study God's Word for themselves, and live by it, when they reach adulthood."

Is his accusation true? Probably so. As individuals and as congregations we often tend to just skim the surface of God's truth, or dip into it here a little and there a little. We are tempted to study only the New Testament plus a few favorite Psalms. Many believers cannot nourish themselves from the Bible, and if their preacher does not feed them well, their spiritual malnutrition nearly becomes starvation.

How sad is our tendency to avoid many passages in God's Word because they are difficult to understand. I know of a church where the adult Sunday School class studied the book of Revelation when the missionary was there to teach it, but on those Sundays when he was away the other teachers, capable men, skipped to some other passages. No doubt they felt Revelation was too obscure. Yet it is probable that many members of the seven churches to which it was first sent were slaves! They certainly were not missionaries, yet the Lord expected them to receive a blessing merely from hearing

the book read aloud in the church-meetings (1:3). By our neglect of many portions of the Bible we rob ourselves of numerous treasures which our Father wants us to enjoy.

Maybe part of our problem is the idea that if we don't understand *everything* in a passage, then we cannot understand and apply *anything* in it. Maybe our approach is too much an "all or nothing" attitude. Let us look at a very difficult chapter, and see how we can learn many lessons from it even if we remain uncertain about the meaning of more than half of the objects and events described in it.

DIFFICULT SYMBOLISM

The twelfth chapter of Revelation is the passage, and it would help you (though it is not essential) to read through the entire chapter right now. What wild symbolism—an expectant woman clothed with the sun, and a child, a dragon and warring angels. What in the world can it all mean?

Who is this woman arrayed with the sun? Most commentators say she is Israel, based on Gen. 37:5, 9 and Rom. 9:5. Others believe she is the Church; others, God's redeemed people of both Old Testament and New Testament times. Catholics think she is Mary. What is your choice? And what about her child, who is he? Most answer that he is Christ (Ps. 2:8, 9), but some say it is the Church, or Christ and the Church together (Rev. 2:26,27), and a few interpret it as the generation of Israelis who will be alive at Christ's return (Isa. 66:7-15; Rom. 11:26, 27).

Maybe you have no commentary, and you have no idea at all who the woman and child symbolize. Or maybe you have several commentaries, and still have no idea who they symbolize! Never mind—don't quit your study in disgust. Of course it is better if you can discover their correct identities. But even if you cannot do so, don't cheat yourself of blessings that still await you in this chapter.

One thing is absolutely clear. Verse 9 tells us that the dragon stands for Satan. So leaving aside the obscurities for the present, concentrate on what is plain. Bible-study has been compared to eating fish. When you find a bone, you need not throw away the whole fish. Lay aside the bone, and eat the meat. (And the exciting thing about the Scriptures is that as time goes on, further study turns some of the bones into good meat.) So a healthy approach to Rev. 12 would be, "I know that the dragon stands for the Devil. So let's see what this chapter teaches about him."

SATAN'S MALICE AND MIGHT

Satan is pictured as a ferocious monster—a great red dragon with seven heads and crowns and ten horns (v. 2, 4). He is so huge that his tail knocks down one-third of the stars of heaven. He is so wild and vicious that he waits in front of the pregnant woman, eager to pounce upon and devour her child. What a fierce monster! What power! What intelligence—not just one brain, but seven! How impossible to defeat—chop off one or two of his heads and five or six still remain to grab you, chew you up and swallow you down! This, then, is the symbol of our spiritual enemy,

the Devil. And therefore we had better be careful. When a dragon is after you, it is no time to relax!

Next we notice in verse 7 that "the dragon *and his angels* waged war." This reminds us that it is not Satan alone who opposes us. He has many allies. Perhaps we remember that Paul in Eph. 6:10ff speaks of various kinds and ranks of Satan-led angels: principalities, powers, spiritual hosts, etc. No doubt demons also are part of his army. We must not underestimate our enemy. Our spiritual warfare is a cosmic conflict, involving mysterious and mighty angelic creatures as well as human beings.

Then in verse 9 we read a list of the Devil's awful names: "The great dragon." "The serpent of old," a reminder of the temptation in the Garden of Eden. "The Devil"; perhaps you have heard that this literally means "slanderer." "Satan," which literally is "adversary." "The accuser of our brethren, who accuses them before God day and night." He hates us so much that he delights in constantly running us down. When we run down one another, we are doing the Devil's business. Then the most awful expression of all, in fact one of the saddest statements in human literature: "The deceiver of the whole world." That phrase alone is worth pondering for five or ten minutes, or longer...

So if we learned nothing else from Rev. 12, the facts mentioned above would be a worthwhile reward for our study. But don't stop now, there is more to come. In fact, to stop now would leave an erroneous impression, for one of the main lessons this chapter teaches is Satan's failure and defeat (or, to put it the other way around, God's preservation of His people in spite of Satan's attacks). As you study this scripture carefully, if you don't watch out you might even begin to feel sorry for the Devil before you get through!

SATAN'S FAILURES AND FRUSTRATIONS

Frustration No. 1. The dragon waits for the woman to give birth so he can eat her child. But he is foiled, for the child is caught up to God's throne (4, 5).

Frustration No. 2. The woman herself also escapes his clutches, by fleeing into the wilderness where God sustains her (6).

Frustration No. 3. Verses 7-8, which list the terrifying names and titles of Satan which we mentioned above, actually stress his defeat rather than his victories. "The dragon and his angels fought, but they were defeated and... thrown out" of heaven, "hurled down" to earth. Because of this he is in a furious rage, knowing he has only a little time left (12). His days are numbered, and he knows it.

Frustration No. 4. After being thrown down to earth, he pursues the woman. But she grows wings and flies away to the desert, out of his reach (13, 14).

Frustration No. 5. The Dragon devises a secret weapon. He "vomited water from his mouth, like a river, after the woman, to sweep her away in the current." But again, all his efforts are in vain. The earth 'opened its mouth and swallowed the river thrown up by the dragon's jaws' (15, 16, Jerusalem Bible).

Thus we see from this highly dramatic chapter that over and over Satan's attacks fall short of his goal. He can neither defeat God's purposes nor destroy God's people. Though he is powerful—and we dare not forget that fact—yet our God is *all*-powerful, and in His care we are secure.

HOW TO DEFEAT THE DEVIL

So far we have skipped over the best verse in the chapter. Ponder these thrilling words: "Our brothers won the victory over him (Satan) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the truth which they proclaimed; and they were willing to give up their lives and die" (v. 11, TEV). Here we learn how to conquer the Evil One. Three of his favorite weapons are described in this chapter, and this verse shows how to overcome all three of them.

One weapon he wields is seen in the terms "accuser" and "devil" (slanderer). When we sin, he constantly *accuses* us. He does it in heaven, and he also does it in our own consciences, though that fact is not mentioned here by John. He slanders us before God: "Look, see your child down there! He has sinned again. What a miserable failure he is. Why don't You give him up? If you are just, why don't You punish him? I demand justice! Even when he does right, he does it for wrong motives." (Remember Job 1 and 2?) But we have a divine defense attorney in heaven, Jesus Christ the righteous. "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins," and thus God can be just even while forgiving us (1 John 2:1, 2). "The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Because of this, the Devil's accusations are brought to nought, found to be invalid, and thrown out of court. We overcome him "by the blood of the Lamb." Let this be our confidence when he attacks our conscience and says, "See—you're no good! You've failed again. You're hopeless; you may as well quit." Answer him back. "Yes, I have sinned, but I'm sorry and I won't give up! I conquer you because of Jesus' death! My confidence is in Him, not in myself. He triumphed over you at the cross, and I share in His triumph. Because He died for me, my guilt is removed and your accusations fall to the ground."

Another devilish weapon is *deception*, as seen in the terms "Serpent" and "deceiver." How can we avoid being fooled and misled by this expert trickster? Our defense here is God's truth. "They overcome him...by the word of their testimony" (NIV) or "through the Word to which they bore witness" (J. B. Phillips). Two ideas are present here, our "witness" and God's "word." We should boldly bear testimony to God's message; Satan is not defeated by Christians who are ashamed and mute. But the emphasis in this verse is probably on God's Word itself—its contents or teachings. By arming ourselves with the truths revealed in Scripture, we can avoid being deceived by Satan's lies and half-truths, his false philosophies and doctrinal errors.

His third weapon is *persecution* as seen in the terms "Dragon" and "Satan" (adversary). He arouses intense opposition against us and attempts to wipe us out altogether. This is seen in the fol-

lowing chapter of Revelation, which portrays the final Antichrist and worldwide persecution against God's people. Martyrs are mentioned repeatedly in Revelation. How can we conquer Satan if he kills us? By being willing to give up our lives and die, rather than deny our Lord. If we remain faithful though the enemy kill us, he simply sends our spirit to heaven (see Acts 7:59, 60). That's no victory for him, and no loss for us! Devil-inspired men may kill us physically, but not a hair of our head will perish, spiritually and eternally (Luke 21:16-18).

Do you get the picture? It's beautiful. We overcome Satan's *accusations* by the *blood of the Lamb*. We overcome his *deceitfulness* by *God's Word* to which we testify. We overcome his *Persecutions* by being *willing to die* for our Savior. Praise God, our fierce foe can be defeated, through Christ and the resources He provides us.

CONCLUSION

This dark, mysterious chapter has taught us a lot, hasn't it? It would be a shame to miss these lessons just because many points in the passage still perplex us. So let's believe Paul when he says that "*all scripture is inspired...and profitable*," even the puzzling parts.

And your next time through the Bible, you will probably understand more about the woman, her child, the "rest of her offspring" (v. 17), the war in heaven (v. 7), and the 1,260 days (vs. 6, 14). But if we *ignore* the hard passages, then of course we can *never* hope to understand them.

* * * * *

REPRINT:

"Premillennialism"—What Is It?

R. H. Boll - 1942

"Premillennialism" is not an "ism" in the sense of being a defined and particular creed or system. It is a general term of wide use and application. Like the term "Protestantism," it includes a great variety of beliefs. As, for example, one who believes that baptism is immersion may be called an "immersionist," and that belief in general may be referred to as "immersionism," so every one who believes that Christ will return before that period which is called the "Millennium" is a "premillennialist." This doctrine in general is called "premillennialism."

And just as a simple Christian, though he might be reckoned as a Protestant, could not be held responsible for all the creeds and shades of doctrine comprised under the head of Protestantism; and just as one who practices immersion would not sponsor all the views and doctrines of all the different kinds of immersionists: so one who believes that Christ will return before the millennium could not be held chargeable with all the views and teachings held by premillennialists in general.

If "Premillennialism" be considered as a sectarian belief—I would

like to have it understood that no simple Christian would connect himself to any creed or theory as such. A person who is simply a Christian (and nothing more nor less) connects himself to nothing but the word of God. He may be convinced from the teaching of the word that Christ returns before the millennium, but he is not therefore to be classed as an adherent of any kind of "ism." The Lord Jesus held the doctrine of resurrection, which was the distinctive tenet of the Pharisees, but He was not therefore a Pharisee.

Nor would a Christian sponsor all that may be summed up under the head of premillennialism, for some premillenialists are far afield from the truths of God's word. Most especially, he would not sponsor the speculations sometimes *charged* upon premillennialism—as, for example: "A carnal reign of Christ;" a demotion and debasement of Christ in His coming to earth to reign; or that the church is an accident; or that "Christ came for the purpose of establishing an earthly kingdom in Jerusalem, but the Jews would not let Him, so He established the church instead and went back to heaven;" or that the kingdom has not been established; or that the Great Tribulation is voided; or that there will be a "second chance." All such caricatures and arbitrary inferences, and any such-like doctrines must be repugnant to an enlightened Christian mind. I for one repudiate them all, and would gladly join with those who oppose them in denouncing and repudiating them.

BASIC PREMILLENNIAL DOCTRINES

The essential points in premillennial teaching are:

1. That the Lord Jesus Christ will return from heaven.
2. That, if there is ever to be a time
 - of the restoration of all things (Acts 3:19-21);
 - when the old curse shall be lifted and thorns and thistles shall cease (Isa. 55:12, 13);
 - when the nations shall learn war no more (Isa. 2:4);
 - when the knowledge of Jehovah shall cover the earth as waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:9);
 - when the groaning of creation shall cease (Rom. 8:18-23);
 - when Satan shall be dethroned, bound and imprisoned (Rev. 20: 1-3);
 - when the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ (Rev. 11:15)

if there is ever to be such a time as that, *then Christ must and will come before that time.*

As all standard church histories, and the encyclopedias, and Gibbon—the infidel historian of the fall of the Roman Empire—testify, so the early church in general, from the days of the apostles for 300 years, believed. Pioneer preachers of the Restoration Movement also freely voiced such belief. See utterances of Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott, Dr. Barclay, H. T. Anderson, Moses E. Lard; of later preachers, Dr. Brents and J. A. Harding.

DAVID LIPSCOMB'S STATEMENT

David Lipscomb also, in his book, "Queries and Answers" (p. 360) wrote:

"Jesus had been to earth and returned to heaven. Heaven must receive him until 'the times of the restoration of all things.' Then 'the times of restoration of all things' must be when Jesus returns again to earth—the restoration of all things to their original relation to God. The relation which the world originally sustained to God was broken when man, the ruler, rebelled against God. That destruction of the world's relation to God was more far-reaching and destructive than we realize. The whole material creation shared in the evil. Briars, thistles, thorns grew in the material world, as in the spiritual. Sickness, death, mortality afflicted the material world. When man rebelled against his Maker, the undercreation rebelled against man. The laws of the natural world were disordered. The germs of vegetation put forth; biting frost or burning heat destroys them. Disorder in the laws of the material world came as a result of man's sin against his Maker. When Jesus comes again, the will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and all things in the world will be restored to harmonious relations with God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe."

And it is edifying to note how brethren of the old days, as seen in the *Millennial Harbinger*, freely voiced their understanding on both sides of this, without even a thought of mutual excommunication.

The position of the simple Christian is simply to take God's word for his guidance and doctrine. The church of the New Testament is non-sectarian and non-denominational. She is not officially Protestant nor Catholic, Calvinistic nor Arminian, postmillennial nor premillennial. She simply stands upon the word of God. As the beloved T. B. Larimore used to say: "We are not right; *the Bible* is right."

* * * * *

Should Christians Be Disfellowshipped Over Prophecy?

by David R. Reagan

No—a thousand times no!

The split over prophetic interpretation that occurred at the beginning of this century among the Churches of Christ is one of the greatest tragedies in the history of the Campbell-Stone Restoration Heritage. The split was needless and sinful, and those who perpetuate it to this day are guilty of dividing asunder the Body of Christ for no valid reason.

Prophecy in Restoration History

For over 100 years brothers and sisters within the Campbell-Stone Heritage worshipped side by side and loved each other while holding every prophetic viewpoint known to man. The two founders of the movement, Alexander Campbell and Barton W. Stone, held different viewpoints. Campbell was a Post-Millennialist; Stone, a Pre-Millen-

nialist. Neither thought such a doctrinal difference should serve as a basis for determining fellowship. In their minds, it clearly fell into the area of opinion, where there should be liberty of thought.

During the second and third generations of the movement, the diversity of prophetic views continued. Robert Milligan ably continued to advocate the Post-Millennial view, whereas Moses Lard, James Harding, and Daniel Sommer all advocated the Historic Pre-Millennial view. The split did not occur until after the turn of the century when World War I delivered a death blow to the Post-Millennial view which was based on a utopian assumption about the inevitable progress of Mankind.

As those who had formerly held to Post-Millennialism scrambled about for a new viewpoint, a powerful spokesman for the Dispensational Pre-Millennial^{*} view emerged on the Church of Christ scene. His name was R.H. Boll, and he held a position of great influence as the front page editor of the *Gospel Advocate*. Boll was driven from the *Gospel Advocate* and ultimately from the fellowship of the main-line Churches of Christ by intolerant brethren who rallied around the A-Millennial viewpoint.

Sustaining a Contradiction

It is paradoxical that the majority of the Church of Christ leaders decided to adopt the A-Millennial view. For that view is based upon a spiritualization of prophetic scripture. So it is incompatible with the conservative view of scripture which is generally held by the Churches of Christ. Their leaders argue that all of scripture is to be interpreted literally *except prophecy!* Prophecy, they argue, must be interpreted symbolically or figuratively by spiritualizing its meaning. What makes this position so incredible is that all the Biblical prophecies concerning the first coming of Christ were fulfilled literally, in the sense that *their plain-sense meaning* was fulfilled. Thus, Jesus was born of a virgin, just as Isaiah had prophesied (Isaiah 7:14). And Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and was hailed as King, just as Zechariah had prophesied (Zech. 9:9 & 10).

If our present day A-Millennial spiritualizers had lived 200 years before Christ, they would have interpreted these passages to mean that the Messiah would be born spiritually pure (rather than literally born

*The Dispensational Pre-Millennial view differs from the Historic Pre-Millennial position in its concept of the Rapture. The Historic Pre-Millennial view, called thus because it can be traced back to the earliest Church Fathers in the First Century, places the Rapture at the end of the Tribulation. According to this view, Jesus appears, the church saints living and dead are raptured to meet Him in the sky, and they immediately return to earth to reign with Him. The Dispensational Pre-Millennial viewpoint, developed in England by the Plymouth Brethren in the 1830's, contends that the Rapture will be a separate event from the return of Christ to this earth. Thus, Christ will appear before the Tribulation for His church and will return to the earth with His church at the end of the Tribulation. The Dispensational view spread rapidly across Europe and came to vogue in this country during the latter part of the 19th Century, due mainly to its adoption and proclamation by Dwight Moody and its popularization by C. I. Scofield in his Study Bible (published in 1909). The viewpoint was probably unknown to most Church of Christ folk when it was introduced by R. H. Boll in the late 1910's. Today, it is the predominant viewpoint among Pre-Millennialists.

of a virgin) and that His perfect spiritual humility (symbolized by His riding on a donkey) would cause men to hail Him as king of their hearts. The idea that He would literally ride into Jerusalem on a donkey and literally be hailed as King would have been scoffed at as heartily as the A-Mill spiritualizers now scoff at Zechariah 14 where the prophet says Jesus will return to the Mount of Olives and that the mount will be split by an earthquake when His foot touches it.

The Point and the Problem

But my main point is this: As incredibly inconsistent as the A-Millennial view may be, I still consider those who hold that view to be my brothers and sisters in Christ, and I intend to embrace them as such and love them even though many of them would consider me to be a person "fallen from grace" because of my Pre-Millennial viewpoint.

The fundamental problem here has nothing whatsoever to do with prophecy—just as the split over prophecy really had little to do with prophecy. *The fundamental problem is the concept of salvation.* Those who draw lines of fellowship over matters like prophetic interpretation are people who believe in salvation by perfected knowledge; that is, they believe that salvation is dependent upon being right about every doctrine.

I can still vividly recall a classic expression of this attitude several years ago at a prophecy conference sponsored by the church where I was serving as pulpit minister. We tried to arrange to have a speaker representing each of the major prophetic viewpoints. The person who presented the A-Mill view, a mainline Church of Christ preacher, was asked after his presentation whether or not a Pre-Millennialist could be saved. His response was, "I couldn't be saved if I were a Pre-Millennialist, because I know it's wrong." I wanted to jump up and stop the discussion on prophecy and spend the rest of the day discussing the real issue of salvation.

Are we saved by being right about prophecy? Can I really lose my salvation if I am wrong about my belief that Jesus is coming back to reign upon the earth? If I can be lost by being wrong about prophecy, then I can be lost by being wrong about anything—instrumental music, the frequency of communion, or even the number of communion cups. That means I have no hope of salvation whatsoever, because it is impossible for me to be right about everything.

The Certainty of Salvation

But the Apostle John says:

"We know that we have passed out of death into life." (1 John 3:14)

"You know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:13).

"We know that we are of God." (1 John 5:19)

Over and over John says we can know that we are saved. But how can we ever have such assurance if our salvation depends upon our being right about everything? The answer is that we can't. And that is precisely why the mainline Churches of Christ are filled with souls who seem sure of everything except the most important thing of all—their salvation!

I can know with absolute certainty that I am saved, because Paul said I am saved by the “grace of God, as a gift.” (Romans 3:24) I can also be certain about my salvation, because I know my Savior, and I know He is trustworthy and that He meant it when He said: “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.” (John 11:25)

Being Right v. Knowing the Truth

This means that I can be wrong about a lot of things, but if I am right about one thing—Jesus Christ—then I can claim the promise of eternal salvation. It means that *although all truth is important, it is not all equally important*. And thus, whatever the truth may be about instrumental music or communion or prophecy, *it is nothing* compared to *The Truth* that Jesus is Lord. (Romans 10:9 & I Cor. 12:3) As Jesus Himself put it: “I am the way, *the truth*, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6)

Does this mean that what you believe about prophecy is irrelevant? Not at all! It just means that it has nothing to do with your justification before God—with your judicial standing before God. We are justified by our faith in Christ as Lord and Savior (Romans 3:21-26).

Justification v. Sanctification

Much of the problem here is due to the fact that the mainline Churches of Christ have never distinguished between justification, sanctification, and glorification. They have failed to realize that salvation is a process that begins with our justification through faith in Christ, continues with our sanctification—a life long process of dying to self and living more and more for Christ—and consummates in our glorification when we stand face to face with Christ and are fully conformed to His image (Romans 8:29).

Justification comes through faith in Christ. It results in my adoption into the family of God. When I am justified, I put on the righteousness of Christ, and I stand guiltless before the judgment bar of God, washed clean in the blood of the Lamb (1 Cor. 1:30). I receive the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit as the guarantee of my eternal inheritance (Eph. 1:13 & 14), and I begin my walk with the Lord.

The Meaning of Sanctification

It is true that I am sanctified when I am justified, because I am washed clean of my sins and am set apart from the world as God’s sacred possession (1 Cor. 6:11 & Heb. 10:10). But the process of sanctification continues as I begin my walk with the Lord. Through the process of sanctification, God shapes me slowly but surely into the image of Christ as I learn more and more about faith and hope and love through Bible study, prayer, worship, and fellowship. This does not mean that sanctification is something I earn, anymore than I earn my justification. My sanctification is still by grace. It is still a gift of God through the power of His indwelling Holy Spirit.

But whereas I am justified by responding to the truth of the *Gospel* (the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus—1 Cor. 15:1-4), I am sanctified by responding to the truths of Christian *Doctrine*. This means that the quality of my walk with the Lord will be substantially

affected by what I believe about such things as the Holy Spirit, the church, discipleship, stewardship, miracles, prayer, and prophecy.

A Personal Example

To use a personal example, before I came to a Pre-Millennial understanding of prophecy, I had little enthusiasm for the return of Christ. I certainly was not watchful for His return, and I felt that the only impact of His return on world history would be to bring it to an end.

Now I have a whole new perspective that has drawn me closer to the Lord and has strengthened my faith, deepened my love, and enhanced my hope. I now look to the return of Christ with fervent expectancy as my "blessed hope." (Titus 2:13) I rejoice that such watchfulness is a motivation for holy living (Romans 13:11-14). I thrill to the thought of the triumph of Jesus over Satan and the establishment of His reign of perfect peace and righteousness here on earth. I rejoice that He will be fully vindicated *in history*, just as He was humiliated in history. I praise God for the redemption that Jesus will bring to all the creation (Romans 8:18-23). And I look forward for the first time to an eternity in the presence of God upon a new earth that has been purged of its corruption and renovated to its previous glory (2 Peter 3:1-13 & Rev. 21:1-4).

I have also been brought to the awe-inspiring realization that one of the greatest miracles of history is occurring before my very eyes—the regathering of the Jews to Israel. Old Testament passages regarding the Jews, passages which never had any meaning at all to me, have suddenly come alive (Isa. 11:1-11, Jer. 23:5-8, & Amos 9:14 & 15). And for the first time, I understand the meaning of Paul's writings in Romans 9-11 where he talks of God's grace for the Jew.

I have a grasp of God's control of history that I never had before, and that has given me a sense of comfort and peace that serves as a sturdy anchor in such perilous times as these. I now know with a certainty I never had before that God's Word is sure, that His promises are certain, that He is alive and well, that He still cares intensely about His creation, and that He still intervenes in marvelous and miraculous ways to direct and comfort His people while He orchestrates the evil deeds of man to a climax that will bring eternal honor and glory to His holy name.

A Call to Love

As you can see, what we believe about prophecy does make a difference in the quality of our Christian lives. But it should make no difference at all as to our attitude toward each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. I have Christian brothers and sisters who are Pre-Mills and A-Mills and Post-Mills, and I have some relatives in Christ who don't know the difference in a millennium and a centipede. I will spend eternity with some who have never even read the Book of Revelation (the Apostle Paul being one of them!).

We need to stop playing God by drawing lines of fellowship which we have no right to draw over matters of opinion, and we need to start loving each other because we share a belief in the fundamental fact of history—that Jesus is Lord!

Gorbachev's Game Plan

Robert Shank

The world today is basking in the sunshine of "a new era in superpower relations" that promises peace and safety for weary nations long fearful of the prospect of a global nuclear holocaust. The recent treaty banning intermediate and short-range nuclear missiles, and talk of further reduction of nuclear weapons—perhaps eventual elimination of nuclear weapons—is hailed as a signpost on the road to a stable world peace.

Exciting things are happening. The new policy of *perestroika*, promising new directions for the Soviet agenda—more concern for domestic matters and less for military, greater freedom for citizens, adoption of some elements of capitalism, and even a smiling tolerance of religion—such things have awakened new hope for peace on earth, good will toward men. The new policy of *glasnost* promises less secrecy, more candor—a new openness in Soviet society, politics, and relations with other nations. Russia has begun withdrawing from Afghanistan.

On the cover of *Newsweek* for May is a picture of Mikhail Gorbachev (very congenial) and the title of a series of articles: "His Game Plan: A Talk With Gorbachev." An article quotes Gorbachev's statements that today there are "no circumstances under which intervention by force in another country would be acceptable," and that "interference is unacceptable from any country...the world has changed greatly, and now even very small nations will not tolerate interference." That is nice to hear.

In the survey of Gorbachev's game plan, no mention is made of the game plan laid down by Lenin in 1922: a long, patient process of expansion through infiltration, subversion, and acquisition of one country after another, accompanied by demoralization of remaining capitalist nations...and at last, when the Soviets have achieved an overwhelming preponderance of military strength and the capitalist nations are confused and indecisive, Russia will electrify the world with overtures of peace and friendship. When the nations are expecting peace and their guard is down, with a sudden strike the Soviets will take control of the world. Has Lenin's game plan been abandoned? Quite to the contrary, it is still in place and right on target.

Against the stage-show background of present peace overtures, a cartoon on the editorial page of the Springfield (Mo.) *News-Leader*, May 23 shows profound perception. The Russian bear, wearing a military officer's cap and hammer-and-sickle armband, is sitting at a restaurant table peering at the "Mideast Menu." Smiling and licking his chops, he says, "Bloodied Iran, Mashed Palestine, Plucked Arab States...hmmm...If only I wasn't dieting...at the moment."

The Russian bear is dieting, at the moment. But not for long. Sometime in the near future, when conditions seem most opportune, the hungry Bear will rush to the Middle East to gobble up "many

countries and sweep through them like a flood," including "the Beautiful Land"—God's "my land" Israel—and "many countries will fall," including Egypt (see Dan. 11:40-45).

Informed Bible believers, familiar with Bible prophecy's end-time scenario, now so swiftly becoming more sharply defined by the unfolding of events, know that already on the horizon looms the figure of Gog of Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39. Of this sinister character of the end time, "Gog, of the land of Magog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal," God says:

"In the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual (long-time) waste.... You will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you... and you will come against my people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It will come about in the last days that I will bring you against my land, in order that the nations may know me when I show myself holy through you before their eyes." There in the land of Israel, God will make himself and his power known before the nations through the cataclysmic destruction of Gog and his armies: "On the mountains of Israel you will fall, you and all your troops and the nations with you." All that Gog and his armies will reap from their last-days invasion of God's "my land" will be a vast burial ground where their bodies will fertilize the soil of Israel: "I will give Gog a burial place in Israel, in the valley of those who travel east toward the (Dead) Sea. ... Gog and all his hordes will be buried there, so it will be called the Valley of Hamon Gog (Hordes of Gog)." (From Ezek. 38 and 39 NASB, NIV)

Let no one assume that Ezekiel's mention of horses, swords, bows and arrows and shields is evidence that the prophecy concerns something that could only have happened long ago. Ezekiel's description is in the style of the rhetorical mode of the prophets, who portrayed things future in terms of things common to their own day and times. The time frame of the prophecy is specific: "the latter years... in the last days," at a time when, after long exile among the nations, many people of Israel "have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel" and are again a nation in the Land. Who does not know that this is so today?

Another indication that the time frame is our own day, this present late hour in "the last days," is that among Gog's confederates in his invasion of the Middle East and Israel will be not only nations from the North, but also "Persia (Iran), Ethiopia, and Put (Libya)" (38:5). Today, Libya and Ethiopia already are in Russia's pocket, and Iran will be too when the time comes for Russia to invade Israel. Ezekiel's prophecy concerns the present late hour of "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24).

The destruction of Gog and his armies "on the mountains of Israel" will be accompanied by fiery judgment and destruction visited on Gog's land of "Magog" and "on those who live in safety in the coastlands"—regions beyond the Middle East and Israel and "safe,"

as they will hope (Ezek. 39:6). But their hope will be vain, for the destruction of Gog and his hordes and his land will be accompanied by a cataclysmic worldwide judgment of all nations on earth, disclosed in many prophetic passages. Among pertinent passages see Isa. 24:1-6; 34:1-8; 63:1-6; 66:15, 16; Jer. 25:27-33 (the "shepherds" of vv. 34-34 are the leaders and the powerful wealthy of the nations who have oppressed the helpless masses, whose time for slaughter will occur at the coming of the Lord, see Jas. 5:1-9).

Gog's last-days invasion of Israel, "gathered back from many nations to the mountains of Israel," will indeed occur, and soon. Without a friend among the nations, little Israel will be helpless to defend herself when the nations come against Jerusalem:

"The city will be captured, the houses ransacked and the women raped, and half of the city will go into captivity, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city. Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south. You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel... Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him [cf. Joel 3:11b-17; Rev. 19:11-16].... The Lord will be king over the whole earth. In that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name." (Zech. 14:2-5, 9).

Jesus Messiah will come as Deliverer and Savior of Israel (see Jer. 23:5-8, Rom. 11:26-29, Isa. 59:20, Acts 3:19-21, Mt. 23:39). He will come in righteous judgment for the nations (Ps. 110:5, 6), to rule over all nations on earth (Ps. 2:6-9, Rev. 19:11-15; 2:25-29). That Day will come, and all signs of the times say soon.

But *first* will occur another invasion prior to Gog's, another war of survival for Israel, the outcome of which will shock the world. This is the subject of an article to follow.

[Questions may be sent the author at 624 Kings Ave., Mt. Vernon, MO 65712.]

A TREE OR A POST?

There is an interesting story of the preacher who had just arrived in town to take up his work with a church. He was approached by a very loquacious woman who asked, "Are you a 'pre-' or a 'post-?'" She had reference to his views on the millennium. He later related the experience at the breakfast table and amused his wife by telling her how he had evaded a direct answer. In a few minutes his little girl asked innocently, "Well, what are you, Daddy, a tree or a post?"

The woman's question may have been ill-timed or asked for the wrong reasons, but it is important what our attitude is toward the word of God. Your minister is ready to confess quite openly that he believes in the premillennial coming of Christ.

In her innocence the preacher's little girl also asked what was an important question—Are you a tree or a post? You see, a tree is alive and growing and a post is dead.

Some think Christians are indeed like trees. They have deep roots in the things of God, they give evidence of life, bearing fruit and seed, making shelter, and in general shedding a good influence on those about them. Some are like the tree "planted by the rivers of water," of Psa. 1.

But there are also the posts, standing where they have for many a year, no new thoughts, no change except for gradual rotting away at the base. Spiritual reality is pretty much a thing of the past with them.

Say, professing Christian, what are you—a tree or a post?

—Carl Kitzmiller, in *Locust St. Laborer*

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Karen Ashley

P.O. Box 139, Honiara, Solomon Islands

July 1988

On May 6th James discovered a rat in our house and decided to go after it with a machete. The rat was not very cooperative and twice managed to escape death by running right between my legs. I reacted in typical female fashion by jumping up onto the bed, but at that point I didn't realize how much my fright had affected me. Five minutes later, however, our thoughts of going after the rat were forgotten as we found ourselves dealing with an apparent miscarriage. We sent for the clinic nurse, but by the time she arrived an hour later things had settled back down. After a few days of complete bed rest and a couple of weeks of taking it easy, I was ready to get back to my normal activities when I again threatened to miscarry. This time we decided I should see a doctor, so I flew back in to Honiara. I spent five days in the hospital wondering if the baby was going to make it; finally the doctor heard a fetal heartbeat and released me to stay with friends here in town, as James and the boys were not due to come for another two weeks. It was hard to be separated from them, but not having family responsibilities enabled me to stay off my feet, and bit by bit the negative symptoms disappeared.

I know it was your prayers that kept us going during this difficult time. Though you may not have known about our troubles, the Lord responds to general prayers for our well-being with specific answers. We realize even more how much we depend upon His care.

One of the reasons James and the boys had to stay behind in Sa'a was to hold a meeting of the Sa'a Translation Committee. This was the committee's first meeting and much of the time was spent in organizational matters—electing officers, defining responsibilities, etc. James was very pleased with the results and was especially glad to see the men realize that the success of this translation project depends on *their* efforts and leadership. At the next meeting (August

5th and 6th) they will discuss more technical matters like alphabet problems and spelling.

Expecting a baby in late November means our plans for the next few months are somewhat dictated by medical needs. Though the hospital here in Honiara has surgical capabilities, the doctors strongly recommend that we return home for this delivery (since both Kent and Philip were born by Ceasarian section). We aren't complaining as this means we'll be able to spend Christmas with family, plus have a chance to report first hand to many of you. *We plan to return to the States in mid-October*, and if all goes well with the surgery, we are hoping to make a quick trip back east in January before *returning to the Solomons in February*.

Before we leave we've got lots to do. Our present house is small (only three rooms and a path—not a bath), very open, and inadequate for storage of our stuff while we are gone. We are building a new house, and the pressure is on to get at least the main structure completed by the end of September.

I'm not much good with a hammer, so I'll be concentrating on language work. We want to begin translating the New Testament when we come back from the U.S., and we first need to finish a grammar of the Sa'a language and a small dictionary. I'll be working with our translator David, who has already completed a rough draft of the dictionary. We are thankful for David's continued enthusiasm—I just hope I can keep up with him and the family too!

We're really looking forward to coming home in October. Until then we'd appreciate your prayers for the following:

1. Good health, especially for me and the little one I carry;
2. Trouble free house building;
3. Continued progress in language learning;
4. Focus on the tasks at hand.

George C. Galanis

Athens, Greece

August 26, 1988

Sophia, my wife, is doing fine. She has been serving at Children's Camp for 23 days, as a cook's assistant, and she is very happy there. Her spirit is in excellent shape. However, the Parkinson's Disease works day and night causing her problems in walking and working, but she fights the good fight.

The Lord is blessing our monthly magazine. Recently it gained access into two jails. Quite a few prisoners receive it. One who serves lifetime confinement for killing two people wrote to me his testimony of how he repented and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. I am trying to get to Crete to meet him.

The need is great for a full time evangelist who will be willing to visit precious souls all over the country edifying them, evangelizing, and church planting. We are earnestly praying for the right person.

Joy Garrett 2047 S. Shelby St., Louisville, KY 40217

Aug. 22, 1988

How very much we have enjoyed our travels around the United States visiting the many congregations who have supported the work in Zimbabwe, Africa. Robert and I have been so hospitably received.

Each time we have stayed in Africa six years before taking a furlough. The pressure of the work is so great that it is hard to get

away. You really can't imagine the changes that six years makes in people and places. Some of it is a shock.

Brother Kubvaruno, who is watching over Rockwood Park, Ruwa, says that all is well. Although most of the building work is suspended until we return, the church work is always carried on by the leadership in each congregation and by the three full-time evangelists: Brothers Patrick, Agrippa, and Sheba.

Lord willing we will be returning to Zimbabwe November 29th which is the summer rainy season there.

Continue to pray for the funds we need to purchase the land on which four of our eight Harare church buildings stand. It is leased land being offered to us to purchase.

Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller



Please explain 1 Corinthians 5:5, which speaks of delivering a man to Satan. Is a person who is disfellowshipped actually turned over to Satan?

In *some* sense the disfellowshipped person is delivered to Satan, for this is clearly what the passage says. It would be a mistake to assume such an act is necessarily a complete, full, and final turning of the individual over to Satan, however. One dominant purpose of disfellowship is to bring the offender to repentance and to restoration with the Lord, so the phrase—"to deliver such a one to Satan"—cannot speak of total rejection. In the case of the man at Corinth, he was brought to repentance (2 Corinthians 2:6-11), so his place in the church was restored and Satan had no permanent claim on him.

Since one is either in the world or in the church, it is very appropriate to speak of disfellowship as delivering one to Satan. Satan is the god of the age (2 Corinthians 4:4) and the whole world lies in great measure under his power and control (1 John 5:19). To withdraw fellowship, to close the door of fellowship from the church in the offender's face, is to commit that one back to the world in a measure, hence, to Satan. This is also suggested by Matthew 18:17, where the offender is to be treated as a Gentile and a publican, that is, as partaking of the character of the world.

A seeming contradiction to Matthew 18:17 is found in the instructions of 2 Thessalonians 3:6ff, esp v. 15, where the disfellowshipped person is not to be counted as an enemy but is to be admonished as a brother. The problem is only imagined, however, for the latter just presents another facet of the matter and shows that

delivery unto Satan is partial, not complete. Although temporarily driven out to the world, the disfellowshipped one is still a brother and is to get certain considerations as such. We take it that this does not mean the discipline is to be set aside, but that neither is his rejection to be considered as complete. Matthew 18:17 and 2 Thess. 3:15 should not be regarded as contradictory but as complementary, as giving two faces of the matter.

Delivery unto Satan is not always a human action. Job was in a measure delivered to Satan (Lk. 22:31-34). In fact, even Jesus permitted Himself to be driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (Matt. 4:1; Mk. 1:12-13). Satan's power is ever limited by God, and God knows how to use him as an instrument for strengthening, chastening, or judgment.

To cut oneself off from the fellowship of the church through indifference, rebellion, a love of the world, or such like, is, even in the absence of church discipline, to deliver oneself to Satan in a measure. For whatever reason, delivery to Satan is a fearful thing and deserves much greater concern than commonly seems to be attached to it by many persons.

What is meant by the expression: "For the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus," in 1 Corinthians 5:5?

This question is tied to the one above, but we treat it separately to avoid confusion.

The passage is a disputed one with several views offered. It describes the purpose of the action to be taken against the grievous fornicator at Corinth. I can only give my own understanding of the statement.

Note that it is not the destruction of the body, but of the flesh, a term used to speak of the desire and inclinations of the flesh (cf. Romans 8). So I think this does not speak of some physical infirmity or disease coupled with man's sin. Instead it simply says that the action is intended to make the man realize his sin and repent of it—thus, the destruction of his fleshly ways. Without the destruction of the flesh (i.e., fleshly ways and acts), the ultimate salvation of the spirit cannot occur. Those who live after the flesh are condemned (Romans 8:6, 13). It is this which must be destroyed in all of us. Although salvation is a present possession, it is not a completed possession until "the day of our Lord Jesus."

We are to be saved—"body, soul, and spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:23)—not flesh, soul, and spirit. There is a considerable difference!

Thoughts From Romans

Ernest E. Lyon

"Clothe Yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ"

And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our sal-

vation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature. (Romans 13:11-14, NIV).

One of the mistakes in interpreting Scripture that seems to be prevalent in every age is in not applying those Scriptures to ourselves and to our times. That was certainly true in Jesus' day. The Jews, Jesus said, did not know how to interpret the time (Lk. 12:56). They did not know their Messiah was in their midst for this simple reason of not applying the Scriptures which they professed to believe to themselves or their time. I wonder how many professing Christians are guilty of that today—reading the Scriptures about the coming of the Lord but putting that day far off. Paul here tries to see that the Roman Christians (and all of us who read the letter to them) did not follow in the footsteps of those who professed to be looking for the coming of the Messiah but did not even recognize Him nor realize that the time was ripe for His coming.

Note how Paul emphasizes this truth in verse 12. “The night is nearly over [“far spent” in the ASV]; the day is almost here.” He is not here saying that the night of sin would end in a few months. It had been going on since man first sinned (over 4,000 years) and Paul knew that when the Lord comes that will end. But he knew that only the Father knew the time of that coming when Jesus was here on earth (the book of Revelation indicates to me that Jesus knows now). But he did know that that time was “at hand” (ASV)—there was nothing that had to happen between the writing of Romans and the coming of Christ; it was the next great event in God’s calendar. Christians then (and now) should have been living in expectation of that wonderful event, not slumbering spiritually but being wide awake to serve Him and look for Him with great expectation. Too many have looked expectantly for a while and then decide His coming is far off. As a consequence many lives are characterized by darkness and have fallen into some of the sins Paul warns against here—things of parties that go late in the night and indulging in revelry, in various forms of secret vice, of abandoned sensuality or in “dissension and jealousy.”

Let us look for a moment at Paul’s statement that “our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.” If you are a Christian you are saved in that you have been born again, you have become a child of God. Your spirit has been renewed so that you can have communion with God; your soul is being saved (1 Pet. 1:9); but your body is unchanged, you have nothing like the body the Lord will give you through eternity. That waits for the time when He calls us home to be with Him and comes to meet us in the air. So, the final stage of our salvation, when we shall be new in body, soul, and spirit

and when sin will have no way of turning us aside, is waiting for His coming and that is now nearer than when we first believed. For some of us maybe it is only a few days, a few months, or a few years nearer—but even then it is nearer. For some of us it is quite a few decades nearer and it is possible that we will go to Him before He comes for us—but we are not looking for death if we know the Word as we should; we are looking for our Lord. “Come, Lord Jesus” should be our constant prayer.

To prepare ourselves for that wonderful day and to serve Him the best we can in the meanwhile, Paul ends this chapter with a wonderful exhortation and prospect—“Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ.” The greatest need we have is to become more spiritually united with Christ. We are to take Galatians 2:20 seriously with Paul—“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” I recently read something about the expression “in the Son of God” that made me think—it can be translated so we read “I live by the faith of the Son of God.” Since He is our Great Shepherd Who supplies our every need, it seems fitting that He supply the faith in the Father, the trust of Him that is needed to live close to Him as if clothed in Jesus Himself. The Christian life is not hard for the flesh—it is impossible. But to live either with faith in Him or by His faith brings this down to earth where none of us has an excuse for not living as He would have us live. Let us put our trust completely in Him and live in Him with an eager anticipation of His coming. Come, Lord Jesus.

Pardon me for an anti-climax to this, but I can’t close this article without emphasizing how Paul ends—“do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.” Too many Christians do not want to “burn the bridges” that would keep them from giving in to the “lusts of the flesh.” We need to realize that to think about how to gratify those lusts is to open the way for those lusts to take charge. Let us “clothe (ourselves) with the Lord Jesus Christ” and keep our minds on Him instead of on the shameful things of the flesh.

PRIME TIME HOLINESS

David L. McKenna

Take *time to be holy*. We sing these words without realizing the practical relationship between *using time* and *being holy*. While Christian holiness is primarily a matter of being, we cannot neglect the fact that it is also a matter of doing—through the discipline of our time. Time is a precious and non-renewable resource intended for the cultivation of a holy life.

Television has become a thief of our time. While planning the furniture arrangement for a student lounge at the seminary recently, the interior decorator cautioned us about the placement of the television set. “If you put the TV set in the center of the room,” he said, “forget about sections for study, games or conversation. Television

takes over space and time." His warning led me to think about the placement of television sets in our homes. If they dominate our living space, where do our families talk, play and pray together? The cultivation of holy living for ourselves and our families requires uncluttered space for conversation, games and devotions. Perhaps the first step in taking time to be holy is simply to get television sets out of the *places* where they master our time.

Second, we must be aware of which *hours* television tends to dominate. The television industry calls evenings and weekends, when most people are free to watch their programs, "prime time." The problem is that prime-time television viewing conflicts with the prime time for Christians to cultivate the habits of holiness. In our home, Sunday evening after church is the "prime time" for us to catch up with each other—to talk, plan and pray together.

But interesting "mini-series" that run in two-hour blocks often begin Sunday evenings. Early on, I learned that our family time did not fit into commercial breaks or after 11 p.m.. From our frustration, we realized that we could choose either family time or TV time. Together, we chose family time and turned the television off. *The first rule of television time management is to identify our "prime-time" priorities.*

To be holy we must also discipline our *discretionary* time. Each individual has more free time than he realizes. The average American spends 20 or more hours a week watching television. Think of the potential of these hours! They remind us that if we want to make holiness a priority for our time, we must practice the discipline of holy living in our daily schedule. Otherwise, the visual seduction of television will rob us of our free time. Even as I write this, a professional football game between my two favorite teams is on the tube. I have vowed, however, that I will not turn it on until this article is finished. The same brutal discipline is needed for holy living.

Transitional time is still another critical point of control in television viewing. I recently noticed that we were turning on the television set as soon as we got up in the morning, arrived at home during the day or went to bed at night. Why? We simply wanted to see what was on. Television, then, became the master of our transitional time. A third rule needs to be invoked. *Transitional time should be used to get essential tasks done, plan ahead and move to our priorities.* If we are serious about taking time to be holy, we will break the habit of turning on the set during transitional moments. Instead, we will use the time to stop and ask, "How am I doing on my priorities today?"

Taking time to be holy is not as complicated as it sounds. Allan Lakein poses one central question in his best-seller, "How to Get Control of Your Time and Your life." He asks, "What is the best use of my time right now?" We should ask ourselves this question often. Then, depending upon the priorities we set, the schedule we follow and the choices we make for the use of our time, television will be either the friend or foe of our personal holiness.

(Reprinted from *Message of the Cross*. David L. McKenna is president of Asbury Theological Seminary.)

Aliens in a Foreign Land

John R. W. Stott

"Aliens in a foreign land" or "Aliens and exiles." That's what Peter calls Christians in his first letter, chapter two, verse eleven. It's an extraordinary description. An alien is a foreigner who lacks the full rights of a citizen, while an exile is living a long way from home.

Now the people to whom Peter was writing were *literally* this, "exiles of the Dispersion" he calls them, scattered throughout the Roman provinces of Asia Minor. But they were aliens and exiles in a metaphorical sense as well. Indeed, there is a sense in which all Christians are foreigners on earth, for our first citizenship and final home are in heaven.

Of course one has only got to say this kind of thing today to arouse both scorn and hostility. Although it is inescapable Christian teaching, it is often misunderstood as meaning that Christians can contract out of their responsibility, or caricatured as the promise of "pie in the sky when you die." And, to be sure, Christians themselves have sometimes been guilty of this kind of distortion.

It's partly as a reaction against the caricature that there are many today who claim to follow Christ and yet have entirely eliminated from their Christianity the note of other-worldliness. They are no longer interested in *God*, they say; only in *man*. It's *this* world which concerns them, not the next. They'd rather serve men in the secular city than worship God in a Gothic cathedral.

But *their* Christianity is a caricature too. Thank God for their concern, often deeply compassionate, for deprived people—for the immigrant, the poor, the homeless, the elderly, the mentally sick. But such Christian compassion should be a result and expression of our love for God, not a substitute for it.

No, the balanced Christian knows himself to be at one and the same time a citizen of two kingdoms. He is both dust of earth and breath of God. He lives in the world, yet he is not of the world. He loves God, and he loves his neighbor also. He does not shirk his duties on earth—at work, at home, in the wider community—and yet he recognises that he is not a resident; he's a transit passenger, on his way to an eternal home.

Of this truth Jesus Christ and His apostles remind us again and again in the New Testament. And once we have grasped it, it becomes a revolutionary principle, affecting the whole of our life. Let me suggest that it has at least three major results.

To know ourselves aliens and exiles on earth . . .

Changes our ambitions

The ambitions of the average man today, at least in the western world, is material wealth and comfort. He wants a bigger and better house, a bigger and better television set, car and yacht. I am not saying that wealth and Christianity are entirely incompatible, provided that a Christian uses his money responsibly in the service of others. What I *am* saying is that *materialism* and Christianity are incom-

pative. No true Christian can be a materialist; it's impossible. For do we not seek to follow One who said, "a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions"?

What then should a Christian's ambition be? Let Jesus Christ Himself answer this question from His Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness," He said. Again: "Seek first God's Kingdom (that is, God's rule) and God's righteousness." It is a matter of getting our priorities right. In the Lord's prayer which Jesus gave us, we don't begin with petitions for our daily bread or even for forgiveness, but with petitions for the honoring of God's Name and the extension of God's Kingdom and the doing of God's Will. This is simply putting into words and prayer the Christian's life-quest. In our conviction the Supreme Good, which we are seeking with all our heart, and to which we devote ourselves, is the spread of God's rule and God's righteousness.

This will include our own lives. The Christian pilgrim, Peter writes, who knows that he is an alien and an exile, must "abstain from the passions of the flesh which wage war against the soul." But of course! If our *soul* has an eternal destiny, then it is our *soul* which is of vital importance, and we must abstain from all those passions of the *flesh* which wage war against it. Indeed, we must abstain from anything which hinders the growth of our soul, or hinders the subjugation of our will to Christ's rule and the transformation of our character into Christ's image. And what we desire for ourselves we desire for others also.

As aliens and exiles on earth, it is not riches but *righteousness* which becomes our goal. We shall seek it first, as of first importance; we hunger and thirst for it.

To know ourselves aliens and exiles on earth

Deepens our responsibilities

It is perfectly true that the other-worldly element in Christianity has sometimes been terribly perverted. When Marx called religion "the opium of the people," he meant that it was being used to maintain the oppression of the proletariat, to deprive them of the will to better themselves by promising them a heavenly reward. Marx was partly right. Religion *has* sometimes been used as a tool of the oppressor. The negro slaves *did* sing their spirituals about crossing Jordan into the Promised Land, under the lash of their master's whip.

But this use of an other-worldly religion to perpetuate injustice in this world is entirely indefensible. It is also extremely perverse. For the knowledge that we are aliens and exiles on earth, travelling home to God, should *increase* our sense of social responsibility, not diminish it.

The apostle Peter is quite clear about this. Immediately after describing his Christian readers as "aliens in a foreign land," he goes on to exhort them to be conscientious in every way—in their citizenship, in their daily work and in their family and home life.

This deepened social concern is partly due to our sense of the

intrinsic value of the people we try to serve; for they too have an eternal destiny. And it is partly due to our knowledge that we have to give an account of ourselves one day to God.

The whole New Testament emphasizes our practical responsibilities on earth. We have to pay our taxes. We have to obey the laws of our country, right up to the point where obedience to the state would mean disobedience to God. By the same principle we shall have to use our vote responsibly in the general elections. Again, Christians should be just employers and honest employees. And we have to play our part, however small, in feeding the hungry, caring for the deprived, and seeking to create social structures which guarantee justice, dignity and freedom for all men.

To know ourselves aliens and exiles on earth...

Lightens our sorrows

Christians do not blind themselves to the tragedies of life. We too read our newspapers and see pictures on television of the results of natural disasters, of floods in Bangladesh and hurricane Gilbert. We too experience the common ills of mankind—the pain of sickness and old age and human unkindness and bereavement. And we *feel* this pain like every other mortal. Christianity offers no immunity to suffering.

Nevertheless, it lightens sorrows. Not by making us insensitive to it, but by helping us to see it in perspective. Pain would seem to us unbearable otherwise. And the Christian perspective is this: "I consider," wrote Paul, "that the sufferings of the present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us." Again, "this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, because we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal."

In the context of eternity, pain and sorrow lose their dominion over us. The traveller is willing to endure great hardship if he knows that he is on his way home.

What I have been trying to say here is all an illustration of the principle that *how we live depends on who we are*. The most important question we all have to ask is "who or what am I?" Only when we have discovered our own identity, can we grasp the meaning of life and the way to live.

Are we only animals? Is man in the last resort nothing but a naked ape? Or, if humans are more than animals, are we still merely mortal creatures, returning to dust and to nothing but dust? Or have we an eternal destiny in heaven—yes, or in hell?

That man has an eternal destiny in heaven or hell is a fundamental Christian conviction. Through Jesus Christ who once died for our sins, but is now alive and our contemporary, we can experience a new birth and receive a new life, if we come to Him. Then, having been born again into God's kingdom and family, we find that we have become "aliens and exiles on earth." And this changes everything, including our ambition, our sense of responsibility, and our sorrows too.

We shall try to fulfill our duties on earth—even more conscientiously than before—but we can never settle down on earth as if in any final sense we belonged here. For we don't. We belong elsewhere. And sometimes we feel a bit homesick in our exile.

So like the Old Testament patriarchs, by the grace of God we shall live and die in faith, acknowledging ourselves strangers and pilgrims on earth, desiring a better country, that is a heavenly. Of such people it is written in scripture: "Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared for them a city."

—Used by permission

Leviticus And Life Today

Leroy Birney

You may have seen Charles Schultz's cartoon in which a fellow says to a girl, "You can relax—there isn't a thing in the whole book of Leviticus against wearing contact lenses." He was right, but what *is* in Leviticus that would help you today? Many things!

For example, society was very lax in its standards of sexual morality in Moses' day, just as it is today in the U.S. Read Leviticus 18 and 20 to find God's standards.

Another example: the New Testament chronology of Christ's ministry is determined by references to the feasts he attended. These "appointed feasts" are explained in Leviticus 23. The main ones are: 1) the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread in the middle of the Jewish first month (March/April); 2) the Feast of Pentecost 50 days later in the Jewish third month (May/June); and 3) the Feast of Booths in the seventh month (September/October). When you get these clearly in mind, you will find it easier to understand the events of Christ's life and many parts of the Old Testament as well.

The fact that the Scriptures are inspired by God is also emphasized in Leviticus. Some 30 times it says "Jehovah spoke," emphasizing that the ideas and words were determined by God. Since the Bible is the only book God wrote, it seems like an insult not to read all of it.

Leviticus is very helpful in another way, too. It tells about the animal sacrifices, which were a dramatization or parable of the meaning of Christ's death. That is why the New Testament calls them "a shadow of the good things to come." The sacrifices showed that to be accepted by God, a person must admit that he deserves death for his sins and come to God through the death of a sacrificial substitute. The person who made the sacrifice put his hand on the animal's head to show his identification with it, then it was killed, the blood put upon the altar, and all or part of the animal burned as a sacrifice.

Of course, animals cannot really substitute for a human sinner, but Christ really could die as our substitute and he did when he came. The sacrifices pictured his substitutionary death long before it happened. All of this is explained more fully in the New Testament in Hebrews 8-10.

The sacrifices are described in Leviticus 1-7. The kinds of sacrifices were 1) the burnt offering, in which the whole animal was burned on the altar, suggesting atonement for inherent sin; 2) the meal offering (or "meat"—KJV), which was grain or flour, suggesting dedication of our possessions to God; 3) the peace offering, most of which was eaten by the one who sacrificed it as a communion meal with God; 4) the sin offering, which was required for transgressions committed unintentionally; and 5) the trespass offering, which was required for transgressions that involved the repayment of damages. All but one of the sacrifices involved the death of an animal and the putting of its blood upon the altar; the meal offering probably was offered along with the others rather than by itself (see Numbers 15:1-16).

The Day of Atonement was the most important day of the year for the Israelites, and it presents the most complete picture of the meaning of Christ's death. It is described in chapter 16. If someone were to read only one chapter of Leviticus, it probably should be this one. On this one occasion each year the high priest sacrificed burnt offerings and sin offerings and took the blood into the Most Holy Place of the tabernacle to atone for the sins of the people. The New Testament says that Christ "entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption." Thus Christ fulfilled the part of both the high priest and the sacrifices. In that way he secured complete and permanent forgiveness for all who believe in Him.

And there are more interesting and practical things in this book. For example, the miscellaneous laws in chapter 19 touch the subjects of welfare (vs. 9, 10), duties of an employer (v.13), attitude toward the handicapped (v. 14), courtroom justice (v. 15), spiritism (vs. 26, 31), integration (vs. 33, 34), and honesty in business (vs. 35, 36), to name a few.

Many of the regulations in Leviticus were for the practical purposes of promoting health, of combating harmful customs of the time, of giving the people a national identity, of teaching them what God is like, and of giving them the consciousness of sin. Many of them were ceremonial in nature and only temporary. However, whenever a moral principle underlies a regulation, that principle is just as binding today as it was then.

Chapter 26 predicts what will happen if Israel obeys God's law, and what will happen if they disobey. The warnings of the results of disobedience form a remarkable outline of Israel's later history—their decline from faith to apostasy, their defeats, their exile, and their restoration to the land. Yet the style of the chapter demonstrates that it was written 1,200 to 1,400 years before Christ, at the very beginning of Israel's history.

So Leviticus is indeed a divine book—and a book for today. It is not the easiest book in the Bible to read, but it is very worthwhile. With its help, you'll see life more sharply than with a new pair of glasses, contact or otherwise.

—from *Interest*

NEWS AND NOTES

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

New Albany, IN:

Bro. Martin Brooks and wife, the former Susan Bradshaw, have recently accepted the call of the Lord to minister with the Cherry Street Church of Christ. Martin is already doing the preaching, and the Brooks family, including 2½ year old son Kirk, will be moving to New Albany to assume the full-time ministry as soon as Martin phases out his secular position. Martin and Susan are both graduates of Portland Christian High School and David Lipscomb College. Recently they have worshipped at Southeast Church of Christ in Louisville, where Martin was a newly appointed deacon.

Bro. Bruce Chowning will now be considered as officially retired as Cherry Street's minister, after nearly 37 years in that capacity. Bro. Chowning had a moderate heart attack on June 13. He is recovering nicely, and Irene, his wife, is gradually recuperating after a shattered hip sustained in a fall last December. They have been able to be back in all of the services as of the last Sunday in August. Lord willing, Bro. Chowning will be available within a few months for substitute preaching.

Cherry street has been seeking the Lord's leading for almost two years in this ministry change. The prayers of many who have joined with them in this petition have been greatly appreciated, and your continued prayers in behalf of the future of the Lord's work there are requested.

Maple Manor Adult Division

Bro. & Sis. Coulter attended the "Open House and reception" at Maple Manor for Bro. Joe and Sis. Martha Blansett yesterday. Bro. Blansett began work at Maple Manor Feb. 1972 and has been the only administrator there. Upon his retirement this week Bro. A. L. Flohr and his wife Jo will take up their duties at Maple Manor Adult Division.

—Linton Bulletin

Jennings, Louisiana:

LOUISVILLE FELLOWSHIP WEEK: Very good week of singing, lessons, and

fellowship, and being a part of it was very enjoyable. Videos and audio cassettes of each session will be available in the near future for you to take advantage of and receive the blessings.

—Doug Broyles

CHRISTIAN YOUTH CAMP, DeRidder, La.: Sr. Week II was successful, with 51 campers, 24 workers, and 7 baptisms, for which we praise the Lord. Reportedly, this was the best week in recent years.

If heaven will be anything close to last Sunday night, we'll enjoy it for sure! Over 236 folks heard the "Revelators" from Dallas sing 20 songs, and we heard lots of good comments. Bro. Chuck Gilbert's message was also very good.

SPECIAL SERVICE TONIGHT: We will be installing David Bowers as our newest Elder. Next Sunday evening we will install our five new deacons: Brian and Marlin Comeaux; Donald Lapretre; Charles Leger; John Prather.

—Jennings bulletin

Amite, La.:

We just had our annual revival meeting [Aug. 7-12]. Bro. Paul Kitzmiller was our speaker, and a very good one! There was good participation from area churches. The messages were very stirring, and the seeds that were planted, we are praying will bring forth fruit.

—Rhonda Giamalva

Denham Springs, La.:

The Denham Springs Church of Christ has changed ministers. Bro. Harry Prather, who worked with congregations in Kentucky and Tennessee prior to coming to Denham Springs, stepped down after 18 years of loving and faithful service. He and his wife Jean will remain in our area and will continue to be a welcome and important part of our work.

The new minister is Don McGee who was raised under the teaching and counsel of Bro. Stan Broussard of the Bayou Jacques Church of Christ. Don

is new in two respects: new to the Denham Springs church and new in the ministry. He comes to the pulpit after taking an early retirement from a secular field. His wife Valerie is a school teacher (currently not working) and they are the parents of 4-year-old twins, Travis and Katie.

We thank God for blessings already received at Denham Springs and with His leading and blessing we look forward to great and good things to come should our Savior's return be delayed. Pray for the congregation and specifically for Don as he assumes this new area of work and responsibility.

Highway Church, Pekin, IN:

Last year the Lord answered prayer and miraculously gave us the Grange building next to our sanctuary. We have combined the 2 buildings and everything is done except a little trim work.

The Lord has been working among our young people. 2 received Christ as Savior in April. We had a youth retreat in May at Woodland with the theme "Total Commitment." 5 Received Christ as a result of that weekend. Since then one more was baptized at Wonder Valley Youth Camp. We are beginning a new class for these young disciples.

-Duane Smith

Tell City, IN:

SPECIAL MEETING NOTES: A group of 21 men and ladies met at the church to discuss the educational program of our congregation. An Educational Committee was established to evaluate our current programs and to begin formulating sub-committees.

Praise the Lord! At our business meeting last Sunday the men decided that we would be buying Dr. James Dobson's video series, "Focus on the Family," and a VCR player. This week an anonymous donor has given the money for both of these needs.

Senior Week at Camp: We have heard that the senior week at Woodland was a beautiful experience for our young people. We want to thank all those that have been responsible this year for getting the kids to camp and picking them up, for the workers that have gone from here, and for the scholarship money that was provided to pay the way for several campers. God has richly blessed the work at Woodland!

Volunteer Shopping: Some of our young people are offering to do shopping or errands for those unable to do those things. Read Matthew 25:40! This is a free service from our youth.

Youth Rally: The CCYBB Youth Rally will be in Pekin on September 10. The theme is reigning in Life, with Mike Abbott, the speaker. Church Youth groups are asked to prepare by reading Romans chapters 5-8 for Bible Bowl.

Johnson City, Tenn.:

Bro. Carl Kitzmiller teaches a Bible class each Wed. morning at Colonial Hill Retirement Center. Interest generally is quite good, with some of the regular folk expressing deep appreciation for the class.

Linton, Indiana:

Bro. Robert & Sis. Joy Garrett were at Linton Church of Christ Sunday August 21 for the morning services. He showed pictures of their work during the Sunday School hour and brought a very heart searching message regarding our responsibility of sharing The Gospel with those around us and around the world.

K.B.C. - S.C.C. ALUMNI

Alumni of Kentucky Bible College and Southeastern Christian College are invited to gather at the Christian Center at the Sellersburg Church of Christ on Labor Day, September 5 at 4 pm.

Editor's Note: We are sorry some of our announcements come out later than the event announced. But our crystal ball gets clouded up! I.e., we don't know about events unless you tell us.

Southeast Church of Christ, Jefferson-town, Kentucky:

We received a great blessing from the preaching of Antoine Valdetero June 12-17. We witnessed one rededication and many lives changed to a closer walk with Christ. We had a record average attendance of 153 per service.

I had the privilege of attending an "Expository Preaching" Workshop June 23-24 at the Westport Road Church of Christ. The Workshop was helpful and the fellowship a blessing.

I was blessed in being able to attend the North American Christian Convention in Cincinnati on Friday, July 8. Each workshop was helpful and the

messages inspiring. The next convention is planned for Louisville, KY July 11-14, 1989. I encourage all Christians in Kentucky and Indiana to attend as often as possible.

Our VBS was most successful under the able direction of Mark Baker. Our attendance was very good. One

new family has begun attending Southeast as a result of the contact through VBS. A special thanks to all the teachers and helpers was given at the closing program attended by 204. Bev and Jane Donlon did an excellent job in directing the program.

-Nathan Burks

IN MEMORY OF SHICHIRO NAKAHARA

A good man has gone home to be with the Lord. On September 1, 1988 the Lord called Shichiro Nakahara into His presence. For nearly 1½ years, Shichiro had battled cancer. It left its mark on his body, but never his spirit. Shichiro remained strong in the Lord to the very end. He told me in March when I last saw him that he knew everything was in the Lord's hands, so he would simply trust Him to do what was best. Shichiro's faith continued strong throughout this entire ordeal, and he was a constant source of strength and encouragement to his family and church members in spite of the intense pain and suffering he endured, especially during July and August.

Timothy, as many affectionately called him, died as a relatively young man, as some count years, but he packed a lot of service for the Lord into those 58 years. His early training at a Christian Academy in Japan, his studies in the states at KBC in Louisville (later to become SCC), his preaching and further seminary training in Texas, and his sweet fellowship with many Christians throughout the states, all served to prepare Tim for his ultimate calling as a missionary to his own people in Japan. His dear wife, Teruko, was a constant source of strength and encouragement to him as they ministered. Their work in Japan was slow and steady, but always faithful. Christianity is not well received in Japan and the work there is very difficult, but Shichiro persevered and touched the lives of many, many people—especially young people. He left his mark, the Lord's mark, in Shizuoka City. And the church there will continue because the seed was sown faithfully.

Shichiro's son, Michiya, is now in seminary training in Osaka with the blessing and encouragement of his parents and the church in Shizuoka City. He is making himself ready, as God told the prophet Jeremiah to do, to continue the work his father has left. He needs our continued prayers. The Piedmont church in Dallas plans to continue on with the Nakahara Mission. For the present, Teruko plans to continue to live with and work with the Christians there. She may visit the states sometime in the near future. The daughters, Annette and Stephanie, after staying in Japan for several weeks will return to their homes in the states. A memorial service will be conducted in Japan on September 15.

While the miles may separate us physically, our hearts and spirits are one with the Nakahara family in Japan. We extend our sincere sympathy in the loss of Shichiro, but we rejoice in the blessed hope that he is with his Lord now, and further, that we shall one day be reunited with him, and all of God's people, throughout eternity. Maranatha!

Brother Nakahara will be greatly missed by all of us. Our lives are richer from knowing him. He developed the respect and admiration of many missionaries throughout Japan. He was loved by all who knew him. The Apostle Paul's summary of his own life could equally apply to Shichiro when he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. Therefore, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give me in that day. And not to me only, but to all those who love His appearing."

You can continue to correspond with the Nakahara family at the following address:

Nakahara (Teruko or Michiya)
25 - 9 Toyohara Cho
Shizuoka City, Japan 422

-Bob M. Yarbrough



MRS. HOLLIS BROWN
2118 MARYLAND AVE.
LOUISVILLE, KY. 40205

HLD

THE FOLLOWING ORDER FORM IS SUPPLIED TO ADVERTISE THE "CHRISTIAN ART" FULL-COLOR BULLETIN SERVICE AND TO MAKE IT CONVENIENT FOR CHURCHES TO ORDER SAME. ORDER MUST BE IN HANDS OF SUPPLIER 30 DAYS BEFORE SERVICE IS TO BEGIN. SHIPMENTS ARE MADE FOR A FULL QUARTER AT ONE MAILING. CONTACT WORD AND WORK FOR MORE INFORMATION.

"Christian Art" Bulletin Order Form

PLEASE FILL OUT ALL APPLICABLE BLANKS.

Please enter our order for _____ "Christian Art" full-color Every Sunday Bulletins each week at \$3.50 per hundred.

Bulletins are shipped THREE MONTHS' SUPPLY at a time, and quantities must be in multiples of 50 (example: 50, 100, 150, 200, etc.)

Please start our subscription on the first Sunday in

January April July October

Charge to _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Ship to _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Name of Church Placing Order _____

Person Placing Order _____

Please add the indicated EXTRA copies for special days. Quantities shown here are OVER AND ABOVE my regular quantity shown above: _____ Easter;
_____ Christmas.