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1954: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text

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PREFACE

The 1954 Abilene Christian College Lectureship was one of the best attended and most successful in the history of the school. Considerable interest was manifested in the timely theme, "Overcoming Dangerous Tendencies," and in the two special topics, "Ways and Means of Doing Mission Work," and "Caring For Widows and Orphans." The reports from the mission fields were highly stimulating, and all in all, the speeches were unusually high caliber.

The Panel Discussions were also on timely subjects and well presented. They received a warm response, as did also the thirty classes that were conducted each day. These classes were taught by persons expert in their particular fields, and covered a wide range of interests to the faithful, working Christian.

We at Abilene Christian College predict for this book of Lectures a wide and hearty reception, and believe that its reading will issue in profit to the individual and to the church at large.

J. D. Thomas
Lectureship Director

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WAYS AND MEANS OF DOING MISSION WORK

John H. Banister

The importance of this subject is evident to all thinking Christians. The chief mission of the church is to evangelize the world and we should be vitally interested in achieving this worthy goal. The importance of learning scriptural ways and means of preaching the gospel cannot be over-emphasized. This question has been before the brotherhood a long time, especially in recent years. It has been discussed publicly, privately, and by means of the printed page. Various religious papers have emphasized this question, and it is still a live issue among us.

There are various ways and means of doing mission work. We can preach from the public pulpit. We can preach on television or over the radio. The printed page can be utilized and brethren can teach many by the wise distribution of gospel tracts. Gospel meetings can be conducted in our home congregations or at mission points. Cottage Bible study groups, special teaching campaigns, and organized personal work can all be employed as ways and means of reaching the lost. Individual members of congregations can, through personal work, win their friends and neighbors to Christ. Congregations can utilize local preachers to evangelize their community. They can also send preachers into destitute fields to save souls and establish churches. These are some of the ways by which we can do mission work today.

In this lecture, however, we desire to study this question in the light of brotherhood developments and controversies within more recent years. It is not our purpose to agree or disagree with any group, congregation, or individual in this study. We have no desire to condemn some and justify others, nor do we wish to "expose" brethren who may differ from us, or the conclusions we have reached on this subject. It is our desire, rather, to study this question without passion or prejudice and, if possible, ascertain scriptural ways and means of doing mission work!

I. PRESENT DAY PRACTICES

Much missionary work is being done today by churches of Christ, especially those in the United States. We are doing more to carry the gospel to others than we have done in several generations past. Workers are entering new fields and the gospel is making new conquests in many places of the world. Mission work is being done by congregations in cooperation with each other, some is being done by congregations working alone, while much preaching is being done by faithful evangelists who are neither "sponsored" nor supported by any congregation! We should rejoice that the gospel is being preached and churches are being aroused to a greater sense of their missionary duty. Paul rejoiced that Christ was preached even by unworthy men (Phil. 1:18), and we, too, should be happy that the New Testament church is being established in many destitute fields, even though we may not personally agree with all the methods by which such congregations have been brought into being.

There has been a great deal of controversy in recent years on the ways and means by which we are to do mission work. Able brethren are on both sides of the question. Some have gone to extremes on both sides, while other brethren have endeavored to steer a middle-of-the-road course. All brethren agree that the gospel should be preached in destitute places. We do not, however, always agree on how this is to be done! Our differences have been over "ways and means" of doing mission work and not over the work itself. We have disagreed primarily concerning the method, not the work. Some brethren and churches have allowed this controversy to discourage them. We must remember, however, that controversy among brethren is beneficial, if it is conducted on a high plane and in the spirit of Christ. If brotherly love prevails; if we do not impugn each other's motives; if we are actuated by a sincere desire to know the truth; a discussion of this important subject is profitable and should be edifying. Discussion of differences among brethren is one of the best ways by which we learn truth and discover error. In controversy we should avoid taking sides with any group or allowing ourselves to go to extremes. Some brethren strenuously object to mission work being done if it does not conform to their own opinion as to how it should be done. Others keenly resent anyone criticizing their methods of doing mission work and feel that no one should ever call them in question. Brethren, when we criticize the way some one else does mission work, let us do so in a constructive manner, and with a desire to help, not hurt, such work. On the other hand, if and when we receive criti-

cism of what we are doing, let us not contemptuously brush it aside as the fulminations of fanatics, but calmly and dispassionately weigh it in the light of the New Testament.

Most of the recent controversy on this question is over the issue of congregational cooperation. We all agree that each congregation can and should do mission work. We also agree that each congregation certainly can plan its own program and act independently of any and all congregations. This is admitted. The issue is this: Can a group of congregations cooperate in preaching the gospel in a given field? If so, how? And to what extent? So far as is known, no one contends that congregations must cooperate or else. The issue is, are congregations at liberty to cooperate, if they so choose and desire? Do congregations have the right to work together in preaching the gospel in a given field? Since this is the heart of the issue, let us now study the question of congregational cooperation.

II. CONGREGATIONAL COOPERATION

1. The Basis of Congregational Cooperation.

Assuming for the moment that New Testament congregations can scripturally cooperate, how and on what basis, can this be done? In answering this question, we desire to lay down two important principles.

First, congregational cooperation, if scripturally permissible, can be done only on a voluntary basis. We believe one congregation can invite another to assist it in a given work. However, it should exert neither pressure nor coercion in enlisting the aid of

said congregation. The invitation to assist, to cooperate, can be accepted or rejected by the congregation thus invited. This congregation, under the leadership of its elders, must make the decision to cooperate or not to cooperate. This decision, whatever it is, should be accepted and respected by the congregation that extended the invitation.

Secondly, cooperation between churches must be on the basis of maintaining local congregational independence. Each New Testament congregation is independent with its own elders who oversee its work and make its decisions. When congregational cooperation is practiced, the autonomy of each local church should be recognized and the authority of each local eldership respected. The elders of one congregation cannot make decisions for the elders of another congregation, nor oversee their work for them. Nor can such elders direct and control the affairs of several congregations. When done, this is a violation of congregational independence. Cooperation on this basis is certainly unscriptural. If elders of a congregation cannot do such, no other group of men can either! No ecclesiastical board—whether it is composed of preachers, elders, editors, college presidents, or other prominent brethren—has the right, officially or unofficially, to dictate to congregations and seek to influence and formulate their policies. Any group of men which seeks control and domination is unscriptural and should be exposed. Any congregation that permits itself to be thus influenced and dominated is digressing from the New Testament pattern of church government and it, too, should be exposed!

Each congregation is to have its own elders, who are to direct the work of that congregation and make its decisions. Such decisions, of course, should be made in harmony with New Testament teaching. Congregational cooperation on the basis of "high pressure salesmanship," implied coercion, and lording it over other congregations and elderships, is certainly unscriptural. On the other hand, if one congregation voluntarily agrees to assist another congregation in a given work, it has such right and does not thereby endanger its congregational autonomy, nor jeopardize the authority of its elders. Such a congregation is only giving brotherly assistance to a work in which both churches are interested. This congregation can cease cooperating with the other one any time it sees fit or deems proper.

2. New Testament examples of congregational cooperation.

There are, we believe, examples in the New Testament of congregations cooperating in a given work. Let us study these examples prayerfully to see, how, on what basis, and to what extent they cooperated.

In apostolic days, congregations cooperated in matters of mutual edification. Here are the ways in which this was done.

(a) One church asked advice of another church on a doctrinal question. The church in Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem to seek help from that congregation in settling the controversy on circumcision (Acts 15:1, 2).

(b) One church gave advice to another church

on a doctrinal question. The Jerusalem congregation gave such advice to the congregation in Antioch. This advice was not given by the apostles alone, but by "the elders" and the "whole church" at Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-29).

(c) One church advised another church in spiritual and moral matters. In addition to their instruction concerning circumcision, the Jerusalem congregation advised the Antioch congregation concerning meats offered to idols, the eating of blood, things strangled, and fornication (Acts 15:28, 29).

(d) Churches sent their members to other churches to teach and indoctrinate them. The Jerusalem church sent Barnabas to Antioch to teach, exhort, and indoctrinate this newly established congregation. "Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:22, 23). We don't know whether the Antioch congregation requested this assistance. It seems that the Jerusalem congregation sent it without being asked. The Antioch church gladly accepted Barnabas and allowed him to stay there a year teaching among them. There is nothing to indicate that the Jerusalem church was trying to control the church at Antioch, or that Antioch felt Jerusalem was trying to run its affairs. These congregations voluntarily cooperated in a brotherly way to their mutual edification (Acts 11:22-26). Later, the Jerusalem church sent Judas and Silas to the Antioch

church. It pleased "the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch." These two men, being prophets, "exhorted" and "comforted" the members of the Antioch congregation (Acts 15:22, 32). Some time after this, Paul and Silas decided to visit the churches in Asia Minor to see how they were getting along. The church in Antioch "recommended" them for this work. The churches to which Antioch recommended Paul and Silas had elders (Acts 14:23). They went among these congregations teaching and confirming them. They also delivered to each congregation the decrees which had been ordained by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. As a result of these visits, the churches in Asia Minor were "established in the faith and increased in number daily." Did the Antioch church do wrong in recommending men to go teach congregations that had elders? Did the churches of Asia Minor feel Antioch was meddling in their affairs by sending such men among them? There is nothing in the proceedings to indicate such. These congregations cooperated in a brotherly way to their mutual edification without a sacrifice of their congregational autonomy (Acts 15:36 to 16:5).

(e) Churches sent letters to each other. This was another way in which they cooperated. The Jerusalem church "wrote letters" to the Antioch church denouncing the false teachers that had gone out from them (Acts 15:22-24). The church in Antioch "recommended" Paul and Silas to the churches of Asia Minor and this was probably done by letter (Acts 15:40). The church at Ephesus wrote the church at Corinth "exhorting the principles to receive" Apollos (Acts

18:27; 19:1). The Corinthian church was urged to "approve" by their letters certain brethren to go with Paul to Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:3).

(f) One church could salute another church. The church in Rome was urged to salute the church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla (Rom.16:5). "All the churches of Christ" sent salutations to the congregation in Rome (Rom. 16:16). "The churches of Asia" saluted the church at Corinth as did the church in the home of Aquila and Priscilla (1 Cor. 16:19). The church in Babylon saluted the congregations in Asia Minor (1 Pet. 1:1; 5:13).

In apostolic days, congregations cooperated in benevolent work. Here are the ways in which this was done.

(a) One congregation sent help to several congregations in a given area. When a famine swept over Judea, the church at Antioch "every man according to his ability determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea." They sent this help to the elders of the various congregations of Judea. No doubt, this money thus sent, was distributed by the elders of each receiving church. Here we have the example of one congregation sending money to other congregations and the money thus being disbursed at the discretion of the elders who received it. Antioch sent these funds by the hands of Paul and Barnabas who were chosen for this special work (Acts 11:27-30; 12:25).

(b) Several congregations sent help to one congregation. The churches in Macedonia and Achaia

sent "a certain contribution for the poor saints" in the Jerusalem church (Rom. 15:25-27). Paul strongly urged these Gentile churches to have a liberal part in this most worthy undertaking (1 Cor. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 8:1-5). Concerning this endeavor, we read in 2 Cor. 8:16-24, "But thanks be to God, who putteth the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus. For he accepted indeed our exhortation; but being himself very earnest, he went forth unto you of his own accord. And we have sent together with him the brother whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches; and not only so, but who was also appointed by the churches to travel with us in the matter of this grace, which is ministered by us to the glory of the Lord, and to show our readiness: avoiding this, that any man should blame us in the matter of this bounty which is ministered by us: for we take thought for things honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have many times proved earnest in many things, but now much more earnest, by reason of the great confidence which he hath in you. Whether any inquire about Titus, he is my partner and my fellow-worker to you-ward; or our brethren, they are the messengers of the churches, they are the glory of Christ. Show ye therefore unto them in the face of the churches the proof of your love, and of our glorying on your behalf." In order to expedite the work of aiding the Jerusalem church, these churches in Macedonia and Achaia "appointed" "brethren" to travel with Paul and Titus. These brethren, thus appointed, were the "messengers" of all

the participating churches and represented them. They went among the Gentile churches collecting funds for the poor saints in Jerusalem. In this way, did several congregations cooperate in relieving the needs of the poor in a given congregation. Here is an example of several congregations helping one congregation do what it could not do alone. When a congregation cannot do a work by itself, other congregations are at liberty to assist it.

In apostolic days, congregations cooperated in mission work. They did not always cooperate, it is true, but sometimes they did. In the New Testament, we have the example of one congregation sending out and supporting one or more preachers. We also have the example of several congregations supporting the same preacher in the same field and at the same time.

Let us first notice some instances in which a single congregation did mission work with no apparent assistance or cooperation from other congregations. We all admit that this was done then and that such a procedure is scriptural today.

(a) The church in Antioch, at the urging of the Holy Spirit, separated Barnabas and Saul for the work of evangelism, the congregation fasted, prayed, and laid hands on these men. Then "they sent them away." Please notice that these brethren were sent out by the church as well as the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-4). In this way, the congregation in Antioch undertook evangelistic work beyond its own border. Through Barnabas and Saul, they preached the gospel, converted sinners, and established churches in various cities of Cyprus and Asia Minor (Acts 13, 14). Later

Paul and Barnabas returned to each of these congregations to set them in order. They confirmed and exhorted the brethren and appointed elders in every church (Acts 14:21-23). Upon completing this first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, which had sent them out, and gave a report of the work which God had done through them (Acts 14:26-28). They also gave this report to the churches in Phoenicia, Samaria, and Jerusalem (Acts 15:3, 4).

(b). Later the church in Antioch recommended Paul and Silas for another missionary journey (Acts 15:36-41). At first, they labored among established congregations which had elders. They taught and confirmed these brethren (Acts 15:36; 16:5). After visiting and strengthening these congregations (the second time Paul had done this), they went into virgin territory to preach the gospel and establish churches. After preaching in various places in Asia Minor, they came to Troas. While there, a vision came in which they were urged to go to Macedonia with the gospel. Assuredly gathering that the Lord had called them to preach there, they immediately set out for Macedonia. Paul and Silas came first to Philippi, the chief city of Macedonia, where they converted Lydia and the jailer, with their respective households, and established a congregation. Leaving Philippi, they preached in Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, and Ephesus, and established churches in most, if not all, of these cities (Acts 16-18). Upon completing this second missionary journey, Paul returned to Antioch, the church which had recommended him to this work! (Acts 18:22, 23).

(c) The church at Philippi also supported Paul while he preached the gospel in other places. "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity" (Phil. 4:15, 16). This fine congregation was probably the most liberal and consistent supporter that Paul had! He greatly appreciated their much-needed help and gave fervent thanks for it. "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now" (Phil. 1:3-5). In supporting Paul, the Philippian church sent "once again" to his necessity. They supported him in various places, in Thessalonica and when he left Macedonia to preach in other fields. They sent money directly to Paul. They had a "messenger" to carry funds to him. Epaphroditus was the man appointed for this purpose and he, as a representative of the Philippian congregation, brought their gifts to Paul (Phil. 2:25). Paul acknowledged receiving them at the hands of Epaphroditus (Phil. 4:18).

(d) The church in Corinth also supported several preachers. In reminding the Corinthians that he had a right to their financial support, Paul said, "If others be partakers of this power (the right to financial support) over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ" (1 Cor. 9:12). Several preachers, for "others" suggests this,

had been receiving support from this one congregation and Paul acknowledged that he could receive it too.

We have noted examples of churches doing mission work independent of other congregations, or without congregational cooperation. Let us now notice an instance in which several congregations supported the same preacher in the same place and at the same time. If this was done in apostolic days, the same can be done today.

(a) We have this example set forth in 2 Cor. 11:7-9. Paul said to the Corinthian church which he established, "Have I committed an offense in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself." From this passage we learn that, while preaching in Corinth, Paul received "wages" from a plurality of "churches." Paul refused to take support from the Corinthian brethren with whom he was then laboring (1 Cor. 9:1-18). He did, however, receive help from several other congregations while preaching there. He even "robbed other churches" to preach in Corinth! Not one congregation but several, sent wages to Paul in Corinth. Who were these contributing congregations? Evidently the churches of Macedonia of which Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea were probably

three! How did these congregations send their funds to Paul? 2 Cor. 11:9 informs us that they were sent by "the brethren which came from Macedonia." How many of the churches in Macedonia gave to Paul at this time? We don't know. How many "brethren" were in the group that brought the money to Corinth? We don't know. All we know is that a plurality of congregations sent money by the hands of a plurality of brethren to the same preacher at the same time and in the same place. Thus did apostolic congregations cooperate in mission work. Let us suppose, for the sake of clarity, there were three congregations in Macedonia which sent Paul and that there were three brethren, one from each congregation, who brought the money to Corinth. Were there three separate contributions with each brother bringing the money from his home church? Or was there one collective contribution from all three congregations which all three brethren had the responsibility of delivering? Were these three brethren appointed by all the congregations as messengers of all the participating churches, as was done in connection with the contribution for the poor saints in Jerusalem? Did the Macedonian congregations "pool" their contributions into one common fund, or did they keep them separate and send them by different men? The New Testament gives no clear answer to this question, but it strongly implies that it was a common fund from all the participating churches sent by brethren representing them all! Each congregation may have kept its contribution separate from the others, and it could have done this scripturally. On the other hand, these congregations may have

“pooled” their funds into one common contribution and appointed these “brethren”, as their common messengers, to convey them to Corinth. They could have done it this way and it would have been scriptural. This is the way the churches of Macedonia and Achaia sent their money to the church in Jerusalem. These congregations pooled their contributions, appointed several brethren as their messengers, and sent the money by them for the relief of the poor saints there. If such could be done in benevolent work, could it not also be done in mission work? If several congregations could thus cooperate in sending money to one church for benevolence, it seems reasonable to conclude the same could be done for missions. If not, why not? If several congregations today support the same preacher in mission work, each one can send its support directly to the man in the field. However, if these congregations wish to unite their contributions into one common fund and collectively send it, such is scriptural. Churches are at liberty to appoint one man, or a group of men, to carry the money to the preacher. Each congregation can, if it so chooses, send its contribution to another one of the participating churches. This receiving congregation can forward the funds, received from the other churches, to the preacher in the field. By such a procedure no congregation would surrender its autonomy, nor would one congregation take over the work of another. They would be cooperating in a brotherly way to their mutual edification. In this way, it seems, one congregation can cooperate with, and work through, another congregation in doing mission work. This cannot be done, however,

unless the principles which we have already laid down are faithfully observed.

3. Principles upon which congregational cooperation is scriptural.

From what has been said, we desire to emphasize ten scriptural principles upon which we believe congregations are at liberty to cooperate.

(a) *Principle number one.*

All congregational cooperation must be entered into voluntarily by each participating congregation.

(b) *Principle number two.*

All congregational cooperation must respect the autonomy of each local church and the authority of each eldership.

(c) *Principle number three.*

Congregations can cooperate in exchanging advice, letters, and salutations. They can establish and maintain communications and relations with one another (Acts 15:23; 18:27).

(d) *Principle number four.*

Congregations can cooperate in solving church problems, both of a doctrinal and moral nature (Acts 15:1-29).

(e) *Principle number five.*

Congregations can cooperate in teaching and indoctrinating one another (Acts 11:22-26; 15:19-41; 16:1-5).

(f) *Principle number six.*

Congregations can cooperate in doing benevo-

lent work. One church can help several churches, or several churches can help one church (Acts 11:27-30; Rom. 15:25-27).

(g) *Principle number seven.*

Congregations can cooperate in financial matters.

- (1) Congregations can send money to other congregations (Acts 11:27-30).
- (2) Congregations can send money to the elders of other congregations (Acts 11:27-30).
- (3) An eldership of one congregation can receive funds from other congregations and disburse them according to their judgment (Acts 11:29, 30; 21:17; 24:17).
- (4) Congregations can send men to other congregations to raise money (2 Cor. 8:16-24).
- (5) Congregations can appoint the same men as their common messengers to raise funds from other congregations and carry such funds to their ultimate destination (2 Cor. 8:16-24).
- (6) Congregations can send money to preachers in the mission field. They can send their support directly to the man (Phil. 4:15). Congregations which support the same preacher may, if they choose, select a common means of for-

warding their combined contribution to that preacher. It may be one man, or a group of men appointed to represent all participating churches. It may be a congregation, agreed upon by all, that forwards these funds.

(h) *Principle number eight.*

Congregations can cooperate in selecting and sending out men (2 Cor. 8:16-24). Several congregations can "appoint" the same man, or a group of men, as their common messengers. One man, or a group of men, can represent several congregations at the same time and be their messenger to visit other congregations on their behalf.

(i) *Principle number nine.*

Congregations can cooperate in doing mission work if mutually agreeable. They can support the same preacher in the same place at the same time. They are at liberty to send their support separately or, if they so choose, collectively (2 Cor. 11:7-9).

(j) *Principle number ten.*

Congregations can cooperate in receiving reports from workers who return from the mission field. A returning missionary can, if mutually agreeable, report to the church, or churches, which supported him. He can also visit and report on his work to churches which did not support him (Acts 14:27; 15:3, 4).

4. The advantages of congregational cooperation.

Cooperation between congregations of the Lord's church has some distinct advantages. As a rule, a congregation does more work in this way although, of course, this does not always result. Some churches are small and unable to support a missionary full time. They likely would never undertake mission work if they had to provide the entire support of a man. However, they are able, say, to supply one-fourth or one-half of the support. When churches thus cooperate in supporting the same man, they are able to do together what none of them could do alone. Thus congregational cooperation actually encourages churches to start doing mission work and, as a result, many congregations are doing such today.

Cooperation usually stimulates all participating congregations to greater missionary zeal and activity! When one congregation sees another doing mission work, it is encouraged by such an example to do more than ever before. Some congregations, which began by supplying a small part of a missionary's support, have been stimulated, by cooperative endeavor, to where they eventually assumed the entire salary of the man.

Cooperation usually binds the participating congregations closer together. As a result of their mutual labors, churches come to love each other more and understand each other better. They become better acquainted and, therefore, more sympathetic toward each other. The apostle Paul recognized that such results would come from congregations helping each other. The contribution sent by the churches of Mace-

donia and Achaia to the church of Jerusalem would cause the Jerusalem brethren to thank God and glorify Christ for such Gentile liberality. It would also break down racial barriers and animosities and cause the Jewish brethren to "long after" their Gentile brethren. Paul fervently thanked God that results followed congregational cooperation (2 Cor. 9:12-15).

5. The disadvantages of congregational cooperation.

We must recognize the fact that there are some disadvantages to cooperation among congregations. Some of these are more pronounced and real than others. This should cause us to pause and think carefully before attempting any cooperative endeavor.

Congregational cooperation may well lead, in some cases, to centralized control and oversight as some brethren fear. This particular danger may have been exaggerated, yet it is, nevertheless, real! We should face it and not ignore it. In cooperating, congregations should lean over backward, as it were, to see that they do not infringe upon one another's authority. They should scrupulously avoid overshadowing or dominating other congregations with which they labor. They should work with their sister congregations on the basis of equality and brotherly love. They should be actuated by a desire to serve, not to dominate, rule, and control! Cooperating congregations should jealously guard their independence and maintain their congregational autonomy. Elders should never diminish their authority or relinquish oversight of their congregations in order to cooperate with

churches. This is the abuse of congregational cooperation and if such is done, it should cease.

Congregational cooperation may, if abused, circumvent the authority of each participating church. This could be done by allowing the direction of a given missionary project to be placed, gradually and unintentionally, in the hands of a few hand-picked men who, not elders of any of the cooperating congregations perhaps, formulate the policy of said project. These brethren would be the "experts" and "specialists" who furnish the "brains" and "know-how" for that work. By such means, they would succeed, in practice if not in theory, in taking over direction of that project and, conceivably, thwarting the desires of the contributing congregations. This, too, is an abuse of cooperation and if such exists, it should cease.

Another disadvantage of congregational cooperation is seen in the tendency of some churches to lose their vision and initiative. While this seldom happens, it can, especially if a particular congregation has a mediocre eldership. Some elders plan mission work with which to challenge the members! They seem to have neither the ability nor the inclination to formulate such mission plans. In such a case, it is easier, and often less expensive, for these elders to send money to another church whose elders do have a good missionary program underway. In this way, do lazy, inefficient, and incompetent elders sometimes use congregational cooperation as a cover-up for their own lack of missionary vision and zeal! Such elders can "point with pride" to the fact that their con-

gregation is missionary because they are helping some church support a preacher in another field. About all they are doing, in fact, is sending a small check each month and allowing the elders of another congregation to do all their thinking and planning for them. This is an abuse of scriptural cooperation. The best argument against missionary digression is not a syllogism, but New Testament congregations thoroughly dedicated to scriptural missionary work, and a brotherhood aroused with a desire and fired with zeal to convert the world to Christ. It is significant that some churches, loudest in their denunciation of the mission work done by other congregations, seem to be doing less to convert the world than those they criticize!

III. DANGERS CONFRONTING US

Concerning mission work being done by churches of Christ, there are two distinct dangers facing us.

1. The danger of apostasy.

There is a danger, indeed, of "going too far" and doing mission work in an unscriptural way! There is a danger of brethren reaching the conclusion that "the end justifies the means" and coming to believe that any way of doing missionary work is all right just so it is done. This is probably a danger more real and threatening than we realize. This philosophy, if carried to its logical conclusion, would result in the formation of a Missionary Society which would surely lead the church into digression as it did the Christian church seventy-five years ago. There is danger

of such a Missionary Society developing among us if we lose sight of the scriptural ways and means of doing mission work. There is danger of congregations losing their autonomy and elders surrendering their congregational authority. Against these dangers, we must guard ourselves with extreme vigilance! There is also the danger of smaller congregations turning their mission work over to a few large and prominent congregations and allowing them to become the unofficial directors and promoters of brotherhood mission activities. Let us keep these potential dangers always in mind. Let us not be afraid to practice congregational cooperation because there are dangers involved! On the other hand, let us recognize such dangers and avoid them at all costs. We cannot quit cooperating in mission work, just because there is danger connected with it. On this principle, we would have to cease all our activities. We could not, for example, take the Lord's Supper, for there is danger of eating and drinking to our damnation (1 Cor. 11:23-30). Everything we do in the church has some potential danger connected with it. Prayer can be a dangerous thing if not done scripturally, but no one recommends that we quit praying! Congregational singing can be dangerous if not done right, but we must not quit singing. There is a great danger involved in the appointment of elders, but we must not refuse to appoint them because of this. There is danger in having a located preacher, but that does not argue against a congregation utilizing the services of such a man. There is danger in having a Bible School, but no one recommends its suspension because of this. Dangers face us

every day in the Lord's work and on every hand! We must recognize and avoid them. On the other hand, we must not allow such dangers to keep us from doing what should be done. Specifically, we must not permit potential dangers in mission work to discourage us from doing it. Nor should we allow controversy and criticism to diminish our zeal and enthusiasm for such work! The best way to guard against such dangers is for each congregation to do more mission work and see that such work is done in harmony with scriptural principles. Such an offensive in mission work will do more to steer the churches clear of danger than will a retreat into a negative and defensive position.

2. The Danger of Reaction

If there is danger of apostasy, there is also danger of reaction. We may indeed "go too far" in some phases of mission activity, but it is just as unscriptural to "fall short" and fail to do such work. The danger of doing little or no mission work now faces the churches. Our controversies on this subject in recent years have caused some congregations to curtail, if not cease, their missionary activities. Some churches seem so fearful of being criticized and "written up" in the papers that they prefer to sacrifice their God-given duty to do mission work rather than risk the displeasure and censure of their critics! This, brethren, is surely wrong. It is just as wrong for one congregation to do no mission work as it is for another congregation to do such work in an unscriptural manner. No congregation can consistently criti-

cize the missionary society of the Christian church as being unscriptural, when that congregation is doing little or no mission work itself. Nor can such churches consistently criticize the mission work being done by brethren, if they do none themselves.

In the New Testament, we have divine principles by which the church can and should evangelize the world. Let us stand by these principles and, by a more ambitious and far-reaching program of evangelism, expose missionary societies, and all other scriptural methods of doing mission work. This will do more to solve our problems, and settle our controversies, than all our arguing and wrangling!

There is also a danger of retrogression. If the churches fail to go forward in evangelizing the world, we will lose the ground already gained. We cannot hold our own. We will either go forward or backward so far as mission work is concerned. Brethren, retrogression is as wrong and unscriptural as digression, and make no mistake about that. It is not the privilege, but the duty, of each local congregation to do mission work. Congregations will wither and die if they lose sight of this important fact. God will not bless a congregation that is too selfish, stingy, and reactionary to carry the gospel to others. He has commissioned the church, as the pillar and ground of the truth, to preach the gospel. This is its supreme mission and every congregation can carry it out! The danger of retrogression is real! If we are concerned about the danger of apostasy, should we not be as concerned about the danger of reaction in mission

work? One is as bad as the other. Either, or both, will destroy the church.

Another reaction, that poses a very real danger on this missionary question, is the development of the spirit of Phariseeism among us. Like the Pharisees of old, whom Jesus so vehemently condemned and denounced, we are in danger of "saying" and "doing not." Most of us pay lip service to mission work and do none. We say we are interested in evangelizing the world, yet criticize the efforts other brethren put forth to accomplish this end. We have little praise and encouragement for churches which plan great mission projects but plenty of criticism and scorn for them. Such churches are often "written up" and severely castigated as unsound, if not digressive, by those who seldom encourage mission work anywhere. This danger confronts us and we should recognize and, if possible, avoid it. We are in danger of developing a self-righteous attitude toward ourselves and a severely critical one toward all brethren who disagree with us on missionary methods. We boast of our orthodoxy and glory in our doctrinal soundness, yet do little or nothing to encourage mission work. We preachers are in danger of developing such an attitude. We should avoid this as we do the plague. We preachers need to develop a larger charity toward those who disagree with us on this question. We should urge brethren everywhere to love, unity, and good will. We preachers do not know all the answers, nor do we have a solution for all the problems facing us in mission work. It is exceedingly difficult, as we all must admit, to know how far to

carry some of these scriptural principles of mission work. We should, therefore, be humble and forbearing and remember that brethren are allowed a great deal of latitude in the realm of method and human judgment. We should not, therefore, seek to rigidly bind our opinions on other brethren, nor should we refuse them our good will, fellowship, and cooperation because their methods of doing mission work do not agree with our own! Let us guard against such a Pharisaic attitude as this.

On the other hand, let us preachers encourage and promote mission work in the congregations where we labor. Let us urge brethren to make greater sacrifices to carry the gospel to others. In most instances, they will respond to our exhortations. Our attitude, as preachers, can largely make or break the mission work in the congregations where we preach. If we are zealous in promoting such work, the congregation will have a good program of evangelization; if we are lukewarm or hostile toward it, the congregation will do little as long as we are there. We preachers, therefore, have a great responsibility in this respect. Let us discharge it by constantly urging the congregation, where we labor, to do more mission work each year. Let us never, by our indifference or opposition, discourage it from doing such work.

IV. OPPORTUNITIES FACING US

The churches of Christ in America have a golden opportunity for world evangelism at the present time. The fields are white unto harvest. Many in our own community have never heard the gospel. In our state

and nation, millions have never yet learned the way of life. In other countries of the world, multiplied millions do not know the gospel and have never heard of the New Testament church. What an opportunity! What a challenge! Let us utilize these opportunities and accept these challenges before they are withdrawn. Let us encourage workers to go into the fields. Let us encourage our young men and women to give themselves to the work of the church, especially mission work. Let us urge congregations to do more—much more—evangelistic work than ever before. Let us help secure support for those brethren who are now anxious to go to the mission fields, and help those already there who are inadequately supported. There are now more brethren willing and ready to go into the wide harvest fields than there are congregations willing to send and support them. Let all elders, deacons, preachers, and members generate missionary zeal and fire the church with a fervent desire to evangelize the world.

We have done much in recent years for which we all are thankful. However, we have scarcely touched the hem of the garment. Churches of Christ in America have sufficient manpower, and financial means to do a hundred, yea, a thousand, times more mission work than we are now doing. If we will do more, God will enable us to do even more. If we will give more and make greater sacrifices, God will bless us more abundantly. Missionary work does not hurt the local church. It helps it. It doesn't hurt the financial program of the local work. It helps it. The way to see the contributions and interests grow at home is

for the church to give more to mission work. The congregations among us today which are experiencing the greatest numerical and spiritual growth are those doing the greatest amount of mission work away from home.

Brethren, let us seize the opportunities which lie before us. Let us do less disputing and arguing over methods, and concentrate on doing more real mission work. Where honest differences of opinion on this question exist, let us practice love and charity toward those with whom we disagree. Instead of retarding and defeating the work of another congregation, let us, if at all possible, help and encourage this work. Instead of working against each other, let us work together to preach the gospel to the world. We can hold our various opinions on missionary methods to ourselves, if we will, and still encourage the work others are doing. Let us find those areas of common ground, let us all faithfully stand as a united, zealous, and happy brotherhood of Christians.

OVERCOMING DENOMINATIONAL TENDENCIES

H. A. Dixon

The subject assigned to me is "Overcoming Denominational Tendencies."

Those planning this series of lectures believed (1) that such tendencies exist in the church of our Lord, (2) that they are out of harmony with the plan which the Savior intended for his church, (3) that they are dangerous and hurtful to the church, and (4) that they can and should be overcome.

A discussion of these tendencies should include a consideration of the undenominational character of the church, the evils of denominationalism, evidences of trends toward departure from the scriptural pattern of the church, and the remedy, or plan by which God's saints may overcome.

The Church, Undenominational

All Bible students admit that the New Testament reveals a church, and that Christ was the builder of it. They also believe that it had members, and that those members consisted of saved people.

The church of the New Testament is declared to be "the body of Christ" (Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18), and inspiration affirms that "There is *but one* body" (1 Cor. 12:20). This truth was emphasized by Paul to show the evils which were very early causing Christians to become partisan in spirit and practice.

The church is described as "the house of God" (1 Tim. 3:15). Obviously "the house of God" is God's family. God's children are in his family, and it is inconceivable that a family be made up of sects or parties.

Jesus prayed that oneness prevail among his followers such as that which was demonstrated between himself and the Father in heaven (John 17:20, 21). The early church manifested that oneness, being "of one heart and soul" (Acts 4:32). Paul exhorts brethren to "be of the same mind one with another" (Rom. 15:5), "that there be no divisions among you" (1 Cor. 1:10), and that they "be of one accord, of one mind" (Phil. 2:2).

The student of the New Testament cannot fail to see the emphasis upon the Lord's plan that there be "one fold (flock), one shepherd" (John 10:16). He is mindful, however, that a very different condition prevails in so-called Christendom.

By a perverted gospel many have been led away from the true concept of the church. They have subscribed to doctrines and commandments of men, and have lost respect for the authority of that which is revealed. Some, in honesty of purpose, are upholding sectarianism while intending to stand for truth. A Babel of confusion prevails instead of the unity for which our Savior prayed.

Some Evils of Denominationalism

(1) Division among his professed followers is contrary to the prayer which the Savior prayed in their behalf; that is, for all who believe on him

through the words spoken by his apostles. This includes all Christians since our faith in Christ has come through the revelations given by those men. We recall that this solemn prayer was made by our Master on the very eve of his suffering and death.

(2) Denominationalism is contrary to the teaching of the Holy Spirit. He bids us to be one of heart and soul, of one mind, and that we all speak the same things. Factionalism which produces denominations is the antithesis of that state which the Spirit demands.

(3) Denominationalism hinders the progress of the Lord's work. The people whom we are trying to convert to Christ become blinded to truth because so many different "ways" are presented by men who claim to be following the same Lord. They conclude that good people are in all churches and one is as good as another. They also decide that one does not have to belong to any church to be saved. Thus, the growth of the true church is hindered.

(4) Denominationalism is wasteful of money and energies. Men, in honesty of purpose, spend themselves and their possessions in building rival buildings and institutions instead of preaching the saving power of God to the lost.

(5) Denominationalism produces atheism and infidelity. The boy or girl from a divided home is at great disadvantage. He loves father, and wants to go to worship with him, but mother goes elsewhere. He loves her, too, and doesn't want to offend her. He is in a strait, and one that is difficult indeed. Frequent-

ly, young people from such homes resolve to have nothing to do with the church, and eventually another infidel is produced by division over religion. It becomes apparent that there is no justifying of denominationalism and that we should give ourselves to the task of putting it down. We must overcome every trend in that direction.

Some Evidences of Denominational Trends Within the Church

All discord, and seeds of denominationalism are not found outside the church. We are oft reminded of the possibility that the same seed which produced apostasy long ago is being sown within, and is actually taking root in the minds of Christians today. It can sometimes be observed in work, in teaching upon the conditions of membership, in organizations, in attitudes and in the language of those who claim to be the true people of God. Some think that we are on the verge of a new apostasy.

Your speaker concurs heartily that such apostasy is possible, and that the danger needs to be kept in view. It is well, however, that we be reminded that such dangers are not new. Seeds of denominationalism germinated at Corinth not long after the beginning of the church there. Men became preacher-followers and forgot the all-important responsibility of following the Savior. The restorers had scarcely begun their work before men were warning against denominational tendencies. Moses E. Lard wrote powerfully to refute the idea that the church had become a sect in his day (Lard's Quarterly, Vol. 1).

The church has ever had to guard against these trends, and so must it today. It is a time for watchfulness.

(1) *In Our Speech.* After Nehemiah had succeeded in leading the Jewish remnant to restore the physical walls of Jerusalem, he set himself to the task of correcting many of the spiritual defects in her bulwarks. He observed especially that due to many intermarriages and associations with peoples of other tongues that many could no longer speak the true Hebrew language. Some of them, said Nehemiah, "Spake half in the speech of Ashdod" (See Neh. 13:23-27). He was disturbed because he knew that such conditions would prevent the unity of God's people, and hinder them in their efforts to worship God together. The situation called forth severe denunciations and stern charges to the people.

"Ashdodic language" is ever a true indication of denominational influence upon our minds. The terms "Reverend," "doctor," "pastor," and even "elder" (when applied to the preacher) are examples of such language. We have lived so close to people who use these terms that many have unwittingly adopted them into their speech. Our preaching against such has as yet failed to stop their use.

The use of the term "Church of Christ" gives another opportunity to see sectarian inroads. The church belongs to Christ, and it surely is permissible to describe it as "Christ's church", or "the church of Christ." The church is also God's, and it is correctly styled "the church of God." Some suggest that

if we call it "the Church of God" we will be confused with the modern sect of that name. They maintain that we have to use only the name "Church of Christ" in order to make ourselves known. Such reasoning indicates how far many have allowed sectarianism to force them into accepting a sectarian view of the Lord's people. The fact that some denominations hold some part of the truth should never deter us from preaching and practicing that truth.

We hear of "Church of Christ preachers," "Church of Christ funerals," and many similar expressions. Our denominational friends are well pleased for us to use such terms to describe those things peculiar to us in contrast with things characterizing Baptists, Methodists and the like. If we should speak of a *gospel minister* as opposed to one of theirs the picture would quickly change.

Occasionally someone speaks of the Church of Christ teaching certain things. They say, "The Church of Christ teaches that immersion is baptism"; "It teaches that the music God commanded is vocal"; "It teaches a right division of the word"; or "It teaches against worldliness." Again we allow a denominational view to cloak our language. It is true that members of the church should teach, but the point overlooked is that the authority is not vested in the church. We simply teach what is taught in the word of God. Otherwise, we make the church as sectarian as other groups, and we have no word of protest against the basic fallacy of Roman Catholicism which has ever advocated the authority of the church. Our Ashdodic speech betrays us.

(2) *In Plan of Salvation to Erring Christians.*
 We oppose the confessional of Romanism while allowing the idea to grow that the church is a confessional. We do not condemn public acknowledgments of wrongs, but we must be mindful that our confessional is before the Father's throne. It is there that we may receive mercy and find grace in time of need (Heb. 4:16). One who repents and confesses his faults to God often realizes that he has also sinned before his brethren. He desires to inform them of his repentance and to seek their forgiveness. The public acknowledgment is the best means. Such does not mean, however, that the church is a mediator between us and God.

(3) *In the Work of Some "Located" Evangelists.*
 This phase of my study falls under the heading of "Overcoming Professionalism in the Ministry" which has been discussed by one of the speakers on this lecture program. It will be passed by in this discussion with only one or two observations.

We deny that "located" evangelism is of itself unscriptural. As long as one does the work of an evangelist the period of service is unlimited by the scriptures. However, when a preacher "takes over" the church and usurps the work of elders, we do have a "pastor system" unsurpassed by any denomination. In some instances this condition has prevailed, and we need to focus attention upon this as another denominational trend.

(4) *In the Laws and Tests of Fellowship Un-taught in God's Word.* As indicated in the outset,

denominations have arisen in part because men invented new doctrines and refused to be circumscribed by the Bible. This accounts for the major differences between sects and the true church. The tendency to make such laws, however, still disturbs Zion. One brother decides that we can pray acceptably only in one position of body, and with all good intention of being loyal to God he binds this upon all who worship God. Some made imperative the wearing of hats by women in any act of worship. Some contend that women teachers have no place. Some make the church building a holy "Sanctuary," and forbid its use for anything save worship. Its use for weddings is frowned upon, and under no circumstances do they permit a group to congregate there to eat a common meal. One avers that private educational institutions which teach the Bible are an insult to Christ, and that such should not be patronized under any circumstance. One decides that works of charity can be done by only one arrangement. One decides that world evangelization must be done by sending all funds direct to the evangelist in the field, and that a sending agency, an individual or a church of the Lord becomes an institution contrary to, and violative of the Lord's plan for the church. It is contended that the church through which the funds are sent becomes a controlling power, and destroys the autonomy of the local church which submits its funds for such use. Each man's plan becomes law to all in his eyes.

We do not disparage anyone's stand for truth. If each of these views is sustained by the scriptures, then

it follows that each should become law. One must conform to God's law.

We oppose all trends toward sectarianism, and we must readily admit that it can destroy the church through any approach. It is possible that it may make its approach through any of the things suggested. Warnings about any potential danger is in order. We need to exercise caution in all of our work, and we should give due consideration to every warning signal. Why should we decry that good men challenge and investigate our practices?

We do believe that there are some cries of gloom, however, over things which of themselves indicate no trend toward sectarianism. The Bible school seeks to train the intellect, the moral or spiritual, and the physical man no more encroaches upon and usurps the work of the church than does the home in which the Bible is studied and the child trained in its concepts. The school could take over the work of the church, we admit; but that does not prove that schools which are not taking over such work constitute a trend toward denominationalism.

Any home can become an orphans' home if the family so desires. Such would not destroy or usurp the function of any congregation. Any church might see fit to establish a large home and care for a number of orphans, employing all help needed. Such would not violate any law of God of which your speaker is aware. Furthermore, the plan by which several brethren come together to care for such children does not become wrong unless one can show that the making of such a home takes over the work of the church,

or that such an improvised home constitutes a *new* and *unauthorized* institution. The real question is whether or not it is wrong for individual Christians to provide a home for orphans.

One church, by simply turning its funds over to another for handling, would surrender its autonomy, and place the other in control. That does not prove, however, that it is wrong for the church in Henderson to send a donation to the elders of the church in Abilene, asking that it be used specifically toward preaching the gospel by radio to a nation-wide audience. The fact that we can direct the place and person to be benefited shows that the authority is with the donor.

There are always tendencies among us in attitudes, if not in practice. Some members don't want us to condemn sectarianism. At heart they don't believe that denominationalism is wrong. Some of us are more concerned about Alexander Campbell or other worthies than we are in what the Bible teaches. Some of us are followers of men through religious journals. We wait for a certain journal to see which side of a question we are to take. Some have the same attitude toward schools. All these things indicate that the spirit which divided Christians at Corinth still prevails. These are sectarian trends.

Must Rise Above Sectarian Trends

The remedy for denominationalism is not a new one. God's people have ever been destroyed for lack of knowledge, and this lack is responsible for every sectarian error. The need, then, is for a closer study

of God's Word, and for an increased confidence in, and respect for, the completeness and finality of that word. As the lamented T. B. Larimore might have presented his appeal to a divided religious world, we call upon men to believe *all* that God says; become and be all that he requires; do *all* that he commands; worship and serve as he directs; then, lovingly trust him for all he promises.

When men learn of the one Lord, one faith and one birth, they will seek to be members of the one body, and to put away partyism and strife.

Such has long been our theme to those who represent denominationalism around us, but we have not considered how important the demonstration of the unity is within our own members. We have often preached unity while practicing division.

Our hope in overcoming the trends toward denominationalism within the church lies in the full demonstration of the same plea which we make to those outside. There is no substitute for knowledge, and we must seek for the wisdom to apply that knowledge in all our relationships. Free discussion of all issues will help us secure that knowledge if the proper spirit be manifest. The application of the restoration principle: "In faith, unity; in opinion, liberty; and in all things, love" should still be our aim. Many disturbances in Zion lie wholly in the realm of opinion, and opinion cannot become law. The unity of the faith, God's law, is the standard; and love is the governing force to lead us in the application of the law. Love never seeks to destroy but to save. It does not look for the faults and weaknesses of others, but

bears, believes, hopes and endures that truth may triumph. Love destroys even the roots of bitterness which often are observed among the Lord's people, and helps us to open the eyes of our understanding so that we may perceive the truth. It shows the way to the joy of fellowship as portrayed by David in Psalms 133:1: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Eternal reward can come only to those who overcome evil. Sectarianism is evil and must be overcome, or it will destroy our souls. Let us take up the whole armor of truth and press the battle until victory is secured. By his grace we will overcome.

CARING FOR ORPHANS AND WIDOWS

George H. Stephenson

I am very grateful and feel very humble because of the confidence which has been placed in me by those who have asked me to speak on this important subject. I am keenly conscious of the responsibility which is mine and it is my earnest prayer that each of us may seek to learn and to do the will of our heavenly Father in caring for widows and orphans.

God has always wanted his people to show interest in the care of the unfortunate people of the world, especially the fatherless and widows. In both the Old Testament and New Testament, we find that God taught his people to minister to the needs of the distressed.

In the law of Moses, the Israelites were taught, "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless" (Exodus 22:22-24). Moses taught the nature of God in these words: "For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment" (Deut. 10:17-19).

We find a description of wickedness in the false accusation against Job, "For thou hast taken a pledge

from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing. Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry. But as far the mighty man, he had the earth; and the honorable man dwelt in it. Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken" (Job 22:6-9).

We see that Job understood the care one should have for fatherless and widows in his declaration in Job 31:16-22: "If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail, or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; . . . If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw any help in the gate; then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone."

Passages from the Old Testament could be multiplied teaching the same truth that God's people in ancient times were expected to care for and not oppress the widows and orphans. We shall notice just one more verse: Isaiah 1:17, 18, "Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppression, judge the fatherless, plead for the innocent. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Certainly, in the New Testament age we would not expect the religion of Christ to have less regard for widows and orphans than the religion of the Old Testament. James gives us a description of the religion of Christ in these words, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). If our religion is pleasing to God, it must include caring for the fatherless and widows. We may be able to show we have not corrupted the worship; we may be able to reason in a logical way the scripturalness of the position "we occupy"; but if we have not cared for the fatherless and widows, our religion is not the religion of Christ.

The entire spirit of New Testament Christianity was that of mercy, compassion and love. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all things, put on love, which is the bond of perfectness" (Col. 3:12-14). Jesus taught that if we are to receive mercy, we must be merciful (Matt. 5:7). Surely, if we manifest mercy and compassion such as Christians should, we will want to do our part to care for the needs of those in distress.

The world has a more sympathetic care for the unfortunate since Jesus came, and wherever men believe in him, they have a higher regard for helpless children. Arthur J. Moore, a Methodist missionary to

China, told of the dreadful conditions in that country in 1938. He told about wagons coming around each morning to carry away the dead bodies of babies and children who died by the hundreds on the streets. Can you imagine such a condition in our country? In this country, we have felt some of the good influence of the loving, sympathetic Savior who teaches us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

We have often referred to the second chapter of James to show the error of those who teach salvation by faith only. While it is true this chapter refutes their erroneous belief, we need to be reminded that James is giving some practical lessons to Christians in teaching them to minister to the needs of their brethren. "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" (James 2:15, 16).

Our first obligation is toward those who are our brothers or sisters, but we should be interested in all the needy of the world. Of course, if one is needy simply because of his own indolence, we are under no obligation to help him. We are hindering rather than helping a man when we encourage him to beg rather than work for a living. Paul plainly taught, "If any would not work, neither let him eat" (2 Thess. 3:10). But those should be helped who are the victims of circumstances over which they have no control, such as the fatherless and the widows, as we find ourselves able. Some have the idea that we are under

no obligation to help take care of any except those who are Christians. We should keep the words spoken by Paul, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10).

Would we say to a hungry, needy child, "Go away; I can't help you. Your folks are not members of the church of Christ!" Or suppose a man were on an island during the time of a flood. If we were in a boat, would we stop to inquire about his church affiliation before we would rescue him? I hope not. We need to hear again the wonderful story told by our Lord about the man who was left half dead by the thieves and robbers. We can follow in the way of the priest and Levite, unconcerned and indifferent toward the physical needs of our fellow-man, but I believe that Jesus would have us to follow the example of the Samaritan who has been called by the world the *Good Samaritan*— who poured the oil and wine on the unfortunate man's wounds and put him on his beast and took him to the inn, and made provision for his further care.

The primary work of the church is to preach the gospel (Eph. 3:10; 1 Tim. 3:15; Mark 16:15, 16). The apostles in Jerusalem had to devote their time to the ministry of the word and prayer (Acts 6:3, 4) and could not leave their work to serve tables. However, the church did minister to the physical needs of others, and when the gospel is preached and fully practiced it will cause us to open our hearts to the needs of those in distress.

Having seen that the Bible teaches our obligation to care for the fatherless and widows, we now want to consider this question, "How can we scripturally care for them?" In answer to this question, I would say that we do not have definite instructions in the Bible concerning the method or methods of doing this work. The New Testament is not a book of detailed instructions telling us how to do the work of the Lord; it is a Book setting forth general principles which should guide us in all we do in religion. I am not unmindful of the fact that the scriptures are said to furnish us unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). It does furnish us unto every work we are to do, but I would remind you it does not always tell us *how* we are to do every work. If we will remember this, it will help to avoid some of the confusion which arises among those who are endeavoring to follow the Bible as their only guide and who respect the authority of Christ.

We cannot find the chapter and verse which tells us to build church buildings. However, we can find the verse commanding us to assemble (Heb. 10:25) and we therefore conclude we have the authority to build a building in which we can assemble. We can not find the details of how we are to carry on Bible classes on Sunday morning. Nevertheless, we feel there are certain principles set forth in the Bible which justify our teaching the Bible in classes on Sunday morning or any other time the church may have opportunity. We would not approve the organization of a Sunday School similar to that which may be found in the average denomination. We be-

lieve, however, that since the Bible is not specific in telling us how to teach, that we should use the best methods possible, as long as no scriptural principles are violated. We feel that the fact that Paul instructs other women to teach a specific class, the younger women, (Titus 2) and the fact that Jesus frequently took his disciples apart to give them separate instruction is proof that the Bible recognizes the *principle* of class teaching. We do not have specific instruction concerning the details of our worship. Of course, we are not to add any thing to the worship which does not have the authority of the New Testament behind it. Nevertheless, we have not been told whether to open our worship with a song or with a prayer, or whether we shall have the Lord's Supper at the beginning or at the close of the service. We have not been told whether we are to lay our money on a table, put it in a basket, place it in a box, or put it in an envelope. Any of these methods would be scriptural. In all that we do we should endeavor to do "all things decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40). We should use the best methods possible, all the time being careful not to violate any scriptural principles.

While we cannot find all of the details for caring for orphans and widows in the New Testament, we do notice the following means of supporting the needy:

1. Needy were cared for by individuals. This is shown in the story of the Good Samaritan. Individuals contributed to Paul's needs in the gospel supplying the lack of the churches in their support of him. (See 1 Cor. 16:17 which tells of Stephanas,

Fortunatus, and Achaicus.) The rich young ruler was told to sell what he had and give to the poor (Matt. 19:21).

2. The church provided for the needy in its own congregation. The church at Jerusalem appointed men to see that its widows were not neglected in the daily ministrations (Acts 6:1-8). However, it might be well to note that many Bible scholars hold to the belief that there were many different groups meeting for worship in Jerusalem rather than many thousands meeting in one assembly. If this be true, then the "daily ministration" was a co-operative work of all the Christians in one city. Regardless of our views on this matter, I am sure we all agree that a congregation may provide for the needs of those in the town where it is located.

3. We find in the New Testament that congregations co-operated together in raising funds to send to another congregation to help it in its benevolent work. We read in Acts 11:27-30, "And in those days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."

Many of the Scriptures pertaining to the matter of giving in the New Testament deal with a collection

made by various congregations as they sent their money to the church in Jerusalem. In writing to the Romans, Paul spoke of this collection in these words, "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea, and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints" (Rom. 15:30, 31).

Then we read in 1 Cor. 16:1-4, "Now concerning the collection of the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me."

In these verses, we learn that churches in Galatia as well as Corinth were contributing to the same cause. They were to collect a sum of money and appoint men to accompany Paul in taking the money to Jerusalem. Later, in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians we receive further instructions concerning the matter in chapters 8 and 9. Here we find Titus and an unnamed brother traveling among the churches and having been selected by the churches to collect the money for the benevolent work at Jerusalem. Notice this reading:

"But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he

accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you. And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches; and not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind: Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which administered by us: Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which I have in you. Whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker concerning you: or our brethren be enquired of, they are the *messengers of the churches*, and the glory of Christ. Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf" (2 Cor. 8:16-24).

This shows us that congregations worked together in sending money to another church to be used in benevolent work. While they had a common interest and a common purpose, each congregation remained separate and independent from the other congregations. Just because the churches of Galatia were contributing to the same work to which the church in Corinth contributed did not mean they were joined together in some sort of federation or that they were organized into an ecclesiastical body composed of many different congregations. Neither were these

churches under the control of the church in Jerusalem.

Some may say that this furnishes us an example of congregational cooperation only in an emergency; that this collection made by more than one congregation was for an emergency only. However, this emergency was something which had lasted for at least a year. Paul said, "For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many" (2 Cor. 9:2). Furthermore, if there must be an *emergency* before these Scriptures apply in regard to cooperation; then there must also be an emergency before we can use 1 Cor. 16, 2 Cor. 8 and 9, to apply in regard to any giving. If this be true, we have no authority for taking a contribution on the first day of each week unless we have heard of some church in distress. We would have no authority for a regular contribution for preaching or any other work of the church. Of course, we believe these Scriptures do furnish us an *example in giving* for *any work* which the church is authorized to do even though they were written for the specific purpose of raising funds for an immediate need, and that need one of benevolence. Why is it not also reasonable to see that these Scriptures furnish us the *example* of congregations working together in sending money to a church to be used in benevolence? By what manner of reasoning could it be right for congregations to cooperate in meeting an emergency and yet it be wrong for them to cooperate in the same manner when it is not an emergency? If they did

not lose their autonomy in working together in an emergency, why should we say they lose their autonomy when it is not an emergency? The truth is that there was a *need* which existed. Men went among the churches to collect contributions to meet this *need*. There are *needs* to be met today, and it is scriptural for congregations to contribute to the same need and they do not thereby form a super-organization or federation of churches, and they do not surrender their autonomy or independence any more than the churches of Macedonia and Achaia surrendered theirs.

In ministering to the needs of orphans and widows, they must have a *home* or a place where they can be cared for. The church at Jerusalem provided for the needs of the widows who were neglected, and in so doing evidently provided for any needy children the widows might have had. We do not know whether these widows continued to live in their own homes or whether they were taken into other homes or whether a special home was provided for them. We do not know the details of the provisions made for them. We do know that seven men of sound judgment were selected to care for the widows. Their work was referred to as a "business." And we do know that these widows and orphans would have to have a home of some sort.

We may prejudice the minds of people by speaking against "institutionalism." We are all opposed to any institution which usurps the work of the church. But in one sense, the home, every home, mine and yours, exists as an "institution" separate and apart from

the church. The home was *instituted* by Jehovah even as the church was *instituted* by Christ. In my home we have Bible reading and prayer and thus do some things done by the church, but we never think of our home being in conflict with the work of the church. Christian homes are an asset to the work of the church. It is possible for the church to scripturally contribute in a financial way to a home where there is a need for such a contribution. The church where I preach helps to maintain the home where I live. The church owns the house in which I live, although I can not find chapter and verse where a New Testament church ever bought a "preacher's home." I can find that "they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). I believe, therefore, the church has a right to provide a home for a preacher and his family to help support them. It is also right for the church to provide a *home* for widows and orphans to care for them.

Now it is possible to take orphans and widows into our homes. Paul teaches that children and even nephews should care for their own (1 Tim. 5:4). We should not expect the church to support our own parents, and we should realize, "If any provide not for his own, and specially those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:8). While this is true, there are conditions in which widows or other old people have no children to support them, or have children who refuse to support them. Christians will try to provide for them in caring for them either in their own homes or some other home.

Everyone agrees that the best place for any child is in a home with its own Christian parents to love and protect it. Also, the next best place for a child is to be adopted into a Christian home where it will have parents to love and protect it. It is encouraging, therefore, to see the growing number of families who are adopting children into their homes.

The Lord has blessed our home with two sons. Our older son was born into our family and our younger son was adopted into our family. However, I think I can speak for all who have thus adopted children, that we do not feel that we have done this just to be benevolent or charitable toward a child any more than you feel that when you care for children born to you that you are being benevolent or charitable when you feed, clothe, and care for them. We are rather selfish in our adoption of children. We realize they give us much more than we could ever give them.

We have encouraged childless couples to adopt children, because we know that it will mean much to their homes as well as to the children. We had some friends who recently adopted three children into their home at one time. The oldest of these three was four years old. We believe it is good that these children can all be reared together in one home. We believe it is much better than if they were in an orphanage, and we believe they will greatly enrich the lives of those who have adopted them.

However, the problem of caring for dependent children cannot be solved by simply saying we will adopt them into our own homes. When we face the facts, we realize there are many conditions which make it

impossible to care for many needy children in such a manner.

There is no difficulty in getting homes for babies. As a matter of fact, there is always a greater demand than we have a supply of babies eligible for adoption. I know of any number of couples today who are faithful Christians, who would be happy to adopt babies or small children who are eligible for adoption. But not all dependent children are babies. Most of them are older and should we take them into our homes, we would find ourselves faced with difficulties and problems we could not solve. Also, we would find ourselves breaking up many family ties of brothers and sisters which would not be desirable. The past environment of these children, in many instances, would not make for a happy association with our own children. Most of the dependent children of today are from broken homes, rather than from homes destroyed by death. These children are not to be held responsible for the sins of their parents and usually they have even a greater need for care and attention than children who have been made orphans by death. We would not find it easy to care for such children with the possibility of being "hounded" by their parents. We would not find it easy in most instances for these children to adjust to the discipline and routine of our own homes. We have had some such children in our own home for a period of a few weeks, and I can speak from actual experience in this respect. It takes more skill and training than most of us have in coping with the problems which arise from handling many of the children who are

older. Of course, there are many individual cases where the adoption of older children does not prove satisfactory to the children and the parents. However, we might as well not "kid" ourselves; the majority of the members of the church have no intention of taking care of many of the dependent children and widows in their own homes.

A local congregation can assist in taking care of its own widows and orphans in various ways. Where it is possible, the church should endeavor to help the widow and her fatherless children to continue to maintain their own home. While I was preaching for the church in Wichita Falls, we had a poor widow in the congregation who had been left with seven or eight children. I am glad that that good church came to her aid. They helped buy groceries for the family each month. Men in the church worked in repairing the dilapidated, old house in which the widow and her children lived. Clothing was provided for the children as they had need and it was seen that the necessary medical and dental attention was provided each child. Members of the church arranged for a "car pool" to bring the family to the services of the church. This arrangement was much better than sending these children away to some orphanage. However, had the mother been dead, we would have had a different problem.

I believe it is Scriptural and right for the church to build and maintain homes which especially care for needy children or for widows. The church may maintain such a home in its own community. I believe also that it is Scriptural and right for any num-

ber of congregations who so desire to make contributions to such a work. If congregations in New Testament times contributed to a benevolent work, and yet they did not lose their independence, congregations today can contribute to the work of caring for the needy without losing their independence.

I am in favor of orphan homes just as long as they are just homes for the *homeless*. I would not want them to be so large that they lose the spirit of the family and home life.

Some have thought the orphan home is parallel to the missionary society. There is no reason why any home should be considered parallel to the missionary society whether it is my home or whether it is a *home* for the homeless. We need to be warned of the dangers of the development of an ecclesiasticism and it has been shown that arguments for the Missionary Society by some pioneer preachers were based on the Scriptures which teach cooperation of individual congregations. But we ought to be able to see a vast difference between cooperation of congregations in benevolent work which is practiced now, and which was practiced in the New Testament, and in the Missionary Society. The Missionary Society is what its name *implies*. It is an *organization* of churches, with each church electing its own delegates who in turn elect its official board. They make their own by-laws and constitution, and whatever they decide in a convention is passed on to the local congregation. Informed individuals know that the United Christian Missionary Society controls all Christian Churches affiliated with the Society. Each congregation thus

has surrendered its independence and its autonomy. In most instances, members of the Disciples or Christian Church recognize they are just another organized denomination.

The orphan homes which have been operated by our brethren have been in existence long enough for us to determine if they are leading us in the wrong direction. Has there been any centralization of power given to one church over another church? I cannot believe it. Does anyone suppose the church in Tipton, Oklahoma, is exercising control over the church in Abilene simply because the church in Abilene has had fellowship with the church in Tipton in helping care for orphans? Are the congregations organized into some sort of federation and tied together in some unscriptural union? They are not. Many congregations contribute to the same work, and are joined in a mutual interest, but not by any stretch of our imagination can we see any federation of churches.

When the late J. B. Nelson was superintendent of Boles Home, he made this statement in a splendid lecture delivered in Tulsa, Oklahoma. "Boles Home is not a church society nor is it an auxiliary, or a helper to the church, but a *big family of which my wife and I try to act the part of parents*. (Emphasis mine—G.H.S.). The home looks to the church for help and sustenance just as an individual comes to the church begging for help. Instead of being only one knocking at the church for aid and sustenance we have about 235 calling. The missionary society directs all funds sent and chooses and pays missionaries. They destroy the autonomy of the local congregation in the brother-

hood. She, Boles Home, is lying at your door like Lazarus at the gate of the rich man begging for the crumbs from your table to help feed, clothe, educate, and properly train the boys and girls that otherwise would live in rags, filth, ignorance and be doomed to ruin, and many to immorality and prison.

“Again, I repeat Boles Home is no kin to the missionary societies. One is ready to say, you call upon the churches for maintenance. Yes, and so does the poor family that is a member of the local congregation, and so does the poor family around the corner where you worship call upon the local church for help, and often fails to get it . . . An individual family may call upon the church for help. Though denied, nothing is said, but let individuals be collected together as children at Boles Home and they call for help. Then it is condemned and classed with the missionary societies. Consistency, where art thou? Hast thou vanished?”

Brother Nelson further said, “I wish to say with emphasis that Boles Home is a family of orphans with the trustees and superintendent as legal guardians. I am superintendent of two orphan homes. The public road divides them. I have my two fatherless and motherless grandchildren in my home. Then across the road I have 235 children. The only difference of my caring for them, the first, they are my blood kin and my wife and I support them. With the orphan children in Boles Home, I care for them with the churches of Christ supporting both them and me. Boles Home is no more an organization than your

home, or my private home across the road from Boles Home where I am rearing my two grandchildren.”

I appreciate these words of that godly man who died while he was still working with Boles Home. I appreciate the work done by all of those whose lives have been dedicated to the training and care of helpless children. I know these homes have made mistakes, just as your home and my home have made mistakes. I am glad to see work being done by every individual and by every congregation working in its own community, but I cannot forget the times I have gone to these homes with the request that they receive some child. I do not know where those children would have gone. I knew that when they went to Boles or Tipton they would have godly men and women to try to help them and make them into Christian citizens. I have always felt that if my wife and I were gone, we would like to know our children could have the opportunity they would receive in such a home. And I believe you would like to know, if you had children left behind they could have a place where they could be cared for and taught the truth. There are many who have been saved from lives of sin and who today are respectable citizens of our country and workers in the church all because some have been willing to contribute their means for the welfare of homeless children. Today, boys and girls who had no home, until they were given a home provided by the generous hearts of Christian people, are now respected men and women with homes of their own.

We are glad for the accomplishments of God's people, and yet we must confess that on the whole, we

have done so little in caring for widows and orphans, so little in practicing pure and undefiled religion. Let us do more in our home congregations, and let us not forget those who are paying the bills in the homes now operated by our brethren. Does anyone honestly want these homes closed? Do we want these boys and girls turned into the streets? The Catholic Church would gladly take over. They know that all that they do in their orphan homes and in ministering to the needs of unfortunate humanity elevates the Catholic Church in the minds of the world. One who has witnessed the beneficence of a kindly nun or priest is hard to convince that their religion is wrong. We have a hard time showing such a one the pernicious and soul-destroying doctrine believed by Catholics.

As we practice Christianity in our own communities and in caring for orphans and widows, we can know that men and women will be more anxious to hear the gospel we preach. They may not listen to our doctrine, but they will listen to the eloquence of Christian living.

In the final day when all men must give an account unto their Maker, I hope none of us will be among the number to hear the words of doom, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat: and I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." And the Judge of all shall say to all of these, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me" (Matt. 25:45).

OVERCOMING PROFESSIONALISM IN THE MINISTRY

By Paul Southern

Broadly speaking, the term "profession" means one's principal calling, vocation, or employment. In this respect every Christian pursues a calling. Paul said: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called" (Eph. 4:1). But in a more restricted sense relevant to our discussion, profession means the occupation to which one devotes oneself. Among these professions there are three that have long been recognized by the world as the "learned professions." They are the professions of theology, law and medicine.

The subject assigned for this study has to do with "Overcoming Dangerous Tendencies Toward Professionalism in the Ministry." Professionalism simply means the following of a profession for a livelihood or for a gain. The term "ministry" relates to the various duties and responsibilities of a Christian who serves as a teacher and preacher of God's word. That there are dangerous tendencies associated with this work is assumed in the very wording of the subject. However, it does not imply that every tendency is malignant or insidious among the people of God. As long as we exist in the flesh we must guard against dangerous trends in all phases of church life and government.

Bible students are aware of the fact that God uses men in the ministry of the word. Jesus said to the apostles: "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:19, 20). "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mk. 16:15). To Timothy, Paul said: "Preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2), "And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2).

In its proper spiritual essence, preaching is the noblest calling on earth. Martin Luther was impressed with the solemnity of this responsibility when he prayed: "Lord, enable us to be faithful stewards of the gospel." The primary purpose of the faithful minister is that he preach the pure gospel of Christ, in word and deed, without addition or subtraction, and also without apology, fear, or favor.

It is the highest and hardest of all callings to be a preacher of the word, but it is the one on which the church continually depends. When Elisha requested a double portion of Elijah's spirit, he was told that he had asked a hard thing (2 Kings 2:9, 10). Paul admonished Timothy to "Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2:3).

There is no substitute for the place of preaching in the purpose of God. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Cor. 4:7), and "We are ambassadors

therefore on behalf of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:20). However, preaching must not be a profession but a passion. Paul said, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16). While he waited for Silas and Timothy in Athens, "his spirit was provoked within him as he beheld the city full of idols" (Acts 17:16). The paganism of the city provoked a paroxysm in Paul, and nothing could keep him from preaching the word. Without such a passion no preacher should pollute the pulpit with his person.

The danger of professionalism in the ministry is real. It has posed a problem to the church ever since apostolic times. Paul described some who "preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one do it of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel; but the other proclaim Christ of faction, not sincerity, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds" (Phil. 1:15-17). Everything about the work of a preacher lends itself toward professionalism, so we must constantly be on guard against dangerous tendencies. To some of these things we turn our attention in this discussion.

A. Professional Pulpiteers

There is always the danger of our becoming professional pulpiteers or parsons in the work of the ministry. This tendency may be reflected in a variety of ways.

1. *Preparation.* We mention first the matter of preparation. Surely, it is important that one make preparation for the work of preaching. Paul said to Timothy: "Give diligence to present thyself ap-

proved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). "Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching" (1 Tim. 4:13). It is axiomatic that, "You cannot teach what you do not know, and you cannot lead where you do not go." But any discussion regarding training preachers evokes the inevitable fear of developing professional parsons. Some Christians seem to think that professionalism in the ministry can be developed only in Bible schools. They conclude that all Christian colleges have been turned into institutions for making professional preachers. In their militant efforts to guard against such tendencies these critics make a profession out of keeping professionalism out of the ministry.

The danger of professionalism is real, but the real factor involved is not in a man's training, but in his motives. The fact that a preacher has had the privileges of a formal education should not make him any more professional than one who has not had such privileges. Professionalism may be as great a danger among "untrained" preachers as it is among the formally educated ones. And certainly, one does not have to be a college graduate in order to be prepared to preach. Some of the greatest preachers the church has known never saw the inside of a college class room except as visitors. They schooled themselves in the word of the Lord, and by self discipline became powerful preachers. But preparation for preaching is necessary, whether it is done in a college or a corn field. When a person quits studying, he should hang some crepe on his nose. If his mind is not dead, it

soon will be. A young man trying to enroll in Abilene Christian College a few years ago must have had some kind of professional preparation in mind. Coming to the head of the Bible department for guidance in registration, he said: "I have entered the ministry. Now what must I do next?" The next time we saw him he was "jerking soda" at the corner drug. That is where he should stay until he gets the proper spiritual insight regarding the work of saving souls.

In speaking of preparation let us remember that no man is prepared to preach the gospel until he has developed a passion for the souls of men. He may speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but if he has not love he becomes "sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1). He may have the highest academic degrees the world offers, and "know all mysteries and all knowledge," but if he has not love, he is nothing (1 Cor. 13:2).

2. *Pose.* Preachers sometimes become professional in their pose. They may develop a fixed posture for artistic effect or in affectation. It is not unusual to hear someone say, "That man looks like a preacher." A photographer at a home wedding approached a gentleman before the ceremony and said: "I presume you are the minister, since you have such an official look." We have all heard the classic story of a traveling salesman who stepped from a train in a small Southern city. Mistaking him for the visiting preacher who was to hold their summer meeting, two deacons stepped forward to welcome him. But the salesman excused himself, saying: "Pardon me, gentlemen.

I am not a preacher. It is indigestion that makes me look this way."

This professional pose may manifest itself in a preacher's bearing or gestures, sometimes designedly adopted. He may fold his hands in front, or behind, parrot-fashion, thinking that such affectation is a part of his priestly role.

3. *Phraseology.* The professional pulpiteer who develops a distinctive phraseology. His pious platitudes become couched in such theological terms that the average person cannot understand him. Soteriology, transubstantiation, eschatology, and apologetics may be common parlance to the preacher, but these terms are professional jargon to the pew. Gospel preachers should always speak in terms easily understood. When souls are at stake, one's speech should be simple.

4. *Preachments.* Pulpiteers are likewise tempted to be professional in their homiletical pronouncements. Sermons delivered in such a mechanical style become little more than empty preachments. When a preacher becomes more interested in heads than in hearts, he needs to go back to the prayer room. Some preachers seem to have a professional interest in statistics, and all their sermons are designed to that end. One gospel preacher was disturbed because the sermon he had delivered the night before did not bring some visible results. He indicated that the sermon had always brought fifteen or twenty responses. "Tonight," he said, "I am going to preach my sugar stick. I always smoke them out with it, and I am

expecting thirty or forty responses." In dealing with never-dying souls, such a statement smacks of sacrilegious professionalism.

Matthew Arnold was wont to say that for some people the favorite book in the Bible was the book of Numbers. Preachers must constantly be on guard against the pernicious snare in statistics. In the kingdom of God quality counts as well as quantity. In fact, it is always better to weigh heads than to count them. Preachers who set quotas, punch clocks, and operate on a mechanical schedule should be in a powerhouse and not in the pulpit. Synthetic sermons constructed from ecclesiastical ersatz have no place in the purpose of God. In order to heal the hearts of men sermons must be smelted in the crucible of life.

5. *Privilege.* Pulpitarian privilege is another professional tendency that we must constantly guard against. Preachers are afforded many special privileges that are not granted other Christians. Church members unwittingly surround ministers with benefits and courtesies that may be abused. In social gatherings the preacher becomes the center of attraction, and every one is wont to listen when he speaks. Because of his religious activities, he is given what the world calls "the preferments of the church." Civil authorities honor the dignity of the "clerical office," and excuse ministers when others would be held responsible. Transportation lines extend these gratuities to include financial benefits in the form of reduced rates, and sometimes free passes. The minister who expects and demands such privileges makes of his high calling a secular profession.

6. *Piety*. Another trait of the professional pulpiteer is reflected in Pharisaical piety. Due to the weaknesses of the flesh, this has always posed a problem. For this cause Christ often rebuked the Pharisees, saying: "Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me" (Matt. 15:7, 8). Preachers today are not immune to this dangerous tendency. We must constantly guard against an air of purity and a "holier than thou" attitude.

In this respect preaching is beset with many perils and subtle temptations. We must be careful not to become godless in the service of God. Familiarity with sacred things may become dangerous. Preachers may talk theoretically about religious experiences without actually enjoying them. They may deceive themselves into thinking that they possess what they are talking about. They may preach about prayer and pray very little themselves. They may plead for Bible study, and do very little devotional reading themselves. They may persuade men to service in the kingdom while they are lazy and indifferent.

A faithful steward of the gospel lives the gospel, striving for a life of genuine piety and godliness, with the help that comes from on high. The faithful steward must himself possess the treasure which he seeks to administer. Let us beware lest we lose a sense of reality in our preaching. Milton said: "He who would be a true poet ought himself to be a true poem." Good fruit comes only from good trees, and good effects come only from good causes. A preacher

must himself be a sermon in the truth of the message which he proclaims.

B. Professional Policemen

Preachers sometimes assume the role of professional policemen in the church. They may suffer from an omnipotence complex and feel obligated to police the brotherhood. A man obsessed with such a compulsion attempts to pour everyone into his theological mold. Such a drive manifests itself in various ways.

1. *Peepers.* First of all, it results in a lot of pulpitarian peeping. Pious professors in the days of Christ were continually snooping around trying to see something wrong in the Master's program. When the Pharisees saw Jesus eating with publicans and sinners, they considered the sight something serious to behold (Matt. 9:10-13). Paul described certain false brethren "who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 2:4).

Modern preachers are not immune to this evil tendency. With microscopic eyes some are constantly looking for minute infractions of what they hold to be spiritual law. As peeping toms, they want to bring everything under their closest scrutiny. One preacher, for example, considered it his responsibility to spy on church members whom he suspected of wrongdoing. Night after night he made calls and followed cars to check on various tips and rumors. Another preacher kept a file on prominent men in the brotherhood. Once he offered to lend a minister his files to be used against a fellow Christian in a church quarrel. But

the kingdom of God is not a police state where Christians spy on Christians.

2. *Protectors.* Peeping preachers soon develop a professional interest in protecting the faith. Inflated with a kind of egotistical blubber, some assume the role of universal guardians. Like some of old they trust "in themselves that they are righteous, and set all others at nought" (Luke 18:9). The Pharisees professed great regard for the new law when they accused the Lord's disciples of profaning the sabbath (Matt. 12:1-8). It was this feigned protective interest that caused the Pharisees and Herodians on another occasion to question Jesus about paying tribute to Caesar (Matt. 22:15-22). Their real motive was to try to ensnare him in his talk. Under the guise of guardians preachers today sometimes develop exaggerated ideas of their protective interest in the gospel. We must certainly "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (Judges 3). But, there is a difference in gospel fact and human fancy. A professional preacher may become more interested in defending his reputation than in declaring the truth of the gospel.

3. *Punishers.* Preachers with a policeman complex enjoy the role of punishers. They may become unscrupulous in their efforts to inflict punishment upon their victims. In one congregation the preacher, by peeping-tom methods and a spurious interpretation, thought he had caught a brother in a serious offense. He indicted the man before the elders and insisted that public acknowledgement be made. While the

preacher was away in a meeting, the accused brother made a public statement to the church. When the preacher returned, he rebuked the elders for not dealing more harshly with the man. He said: "If you had waited until I returned, I would have made that fellow crawl down the aisle on his hands and knees."

C. *Professional Politicians*

It may sound irreverent to some to speak of professional politicians in the church. But due to unholy pride and ambition we must constantly guard against this danger. It may manifest itself in several ways.

1. *Parleys.* The man with a political axe to grind can muster others for such a parley. The tendency to develop brotherhood cliques poses a constant danger. Power politics may operate in the church as well as in the congress. Thus some brethren try to control the church by a balance of power. Back stage strategy promotes many plans and projects. When preachers pull a political pow-wow, anything can happen.

2. *Placement.* This political spirit usually crops up in the placement of preachers. Someone looking for a place to preach begins to pull the wires of his friends. The result is that politically minded brethren sometimes reduce evangelism to common horse swapping. It has been reported that some brethren will not move from one location to another until they have selected the men they want to succeed them. Others say, "You get me a meeting and I'll get you one." This is certainly a poor way to convert sinners to Christ and build up the church. If a preacher is

properly prepared, the place will seek him. He does not have to stoop to politics in order to be used in preaching the word. Charles Spurgeon once said: "A good horse seldom lacks a rider."

3. *Polemics*. Politics is usually responsible for most polemics among brethren. These aggressive attacks and refutations are more often associated with opinions than with doctrines. When sarcasms and invectives are hurled at one another, the church always suffers. In this connection, Abraham's statement to Lot is quite appropriate. "Let there be no strife between me and thee, for we are brethren" (Gen. 13:8). Charles Spurgeon once said to a group of young preachers: "Preach nothing down but the devil, and nothing up but Christ."

We need to foster respect for the church and for the noble souls who help to further it. We should never abuse a fellow minister. No preacher can discredit his colleagues without sharing the shadow himself. If we limelight the unworthy, people will come to feel that the whole field is infested. Rome was not built in a day, but it was burned in a night.

D. Professional Panhandlers

Although there are very few known panhandlers in the church, history shows that this is a dangerous tendency that we must guard against. Indulgences were not forever buried among the ashes of the dark ages.

1. *Pay*. It goes without saying that "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (1 Tim. 5:18), and "Thou shalt

not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn" (1 Cor. 9:9). "Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). "But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things" (Gal. 6:6).

Although the Bible teaches that ministers should be supported, gospel preachers are poorly paid in comparison with professional men of equal training. Churches are sometimes responsible for this situation. For instance, one good sister said: "If we are going to pay the preacher for his work, let's get all we can out of him while he is here." In spite of this attitude there is no place in the church for professional panhandlers. Preachers should examine their motives. The man who will not preach without pay should go back to the farm. No person is prepared to proclaim the gospel until he is willing to preach unknown, unsung, and unrewarded. A faithful minister will preach to save himself, to save others, and to demonstrate his love for the Lord and his cause.

2. *Purloiners.* It may be revolting to some to think that we have a few purloiners in the church. However, the man who sets a price on his preaching will also demand that which does not belong to him. Peter warned us regarding those who with feigned words make merchandise of the saints (2 Pet. 2:3). Paul described such preachers as high-handed hucksters of the gospel (2 Cor. 2:17). A preacher who demands discounts on purchases, or one who leaves debts for the church to pay is little more than a professional purloiner. No minister dedicated to the cause of

Christ will place a "What-Am-I-Offered?" sign on his services. He realizes that the righteous will not be forsaken, nor will his seed have to beg bread (Ps. 37:25).

E. Professional Priests

Another danger that the church must guard against is the tendency to develop professional priests. In Roman Catholicism religious authority inheres in the church. The hierarchy is composed of those who have been duly ordained by accredited bishops. We are not immune to such things, so there is a constant danger of developing an unscriptural priesthood.

In contrast with this Catholic doctrine the New Testament teaches that all Christians are scriptural priests (1 Pet. 2:5, 9, 10). Yet some among us have at times exhibited a professional attitude. Like the hireling who flees when the wolf appears (Jno. 10:12), they show little interest in the flock's spiritual welfare. One man said: "As long as I can keep them coming in the front door faster than they go out the back door, I should worry."

Thus we sometimes save the lost and then lose the saved through neglect. The professional priest leaves the wounded man on the Jericho road, but the good Samaritan stops to bind up his wounds (Luke 10). General Wm. Booth of the Salvation Army used to say: "To shepherd the ninety and nine is an easy task compared with going out to seek the one sheep that is lost."

F. Professional Pastors

Perhaps there is no greater tendency toward professionalism in the ministry than that of developing a pastor system. Good men in their enthusiasm to see the church grow may assume dictatorial authority. Occasionally we read of a preacher who "has taken over the work" in a certain place. Such a person overlooks the fact that the elders are overseers of the flock (Acts 20:28). The church is not a "parsonarchy," and ministers must not "take over" the church. They should simply take hold and serve under the direction of the elders. The pastoral tendency on the part of preachers is exhibited in a variety of ways.

1. *Planning.* It usually manifests itself in the planning that is done. "Push-Button pastors" usually control the work of a congregation in which they operate. They speak of "my elders" and "my secretary," and want the last word in any plans that are made. Instead of giving themselves to the ministry of the word, they spend their time in doing the work of elders.

2. *Promoting.* Professional pastors are great promoters. They keep a continuous round of special activities going all the time. Their projects are so numerous and varied that several office clerks are necessary to keep up with details. One preacher, for instance, has a member's information form that would require hours to fill out. It includes six legal pages of two columns each, the equivalent of twelve pages of single spaced material. The questions cover

everything from blood type and tooth fillings to the kind of automobile you drive. Such a preacher wastes too much time on the mechanics of systematizing. There are too many cogs within cogs and wheels within wheels. The church is not a mechanism, but an organism. Organization, technique, and administration must not be allowed to overshadow preaching.

Some preachers spend too much time just keeping the wheels turning. In some places one hears little more than the rattling of ecclesiastical machinery. There is an expert for every purpose, ranging from youth minister and director of curriculum to a specialist in the problems of old age. Such a program makes the church look like some kind of religious club. We must guard against considering religion as the amusement of youth or a vocation for old maids.

A man may be a glorious glad-hander, a clever promoter, a professional joiner, and a powerful after-dinner speaker and still be a poor preacher of the word. When reverent people go to worship, they want to hear someone who has meditated in the night watches with the Almighty, one who can point them to the keeper of lights and the Saviour of their souls.

3. *Preventing.* Another aspect of professional "pastoring" involves the matter of preventing. When a preacher becomes "the pastor" of the church, he prevents many worthy projects from being presented to the members. Elders may never see or hear some of the Macedonian calls because the preacher intercepts

them. Some preachers prevent the bishops from having the evangelists they desire for gospel meetings.

Preventing Professionalism

As indicated at the outset of this discussion, the church will always be faced with dangerous tendencies. In overcoming these dangers the entire membership must be on fire with evangelism. We are cognizant of the social implications of the gospel, but the keynote of all our activities must be that of evangelism. When the church was scattered abroad in New Testament times, the saints went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 8:1-4). Evangelism is a corollary of discipleship. Priestly people must perform their priestly work.

It is significant that all real revivals of religion have come to pass through preaching. When Isaiah arose to preach, a new concept of holiness flourished in the earth. When Jeremiah walked out of the fields of Anathoth to prophesy, a new morality came to his nation. When Amos left the flocks and furrows of Tekoa to preach, a new sense of social justice emerged. When Paul bolted the Pharisaic party to preach the gospel of Christ, he rocked the Roman Empire and turned the world upside down. When John Chrysostom was banished from his beloved city of Constantinople by godless leaders whom he had rebuked, the people said: "Better that Constantinople cease to be than that John Chrysostom should cease preaching."

Truly, there is no substitute for preaching. God give us men of proper humility who are dedicated to

the proclamation of the gospel throughout the whole world. What this old world needs is to look into the face of the man of God who has climbed the storm-swathed side of Sinai and the blood-stained hill of Calvary saying, "Thus saith the Lord."

OVERCOMING MODERNISM

Jack P. Lewis

About a hundred and fifty years ago there arose in this country the idea that men in the modern age could go back behind the passing centuries to the first century and pattern their lives and worship, not on the accumulated creeds and traditions of the ages, but upon the New Testament, itself, without addition or subtraction. Said Thomas Campbell, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak, where it is silent, we are silent." On this basis our brethren have challenged all comers to suggest the points at which our teaching and practice either falls short of that which is Biblical or where we have gone beyond that which is written. The truth has nothing to lose by investigation. If it is not the truth, we want none of it!

It is obvious that this movement rests upon certain fundamental attitudes toward the Bible: (1) The Bible is the revealed will of God—"Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2) The authority of Christ passed on undiminished to the apostles. They were guided into "all truth." (3) The example of the early church, when approved by an apostle, is authoritative. (4) The New Testament imposes a definite doctrinal program for the church in all subsequent ages. In other words, we deal with faith "once delivered to the saints."

We should not hesitate to submit these attributes to continuous investigation. If any man, whether scholar, skeptic, reprobate, or anyone else, should be able

to demonstrate by any sound method, that any one of them or all of them is fallacious, we owe to him a lasting debt of gratitude, for because of them, as is said of Ishmael, our hand has been against every man and every man's hand against us. We should be as ready to submit these attitudes to investigation as we have been any item of practice that might be settled by citation of a Biblical verse.

You are not aware that a movement began in Europe in the last century and then spread to this country through the universities, which looks at the Bible in altogether a different fashion. It is a movement of which it might be said, "its word doth eat as a gangrene and overthrows the faith of some." Liberalism examines primarily the foundation of our thought, raising the question—not whether a practice is Biblical or not—but whether modern man can base his religious life upon the Bible at all. When its conclusions are accepted, we face a definite challenge. In the past fifty years this method of dealing with the Bible has made alarming gains in this country. It now holds an almost undisputed sway in most of the better known theological schools. It is expounded in the books coming each month from the leading publishing houses; it is set forth in the popular encyclopaedias; it is gaining favor in many denominations not formerly labeled as liberal; and is rapidly filtering down into the texts used in the secondary schools. It aims at world domination. Those who have espoused its conclusions are confident of ultimate victory and certain that any sort of conservatism has been driven from the field in confusion except

in a few cases where people are too uninformed to know what is going on. Since these things are matters of published record, encountered in the press week after week, "modernism" is not in any sense something "done in a corner."

It is impossible to adequately treat the whole problem in a year—not to mention in one hour. There is no set of doctrines that we can discuss, refute, and say "no that is that." It is not safe to assume that a combination of all the things we shall talk about are believed by any one person. The modernist movement by its nature is fluid. What is set forth tomorrow will be different from that set forth today. It is an attitude and not a fixed belief. As defined by its exponents, it is an effort to bring religious knowledge into conformity with current scientific knowledge. Science is "classified knowledge." We have no quarrel to pick with it. But this movement has not been content to deal with the unproved assumptions currently set forth as "science." It is, therefore, a compromise in which one attempts to serve two masters, and in doing so, we believe, has sold out to the enemy.

Modernism rests upon two basic pillars: (1) the critical analysis of the Bible; (2) An attempt to integrate life around some focal point other than the Bible. I beg your permission to limit our consideration chiefly to some aspects of New Testament study as they affect our movement. I choose the New Testament, for I believe it has received less publicity in our circles than that connected with the Old Testament and also, because here the issues are most clear. Should you be curious about the current status of

Old Testament studies, a summary is to be found in H. H. Rowley, *The Old Testament and Modern Study* or J. Coppens, *The Old Testament and the Critics*, or in a brief popular treatment in H. F. D. Sparks, *The Old Testament in the Christian Church*.

It is inevitable that with the great progress that has been made in the physical sciences, the rise of the science of history, and the widespread popularity of the evolutionary hypothesis, and the rise of the study of comparative religions, as well as that of behaviouristic psychology, that men should apply like techniques to the study of the Bible and also ask how the new studies are to be harmonized with the views set forth in the Bible. The questions they begin to ask are legitimate questions: When was this book written? Who is its author? What was his purpose in writing? What style did he use? What sources of information did he have? Did he use oral or written sources? Did he make any mistakes? What is the relation of this system to other religious currents of the time? These questions are to be answered by what can be found in the book and what can be learned from other sources of the period from whence it came.

The application of critical methods to the New Testament goes back to Richard Simon, a French Catholic theologian of the 18th century (c. 1712), who also dealt with the Old Testament. H. S. Reimarus (1694-1768) attributed the rise of the Christian movement to a deliberate deception on the part of Jesus and his apostles, who had stolen away his body from the tomb. H. E. G. Paulus (1761-1851), on the

other hand, attempted to explain all the unusual in the New Testament as natural phenomena, (e. g., walking on the seashore). J. F. Strauss (1808-1874) considered that everything in the gospels except the fact that a rabbi, Jesus, lived and gathered disciples, to be legendary and mythical. No reputable scholar would defend the original position of these men today. There are many names that might be mentioned, but we shall pass on to the Tübingen school founded by F. C. v. Baur (1792-1860). Baur drew a sharp distinction between the Petrine and Pauline parties in the early church. This thesis and antithesis, in his opinion, finally ended in the synthesis of the Catholic church. He regarded the acts of apostles as unhistorical, and considered only Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Romans to be genuine epistles of Paul. The gospels were productions of the second century, with the fourth gospel at the latest. Baur attracted many followers at the time, though no one would accept his conclusions today without great modification. We shall avoid following the various alleys into which the investigation has led. Many critical positions have been mutually self-destructive and the more recent trends have been toward milder positions, though the radicals have by no means completely disappeared.

In considering the relation of the Synoptic Gospels to each other, around the turn of the century the two-document hypothesis was being set forth by the critics. Mark, considered to be the earliest gospel, was supposed to have been used by Matthew and Luke (though in a more primitive form than the present

book—called *Ur-Markus*) in writing their books. The material they have in common not found in Mark was assumed to have come from a second source called “Q” (from German, *Quelle*, which means “source”). “Q” was assumed to be made up chiefly of sayings of Jesus. B. H. Streeter (*The Four Gospels*) demonstrated the two-document theory inadequate and proposed a four-document hypothesis in which each Matthew and Luke had separate source in addition to Mark and “Q”. He proposed that these four sources represented the traditions about Jesus which had survived in the four cities: Rome, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Caesarea. The case, arguing that one writer borrowed from the other, is built on likenesses in material, order of episodes, and likenesses in Greek wording. Mark is to be dated 70-85 A.D.; Matthew in 95, and Luke also near the end of the first century. The allusion to the fall of Jerusalem is considered to be written after the event rather than being a prediction of it. Some consider that a final revision and editing may have taken place in the first half of the second century. You see here the assumption that oral tradition preserved a memory of the words and deeds of Jesus for about a half a century. During this time it was used for the purpose of instructing converts. Finally some traditions were written down, and then in turn, these accounts were used in writing our present books after the apostles had died.

A more recent development is “Form Criticism” which can be traced to Martin Dibelius and Rudolph Bultmann. The form critic assumes that the gospels are artificial collections of isolated materials. He

feels that he is able to classify the material they contain according to form: (1) Short stories about sayings of Jesus, e. g., Blessing the little children (Mark 10); (2) Miracle stories, e. g., Jairus' daughter; (3) Sayings of Jesus, further divided into parables, prophetic words, church words; (4) Stories about Jesus, e. g., Transfiguration. The critic next assumes that the material has been changed in transmission, especially the links (topographical and chronological details, as well as persons and scenes) which have made a connected story, have been added. He then conjures up situations in the early church that he thinks explains why this material was remembered. The fact that things may have been preserved because they were true does not seem to worry him much. This system to many students, is an unreal and inadequate explanation of the Christian faith, and is not widely accepted in this country.

The gospel of John has suffered badly at the hands of critical study. The German school dated the book in the second century and attributed it to John the Elder in Ephesus (mentioned by Papias, Eusebias, *H. E.*, III, 39). Others pointed to an unknown Christian of Asia, while others to a disciple of the Apostle John. There are few critics who would defend direct apostolic authorship, but the tendency is to date it at the end of the first century, and to grant that it may have more historical worth than was once thought.

The majority opinion grants the Epistles of John to the same hand that wrote the gospel. C. H. Dodd, as well as some Germans, have challenged the argument, but unsuccessfully. On the other hand, opinion is

divided over Revelation. Few grant it apostolic authorship. In interpreting it, current opinion is that John spoke of events in the first century—"Things that must shortly come to pass." The number 666 stands for Nero, while pagan Rome is the enemy of the church. Her fall is thought to be near. This method of interpretation assumes that the seer was in error. His visions did not come to pass as he saw them. The important truth, says the critical student, is that he saw God in control of the world and right eventually triumphing over wrong.

The older view made a sharp cleavage between Paul and the thought of the original apostles. He was charged with taking a human Jesus and making a supernatural Christ out of him. Wrede denied that Jesus ever thought of himself as the Messiah. The issue was sharply drawn between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith—Jesus or Paul, the founder of Christianity? It is now granted that no such chasm exists. Paul was not essentially different in message from other early teachers.

The questions of the genuineness of his Epistles have narrowed themselves down to Ephesians and the Pastorals. The doubts over the latter center around the fact that (1) there is no place for them within the history of Paul as related up to the end of Acts. One has to assume that there was a release and a second imprisonment. (2) The church organization they reveal does not fit the critic's idea of the development of the church; (3) The style and vocabulary is different from that found in the other letters. Some

suppose that notes of Paul fell into a later teacher's hand and that he composed the present books.

The Epistle of James is considered a Jewish ethical treatise which has been retouched here and there to adapt it for Christian use. It is thought certainly not to be by the Lord's brother, but perhaps by an otherwise unknown James. 2 Peter is considered to be pseudo-epigraphical and to have been written as late as 128-178 A. D. Its author is thought to have borrowed from Jude. His allusion to the Epistles of Paul as scripture is considered evidence of lateness.

The Tubingen school dated Acts in the middle of the 2nd century and declared that the author wrote to try to gloss over the division between the party of Peter and the party of Paul in the early church. It was of little value for history. Ramsay and Harnack helped correct this view, swinging back to the view of Luke as the author, and tended to reestablish faith in his historical ability. It is supposed that the purpose of writing was to tell how Christianity spread from Jerusalem to Rome, with a secondary purpose to show that the new religion was not politically dangerous. It is not to be supposed that the critics are willing to take the story as given, in particular the miraculous. It is still a favorite parlor past time of some to attempt to array Acts against the Epistles of Paul.

The present trend is a return to relatively conservative conclusions or matters of composition and date, and an increased readiness to accept the historical reliability of the documents. This is not to say that there is a return to acceptance of the infallibility of

the scriptures. Such is not the case, rather modern man comes to the religious problem with the conviction of a discredited book. The present situation is a compromise. Unable to maintain its human creeds before the advance of science, Protestantism has not only yielded its position, but also the Book. And this leads us to the second pillar on the modern scene—the effort to integrate life around some other focal point. The modern mind is not willing to give up religion altogether, nor is it willing to throw over the Bible all together. It might be compared to a child who has dismantled a toy and suddenly realized that he did not want it apart after all. And so a most strange state of mind has developed in which one claims to be a Christian—a believer—and loyal to Christ, while at the same time he is willing to openly allege that any number of details of the Bible may be in error.

There is a willingness to sing the praises of the Bible, claim it is inspired, and to devote a lifetime to its study, while at the same time contending that its books were written by other men than those which they claim to be. Its characters may misquote earlier writings; it may contain historical errors and inner contradictions. It may make predictions that never came to pass nor ever shall; some of those which did come to pass are descriptions made after the event and are placed back in the mouth of earlier characters. The supernatural is exaggerated. Many of its narratives are claimed to be legendary. The student talks about a deep underlying unity of the Bible,

while it is contradictory at many points on the surface.

How then can such a book be of any value? Modern man fancies himself able to distinguish between form and substance—that is, between a story as given and the abiding spiritual lesson which he sees back of it. The bodily resurrection he feels he can't accept, but the lasting reality is survival after death. The expectation of the return of Christ is too much to take, but the victory of God's purpose on earth—"Thy will be done"—is desirable. That there was ever demon possession is too much to accept, but the idea may symbolize the reality of sin and evil. Angels also have trouble, but they may convey the concept of the nearness and friendship of the divine Spirit. The judgment day? This was confronting Christ as he came into the world, sifting men for good or evil. And so on it goes. And now to the crucial point—How is a man to know when he is dealing with truth and when with an outworn shell? Each man is "guided in the last resort by his own conviction of truth" (See *Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 1, p. 26). By others this faculty is spoken of as the "religious consciousness" of the church. Implicit in this idea is a sort of continuous or progressive revelation. Some would quote "Guide you into all truth" (Jno. 16:13), and apply it to a continual direction of the church. Perhaps it is in this light that the strange statement in the Methodist Discipline for 1940 is to be taken:

"We have, therefore, expected that the discipline would be administered, not merely as a legal document, but as a revelation of the Holy Spirit working

in and through our people" (p. 2). In this connection is to be taken all the vague, nebulous statements one encounters where "Christ" as the authority is contrasted to a dependence on the book. It is true that the authority of the book depends on Christ. But let someone explain, if he can, how he can know anything about Christ apart from the book. Theological schools never grow tired of assuring incoming students that their faith cannot be destroyed. Little wonder! By faith is meant this sort of mystical experience which leads to or results from religious consciousness. The experience itself is its own verification. It needs no other evidence.

Long before we have reached this point I am sure that you have been aware that we are no longer dealing with a "faith once delivered to the saints." Gone is the concept of a man who was led to write as we thought of the prophets of old being led to speak. In fact, if inspiration can be held to at all, it is only in the form of God directing a general movement—a sort of infallibility of a movement—or inspiration as a modern man may be stirred to compose a song. It does not take a wise man to see that with these conclusions one can hardly talk of being governed by the Bible. The Book, to the critic, is as fallible as those other men produce. Said Loisy, "A book absolutely true for all time is no more possible than a square triangle." The early church was in a fluid state and could not be considered normative for anyone. Instead of a plan of organization being revealed for all time, the allusions to organization come late after the organization had already developed. Instead of there

being a departure from the faith, there has been a gradual unfolding and development. It is denied that the New Testament presents any code for the work and worship of the church. Here then is the challenge to our movement. No question has been raised that any Christian should hesitate to face four-square. The appeal of Modernism is to a man's pride, to his interest in that which is novel and up to date, and to his loyalty to "scientific knowledge." It claims to offer a new freedom from the intellectual restraints of the past. There is no limit to the skill and persuasiveness with which its advocates are able to present its case.

In an evaluation of this challenge, several courses are open. We might point out all the points at which the critic has been in error and has been forced to yield ground, and by doing so close every mind to a fair evaluation of the position. However, we do not feel at all called upon to defend the errors that have been put forward in the name of Christianity, nor does the critic feel compelled to defend abandoned errors. The fact that Edison tried eight hundred things in error before he found a filament for the electric light does not negate the blessings we now enjoy. Trial is the process of science. It is only when error is repeated knowingly that it becomes contemptible. We must deal with present conclusions and not with abandoned positions. We might recall that the critical movement has been at times under the influence of rationalists, but that does not really meet the issue of the hold it has on minds today. We might launch a tirade on the moral defects of some schol-

ars—but I recall some of my brethren who have broken the moral code—and for that we bow our heads in shame—but this does not in any way negate the plea for New Testament Christianity. No, this is not the answer. The question must be viewed as an effort on the part of honest, learned men to describe events in the first century as they see them, using all the tools at their command. We could call names, but we are dealing with an attitude which is not frightened at epithets or bound in loyalty to old phraseology. That is to say, if one assumes the attitude as Machen has done in the book *Christianity and Liberalism*, that the movement is unchristian, he is correct, but the liberal merely draws a larger circle, and redefines the term "Christian" to include his views and goes on his way. Calling names is valuable at times, but it convinces only those who have already determined their loyalty. There is no doubt that a new definition of the term "Christian" is involved. Wellhausen resigned his professorship, realizing that he had abandoned the foundations of Evangelical Christianity. C. A. Briggs, in this country, was accused of heresy by the Presbyterians. There are other examples. The liberal's reply to all of these things is "Your Christianity is based on a narrow definition." "We have captured the real spirit." The liberal is thoroughly convinced that he has the truth and has discovered the true way to use the Bible. This, of course, is no guarantee that it is so.

There is another alternative open. One may well ask, Is the system true? Now there is no error but that contains some truth. Men in the critical move-

ment (paradoxical as it may seem) have made some contributions to Biblical study which we need not hesitate to admit. In the first place, the ground has been cleared of a lot of erroneous ideas which have accumulated through the years. In illustration: Just a few years ago at a mid-week service, meeting in the chapel of one of the colleges, a well-educated brother stated that the Holy Spirit spoke a special language, being particularly fond of involved sentences. A related form of opinion of the "special character" of New Testament Greek was common a few generations ago. Now if Deissmann, Moulton, and others are able to prove that New Testament Greek is "*Koine*"—that spoken in the streets of ancient cities, rather than a special language of the Spirit—they have done us a favor. Again, the New Testament calls Luke a physician. Jerome said he used medical language, though the New Testament does not claim this feature. Hobart in the last century, claimed that there were 400 medical terms in his writings. Harnak reduced the number, but repeated the argument. Now if a man by the name of Cadbury can prove that most of these words are to be found in non-medical writings, such as the LXX, even if he carries his side of the argument too far, we are benefactors. There is no objection to the testing of positions. Those that endure are the more secure for having undergone successfully the test. "Prove all things and hold fast to that which is good."

But not only has there been a negative contribution, the critic has lent encouragement to the historical approach to the Bible. He did not originate it. It

is older than Modernism. And the critic has not been content to stop with history. One encounters all too frequently a reconstruction of events based on "historical imagination," as it is called. In common language this means "sheer guessing." One can conjecture anything. Guessing is not history. There can be no question that an historical approach to Biblical studies is a sound one. I have not the slightest intention to abandon it or to denounce it when it is sanely used, though I do not accept the contention that history is the total picture. I do not for a moment suppose that the church and the Bible are solely accounted for by the social, political, and religious currents of their day. But the Bible is correctly interpreted when we first ask what the writer meant to say to his original readers in the situation in which they were. One needs only to compare the results we gain by such a method with the excesses set forth by the exegetes of the middle ages and their predecessors who used the allegorical and textual method, to appreciate it.

A third very valuable contribution has been made by helping to make available tools for Bible study. Land and sea have been encompassed to discover every word, every stone, and custom which might cast light on some Biblical fact. As a result the student today has at his disposal the dictionaries, the critical texts of ancient works, a knowledge of language, life and times of the Biblical world never before available to any generation. These are not an unmixed blessing. Even the standard books must be used with extreme caution. The popularity enjoyed

by rash conjecture is such that one can never be certain that he is dealing with facts except in those cases where he is competent to check the results himself. One may take a Bible translation as an example. When translators issue a translation, a goodly portion of which is based on textual emendation, then it becomes a safe tool only in the hands of Hebrew and Greek scholars who are able to recognize the emendations. One who has that sort of competency does not particularly need the translation anyway. The liberal would be glad to claim credit for whatever advancement has been made in Biblical study. He may often intimate that all the contributions have been made by liberals. This just is not so.

Now the heart of the matter is—because we accept some benefits of critical study, must we accept its methods and conclusions in *toto*? To the average modern student that one would do otherwise is most contemptible. But we recall a simple illustration once used by Phillips Brooks. When I invite you to my house for fish dinner, it does not imply that you must devour all that is served. No, you carefully separate the fish from the bones. Eat what is palatable. Has not the critic done just that in building up this system? In fact the assumption that one can distinguish between form and substance of Biblical material is such a process gone to seed. Why should one feel compelled to accept critical conclusions of today, when even the critic admits they may be different tomorrow?

But to repeat the former question—Is the modernistic system really scientific? We shall examine the

pillar upon which it rests first. The effort to integrate life around some point other than the Bible. We will not be led astray by all the talk of "religious consciousness." The old infallibility of the Roman church has just changed its clothes to become the infallibility of all religious men. Or to put it in other terms, the age old *Vox populi, vox dei* raises its head again—this time, the voice of religious men is the voice of God. Though it has on grandmother's cap and is in grandmother's bed, the big eyes, the sharp teeth, and the long ears are the same. Despite the numbers, the education, and the sincerity of those who advocate it, Little Red Riding Hood need not be deceived. It is the wolf!

"Each man guided by his own conviction of truth"—this is a system that can offer no solution to the ills of the world. It has no power to lift man up out of the mire of sin. There is no upsetting of the money-changer's tables. Instead of demanding that men change, it changes the demands made on men. Religious practices become really matters of taste. There is no authority on the basis of which any practice can be condemned. Liberalism is a parasite. As long as it is able to recruit from believing people it continues its public ceremonies just because people love to hold on to traditional ways—but one who has not that background may well decide that something else is just as valuable. There is no church as dead as a liberal church. Its people are in a status where they do not know the Bible and have no motivation to care. At the best, it can deal with social issues and try to get a good attendance Easter. Steinmueller has well

put the problem by stating that Protestantism has moved from Luther's "faith without works" to the modern "works without faith."

One recalls another period in history when people followed their "own conviction of truth." Its chaos is characterized in the last verses of Judges: "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." This is complete chaos. It has no message to offer even to a heathen world. In fact, the liberal in many cases has abandoned the claim that Christianity is unique. He feels a great kinship to the brethren. He feels that the founders of the non-Christian religions also enjoyed a measure of divine revelation. T. S. Kepler expresses himself as looking forward to a time when there will be ecumenical conferences between the great religions of the world. Why not if every man is to be "guided by his own conviction of truth"? Alas! They have forsaken me the fountain of living waters and have hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer 2:13).

But turning to the first pillar—the critical analysis of the Bible. When I was a child I played with building blocks and constructed large towers. It was never necessary to take them apart block by block, but just pull a block or so from the bottom and the whole tumbled. Let us take soundings on a block or so of this great structure.

It is admitted by all that the critical movement has proceeded on the assumptions of the evolutionary hypothesis. George F. Moore expresses the spirit in his book *The Birth and Growth of Religion*. One of

the chapters is entitled "The Emergence of the Gods." That is, man finally developed to the point that he postulated gods. It is necessary to remind ourselves that evolution, after all these years, is still only a hypothesis? The Piltdown man has evaporated into thin air. It was all a hoax. I have no competence in this field, but Wm. Langer of Harvard in his *Ency. of World History*, p. 9, states that it is questionable that any of the so-called "pre-historic men" are the ancestors of modern man. If not, then why all the agitation? Why all the exhibits of stages of development in the museums? Why all the picture stories in *Life* and like periodicals? What do these discoveries prove if they are not ancestors of modern man? Nothing at all! The emergence of the gods—Indeed! Has any people been found so backward that it has no gods? Has any evidence come to light in that direction? Never! It is all a guess. Now the real question is, could a system which has never been proved furnish a stable basis upon which to interpret Christianity? It is in the application of this idea to the story of the New Testament that our principles run head-on into modern theories. The historical school refuses to consider a "faith once delivered" to which all ages must conform. Belief in an unchangeable standard is the chief item to which the liberal objects. The one item he is dogmatically certain about is that the Bible is not a standard for modern man. No, all must be growth and development. Truth must be relative. It cannot be absolute. Such a position is not a question of historical evidence, but of philosophical pre-suppositions. How one looks at the

universe and the processes of history determines how one comes out.

Let's tap on another block of this building. The acceptance of miracle is more in vogue today than formerly. But from the beginning this has been one of the chief objectionable features of the Bible. The critic must reject them. At the present many feel they can accept some and reject others. Few, if any, are willing to accept all. Miracle does not fall in the realm with which science is qualified to deal. All history can do is report that people believed in a miracle at such and such a time. It can neither prove it happened nor disprove it. Here then we again come to a philosophical presupposition. What is your connection with God? Is he a God sweating like a laborer to overcome difficulties too great for him—as Brightman speaks? Is he caught in his own system so that he must conform to it? Or can he who said, "Let there be light and there was light," work with his chosen to confirm the word with the signs they follow? Take just one: the resurrection of Jesus. It is not difficult to get anyone—even the unbeliever—to admit that Jesus was a smart, great man. He taught some fine things. But O the stumbling block of the cross! If God raised him from the dead, then the rest is not difficult to believe. As to the spirit of accepting some of the miraculous, while rejecting the rest, we recall that the same sources tell of the two. This is sorely a subjective judgment. In the *Interpreter's Bible* in discussing Enoch, the commentator cites with approval a writer who suggests that Enoch's place, one day, was vacant and people

drew their own conclusion that he had gone with the Lord. This sort of exegesis, examples of which may be multiplied, merits only one remark—with apologies to the comedian—"Was you dar, Charlie?"

But let's examine again: The assumption that the Bible has been demonstrated by recent discoveries to be so full of errors and inconsistencies that no informed man could think of following it. What are some of these? We shall not list them. Take any introduction or read any book dealing with Biblical problems and you will find them. You will also find that there are only a few of these things that could be said to be new. A good portion of the charges made by the heretics and skeptics from the time of Celsus and Pophyry on down will be set forth and accepted as being true. In their own day they are met and rejected. Now they are baptized and accepted into full communion of saints. Now it is admitted that they were partly right and that they laid the foundation for modern attitudes. Swinburne in his "Hymn to Persephone" has the line "Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean." Were the skeptics able to arise from the dead and read some modern treatments of the Bible by those within the churches, they might well say, "*We* have conquered, O pale Galilean." The skeptic made the argument to try to destroy. Moderns make them to try to compromise and suppose that they build up, but in reality have capitulated to the opposition. A good portion of the questions have been dealt with in the handbooks on Biblical difficulties. I leave it to you to decide whether the solutions there proposed are convincing. But

let us not suppose because they have been dealt with we are through with them. You will find them repeated with new vigor in the *Interpreter's Bible*, now being issued by Abingdon-Cokesbury, and also elsewhere. Most Bible believers do not have much trouble accepting the things the scientist is actually able to demonstrate. But when compromisers want to throw over the Book in favor of theories unproved and unprovable, regardless of whether they come from anthropology, sociology, psychology, geology, or what not—then we rebel. It is loudly proclaimed by some that the manuscript tradition of the Bible is so varied that the question of inspiration becomes entirely theoretical. This problem Norvel Young has dealt with in reply to the *Look* magazine article a year or so ago. *Our Bible* by the faculty of this college also bears on it, as do some of the older books. While it is true that in the several thousand New Testament manuscripts there are 200,000 variant readings, most of them are insignificant as far as the meaning of passages are concerned. It is said that only 200 affect the meaning of passage, and only 15 of them are of major importance. They neither add to nor detract from a single duty of man.

A fourth block of the building we shall look at—Objectivity. Actually no small part of the objection to critical conclusions about the Bible is their subjective nature. After all the cry of "Let's look at the Bible objectively," I still believe one can be prejudiced "against" as easily as "for." Where one comes out depends to a degree on what pre-suppositions he has when he starts. The scissor and paste

method of exegesis does not enjoy the popularity it once did, but it has by no means been abandoned. Can any system be sound when built up by selecting certain portions of evidence and by declaring all opposing facts to be interpolation? Is it really sound to form an opinion of what a man's thought was, judge his writings by it and declare unguine whatever is found there not fitting the pattern? The problem of the Pastorals may be taken as an example. One of the arguments against Pauline authorship is that they reveal an organization of the church which was later than Paul's day. That is, one has decided from 2nd century writings when he thinks the office of bishop arose. He then judges both Acts and the Pastorals. The mention in Acts of appointing of elders becomes a sort of anachronism on the part of Luke—the reading backward the system of his own day. The Pastorals become written after the historian's imagined date of development of the office. Now is it not true that dealing with the evidence in this way anything on the face of the earth could be proved? We are not unfamiliar with methods by which people who look convince themselves that they have found strange things in the Bible. That does not mean the Bible teaches them. The Paedo-baptist thinks he finds ample ground to justify him to sprinkle babies; the premillennialist can find his system set forth on most every page—not that he can convince others that it is really there. The Mormon finds Mormonism in the clearest terms. Are we to be surprised that other systems, after forming a hypothesis, and searching could con-

vince themselves that they have found evidence to establish their hypothesis? Many times when one looks over the method by which critical study proceeds, it seems that it only take two "probablys" to make a "certainly." Three "certainlys" make an "undoubtedly." Two "undoubtedlys" make "all scholars agree." And then you have "It is no longer questioned." And yet the whole structure may be one unproved hypothesis leaned against another until people forget they are unproved. It is built up of conjecture and reading between the lines. If the desired outcome is not found, one amends and rearranges until he gets it. Take the question of "Q" as an example. Now no student the critic considers worth his salt would operate in the gospels without "Q", and yet listen to H. J. Cadbury (and surely no one would question whether he knows or not)

A very popular hypothesis, which, although not provable, is not disproved, is that they both used another earlier written Greek source, called by the scholars "Q", which differed from Mark in that it collected primarily sayings (*The Interpreter's Bible*, VII, 37).

This takes us to the heart of the matter. A spirit has arisen in which men are willing to formulate guesses and consider that they are properly handling the book by doing so. Bible study becomes a sort of "Anagrams" in which people vie for the most astute guesses and combinations. Then others act upon the guesses as though they were proven facts merely because no one arises to disprove. This is modernism and a few, but by no means all, of its shortcomings.

It would be completely dishonest to leave the impression that there are no unsolved questions in Biblical study. I am not aware that anyone ever supposed such a thing. From my earliest remembrances there have been larger areas of ignorance than of knowledge, and it is still so. Criticism does not answer the problems. In hundreds of instances the critic willingly admits that he does not have the material to deal with a problem he had raised. In fact, there are plenty of students who wonder if there are not more of that type when he gets through than there were when he started. It is his method to raise questions. Perhaps you have been on the witness stand in court and had the attorney cross examine you on something you saw, firing questions and cross-questions until you were not really certain whether the event happened as you saw it or not—and yet you were actually there. This can easily happen to a man in Biblical studies. To the formulation of hypothesis there is perhaps no objection. When these begin to be treated as facts, we need not be led astray.

To what extent this spirit has pervaded the church I am not prepared to say, but perhaps far more than any of us realize. Once it has become a settled conviction with a man, there are few reasons why he should continue with us. He might love his position and stifle his convictions. It is often said about certain denominational men—if their people really understood what they stand for they would throw them out. But this is a serious charge. He might consider himself a Moses to lead his brethren out of bondage. In

such a case, he might recall that the children of Israel have not yet called unto the Lord because of the bitterness of the bondage, and until such time arrives, he is likely to meet with "Who made you a prince and a judge over us?" It is also possible that a man's convictions have changed without his realizing their implications. There are a few signs which in my opinion are the danger signs: (1) A man has questions fired at him along with unproved assertions, until he becomes confused. But instead of being humbled by it, he becomes proud. (2) A man becomes one of the *intellegentsia*. He has been enlightened and has attained a freedom not enjoyed by others; (3) The brethren in his estimation become woefully behind the times and uninformed. None of them have ever *fairly* investigated the new portions. Whether men must obey the clear commands of the Bible becomes doubtful in his mind. It does not take much confusion of this sort to paralyze a man as a force for good. On the other hand there is with him, an unlimited praise for those who whittle away at the things we have always stood for. (4) He becomes a Moses to enlighten others. (5) Having failed, and receiving in return the same sort of criticism he has dealt to others, he becomes greatly misunderstood and persecuted. People are about to force him out of the church. (6) Finally, some, as we all know, have sought other company.

What, then, can the church do to satisfactorily meet the present attitude?

(1) Preach the Word. The gospel is the seed of the kingdom—The gospel and not some particular

theory about it. The gospel preached in the first century did not require years of schooling to understand. The common people heard the Lord gladly. To leave the great task of preaching the word to go chase after the phantoms of the minds of men would be equal in stupidity to the mistake of the bugler in the army who awoke one night to find the camp on fire. He shouted himself hoarse yelling "fire," while at his side all the time was his bugle, a few blasts upon which would have aroused the whole camp. The sword of the spirit is the word of God. Opponents, from skeptics on through men of the denominations, for ages have thought they saw the church tottering on the verge of its demise. Time has revealed that it was a chimera of their own eye. The church is growing faster and is stronger numerically than it ever was. "Preach the word. Be urgent in season and out of season."

(2) Defense. The Apostle also says "I am set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17). "Being ready to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15). Let us not underestimate the strength of the opposition. It boasts of the wealth and the learning of the world as its backing. The battle lines are being drawn for a great conflict. The basic principle of modern war is to hit the strongest point of the enemy with all you have. Border skirmishes here and there will never bring total victory. It is doubtless necessary to deal here and there with how many cups were required for 5,000 people in Jerusalem, how long is "long"; whether a lesson must be oral

or written, and like topics—but friends, the authority of the Book is the real issue of the hour. It has been obvious for a long time that denominational lines are yielding. The Modernistic spirit explains part of it. It does not make much of an impression to argue immersion to a man who has been convinced that his religious consciousness is his standard. Why not have instrumental music if the Book does not furnish a pattern? If the trend of the past fifty years continues unchecked and unchanged, the day is fast coming when the common man in the church will need to be equipped to meet these issues as he has been to handle the usual denominational errors. The problem we face requires men equipped to discuss thoroughly and intelligently any issue that may be raised. Some of our young men are saying, we would like more equipment, but in view of what has happened to the faith of some others, we are afraid. There is no reason why men in the church cannot know as much about Greek and the Semitic languages, as well as history and the other disciples, as anyone in the world. By superior scholarship the opposition can be driven from the field. There is a need for printed expositions of the points at issue. The old books—even reprinted—are fine, but we will not be able to meet a movement which produces hundreds of books yearly with reprints alone. We are likely to feel that an argument once dealt with needs no further attention. But the modern spirit, once met, will wash its face, put on a new dress, and restate the case. It might be compared to the dragon in mythology, who when Hercules cut off one of its heads grew

two more in its place. We are in constant need of new books which meet the issues of this day as the older men met those in their day. Though some brethren have written on these problems, we have not yet produced adequate refutations that may be used for texts in classes and in private study. This is a task in which every person can participate. In science, psychology, history, philosophy, as well as the Biblical field, the student must be trained to distinguish between the things that are only conjecture and those which are true.

Let there be a renewed effort to safeguard our thought from any fallacies, and from all fallacious arguments that may creep in unawares. These give the enemy great cause to blaspheme. Let our consideration of the problem be that of the intellectual system rather than attacks on character, lest the student upon further investigation, discover admirable traits in the individuals involved and become confused. A teacher should not be content merely to ridicule a few peripheral errors he sees. Rather, one should attempt to give the student an understanding of the spirit at the heart of the attitudes that lives on even though it be forced to yield any number of individual points, and then having done this, relentlessly expose its shortcomings.

In this conflict the churches of Christ must bear the brunt of the attack. Although the Catholic church has expressed itself in opposition to modern theories, and in the decree "Lamentabili" (1907) specified a number of objections to modern trends, its own position is too vulnerable for it to be of value in this

struggle. It is exhibit "A" of the sort of development of which the critic speaks. The old line denominations are shot through with these theories; and also because of their creeds, live in glass houses. The Holiness groups who claim to believe the Bible are really based on emotion and not on intellectual conviction. The New Testament church alone offers and is prepared to defend a faith "once delivered."

(3) Student Guidance: We can build a bulwark of faith and fellowship upon which those yet to come can lean. There is a great need to develop strong congregations in the centers of learning whose fellowship can offset the spirit of loneliness that modern education can bring to a man. There is a need for capable, experienced men in the leadership of such congregations who understand the spirit of the hour and counsel the student who encounters difficulties—a leadership that will command the respect of all men; a leadership who knows more about the questions than the critics do.

(4) Investigation: I am not impressed by the insinuations, subtle or open, of the opposition and also sometimes heard from brethren newly drunk on learning that Bible believers are afraid of investigation. I believe just the contrary to be true in most cases. Give us the facts. Investigation is the only lasting solution to any problem. One day John, in prison, sent disciples to Jesus with the preplexing question, "Are you he that cometh or look we for another?" Jesus could have said, "Now, John, you are getting on dangerous ground. You are worrying about things too great for you. Stifle your doubts"—and the like.

But no! He performed some wonders and said, "Go tell John the things which you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear; the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them; and blessed is he who does not find occasion of stumbling in me" (Matt. 11:3-5). That is, as it were to say, "Here is the evidence. Make up your mind on the basis of it." Here, then is the real method of overcoming "modernism." Get the facts. Be sure they are fact. Distinguish between the true and the conjecture. Never pre-judge. Never close your mind. If the dearest position will not stand investigation, it is not worth living by, and certainly not dying by.

Having made that sort of investigation, one will be able to say with deeper understanding,

The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul:
The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise
the simple.

The precepts of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the
heart:

The commandment of Jehovah is pure, enlighten-
ing the eyes.

The fear of Jehovah is clean, enduring forever:
The ordinances of Jehovah are true and right-
eous altogether.

More to be desired are they than gold; yea, than
much fine gold;

Sweeter also than honey and the droppings of the
honeycomb.

Moreover by them is thy servant warned:
In keeping them there is great reward. (Psa. 19:
7-11)

OVERCOMING PROBLEMS IN WORSHIP

Frank Pack

"When Thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, O Lord, will I seek" (Psalm 27:8). In that remarkable verse I believe we have the very essence of true worship expressed. It is the call of God to the heart of man, and the response of a believing heart seeking God who is drawing near. Worship is the greatest privilege that God has ever granted to mankind. It is a privilege that we share with angels. It is a privilege that is not limited to this world but will also be the joy and the glory of that which is to come. Worship is the call of God to your heart and mine as his children as we draw near to him and as he draws near to us. It is the fellowship of our spirit with him as a loving heavenly Father. It is the recognition on our part that he himself in all of his gracious goodness, mercy, and love has come and said that we may be his children and walk with him; that he in his graciousness has promised to the man of faith that he shall be rewarded if that man diligently seeks after him (Heb. 11:6). Worship lets me know who I am. It shows me all of my unworthiness, my dependence, my weakness, my poverty of spirit in the eyes of an almighty, holy, and powerful God. Worship helps me to know that in spite of that, God is interested in me to the extent that he draws near and has provided the means by which I can, though I am weak, have fellowship with him, the infinite and the eternal Almighty.

Worship impresses upon me the fact that I need his help, his strength, his guidance, his forgiveness every day. Worship gives to me the opportunity in some small way to show forth the praise, the adoration, the thanksgiving, the love and devotion of my own faltering heart to a God that has been infinitely good and merciful to me. It is expressed beautifully in that longing and yearning expression in Psalm 42:1. "As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." It is so difficult in such a few words to express all the riches of worship, the privileges and opportunities extended to us when we come to worship God. But that is really the chief concern of the Lord's church, that it worship and adore, praise and give thanks and honor unto the Father, that it be concerned with God and his will; that it desire that the will of God may be wrought out on this earth even as it is in heaven.

My friends, since worship is concerned with God, and tonight we are concerned to talk about some problems to be overcome in worship, I want at first to suggest to you what to my mind is the most important problem that I face and I believe probably that you face in worshipping God. That is the problem of making God real to you in worship. When we come to worship him we are concerned with God. We are concerned, as I said, to adore him because he is adorable and because he is so infinitely worthy of our praise and our adoration. We are concerned to thank him because he has blessed us so wonderfully and so remarkably and we see the evidences of his grace and goodness all about us temporally. We are

concerned to ask that his will might be wrought in our lives and we confess our faults and our failings; we ask him to guide, bless, and strengthen us in the doing of his will. We are concerned to do that which he has asked us to do for worship is not only within, it is also expressed in acts—it is the doing of that which he has commanded in honor and praise unto him. And yet so very often when we come together to worship, we as a materialistic people are interested in the things that the Gentiles seek, what we shall eat, what we shall wear, how we shall be sheltered, so much that instead of seeking his kingdom and his righteousness *first*, we are thinking of material things. Have you ever thought how many people come to church with the wrong attitude? Worship demands proper approach, it demands proper attitude. We are coming into the presence of God. The literal meaning of the word "worship" is "to kiss the ground toward" or "to kiss the hand toward." When I worship God, I "kiss the ground toward" him and it is with a profound sense of reverence that I approach my heavenly Father. But many people come to the assembly with the attitude of going to a theater or a circus. They come in and they sit down with their minds filled with material things and interests. They talk to one another. They visit with one another during the services. They are interested to see who is here, what they are wearing, and how long it has been since they have seen so-and-so and how bad this person looks or that one. They play with the children, they litter up the floor with paper and chewing gum and various other things. They

are inattentive. They interest themselves in almost everything else and allow everything to distract them from the very thing for which they are there; namely, to worship and to adore the Almighty God. What is the trouble? They have no sense of being in the presence of the Lord. Yes, that is my fault, that is yours time and again. We are light; we are flippant; we are irreverent. We have no sense that he is in our midst, and yet he promised in Matthew 18:20 that where two or three of us are gathered together in his name he is in our midst, and he knows our hearts. He walks in our midst, as the Christ in the midst of the golden candlesticks. He knows when we are showing forth his light brightly and when we are dead even while we live. He knows that in the midst of a dead congregation there are some that have not defiled their garments and they shall walk with him in white. Yes, he searches the hearts and knows the thoughts; he knows our downsitting and our uprising. He understands our way afar off.

I wonder if you have ever looked at that marvelous book, the book of Revelation, and reflected on the scenes of worship that are repeatedly before the eyes of the saints for our admonition. Some of the most beautiful passages in all of God's word are found in that remarkable book. It is a book that many of us shy away from because there are some things about it that we don't understand as fully as we ought. We ourselves are the losers, for there is a blessing to a man that reads and to those that hear the words of that remarkable book. I want to read to you one of the scenes revealed through John of true worship.

"After these I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands and they cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels were standing round about the throne, and about the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God, saying, 'Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen.'" You can almost hear that chorus as they offer their worship to the Almighty.

My friends, we ought to raise with ourselves the question individually and personally as we come before God, do you the saints of God show forth the glory of God in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever? He is to have glory in the church, Eph. 3:21 declares. Is this worship that which glorifies God in his church? Is the assembly of saints concerned that they may adore and love and express to their heavenly Father the love that he has shown to them? Well, someone says, "How is it that we are going to overcome this?" I think that it is an individual matter as well as a collective matter. It is a matter for me to search my own heart and raise my own questions as I come to the meeting house. I am going to meet with whom? What am I expecting in this time? Am I going to hear the man talk? Am I going simply to be enter-

tained by somebody who will brilliantly discourse while I can sit back and measure his oratorical abilities and his logical reasoning against somebody else, as if we had here before us two boxers who were trying out for a victory, or am I going to meet with God and am I concerned to offer unto him that worship that he is so justly due? We need to preach on it. We need to emphasize it in our teaching. We need to hold up the great truths of God's word before the hearts and lives of individuals to let them realize how that God is to be approached and the reverence that we should have for his great and holy name. That is possibly the biggest problem that we have.

Maybe you have had the experience sometime of laying aside every other thought and concentrating upon worship so that in the songs, in the prayer, in the reading of God's word, in meeting around the Lord's table, and the giving of your means—in every act of that worship—you were concentrated and centered on the Christ and on God the Father. As you have gone away, haven't you experienced the tremendous uplift that comes from that kind of meeting with God? The more that men come to know God and to worship God as he is, the less that we will have to impress upon men that it is their *duty* to meet him and worship. The more they will say with the Psalmist, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go unto the house of God to worship."

Let's turn in this lesson to another area of problems, because we are interested in overcoming problems in worship—to the problems of leading public worship. Public worship demands public leadership

and I can't overemphasize the importance of leading people in public worship. I am talking primarily to men now—not just to gospel preachers but to all the men of the church who have the high and holy privilege of leading congregations in various acts of public worship. It is such a great privilege to lead others in worship that we ought to prepare our hearts to go into the presence of God and to lead others as we approach him. After all, the attitude that we have as leaders in public services of worship will be communicated to the members of the congregation, for they watch. I remember sitting recently in a religious assembly which was made up of some high dignitaries of denominational bodies. I noticed the men who sat on the platform constantly during the song service as they talked and conversed with one another as if they were on exhibit and had little respect for what was going on. Their attitude expressed in action was. All the rest of this is kind of a preliminary until we come on the scene. Naturally, if you see people who are to lead behave in that manner, such a wrong attitude will be likewise in the minds of the people. I use this as an illustration to impress upon us the wrong attitude in worship and its danger. How important it is then for us to lead in various tasks of the services of the Lord in a way that is acceptable in God's sight.

In singing, what a tremendous argument against the use of instrumental music is good, spiritual, soul-stirring congregational singing unaccompanied. What a tremendous responsibility rests upon the man who leads the congregation in singing, that he not only

know music—the mechanics of it—but that he realize the importance of what he is doing when he leads the congregation in song. He must consider the meaning of language, the appropriateness of the selection, and have the ability to get people to want to sing and to praise God from the very depth of their hearts, not in a light, flippant attitude, not as an entertainment program that is a kind of sideshow to the important thing, but that which is essentially a part of the true worship of God. What is the responsibility of a congregation in singing? It is to cooperate; it is to work with the leader; it is to be responsive in singing and praising the Lord out of a pure heart and glorifying his name. I believe that every congregation ought to set aside time when there can be training and special study of songs not to learn new ones technically, but to study the words that we sing. So many times, if we would look at the words we say, we couldn't sing some of those songs. We would have to cast those out because of the improper wording that is there.

In the reading of the scripture what a tremendous opportunity is offered us. My friends, New Testament Christianity is the religion of the book; it is based on the Bible. It determines to speak where the scriptures speak and to be silent where the scriptures are silent. The only authority that a man has who preaches is the authority of the word of God, and if he deviates from that word he has no authority—he misleads. All of the authority that is there is the truth of the Lord. How solemn, how holy is the privilege of reading God's word and having men to meditate upon it. Have you noticed the way that

congregations at times behave during scripture reading? Do we realize that God is speaking to us in his word? As readers of the word of God do we carefully prepare as we ought to read God's truths, not only letting the people know that we are reading but also speaking it distinctly and clearly, getting the meaning—and that means that we are concerned to know what that meaning is ourselves—that we may read it forth. I have heard preachers quote the Bible so fast you couldn't hear what they were saying. But, my friends, after all, what God has to say is more important than anything that any man has to say. The Bible deserves a reverent and careful hearing. I may know a passage of scripture well, but I ought to give time to the man who doesn't know it to feel the force of it as he hears and has it explained in his own hearing. What an important thing it is to read the word of God. Have you ever heard a good reader read the Bible? Brother Holten is here on the front seat. I had the privilege of working in a congregation where his son was a member. He was a wonderful reader and Lord's day by Lord's day he read the Bible publicly. What a meaningful thing it was, just to hear the Bible read by a good reader. What should our attitude be in hearing? It is to recognize that this is God's will, that God has a message in his word for me and my own need as I live here at this time, to reverently consider it, and to reverently study it with the man who presents the lesson. It is the will of the Lord and that is the important thing. It is not the man who presents it but the will of the Lord that is being presented that is the important thing.

In prayer how important that we lead as we ought. When you are called upon to lead prayer, do you consider what it involves? Do you realize that as a leader of prayer you are leading the prayers of others? You are helping them to pray in expressing audibly the petitions of a congregation—in expressing not only the praise and adoration, but the needs, the longings and yearnings of human hearts. Have you ever thought before you were called upon to lead prayer for a large congregation or for a small congregation what needs are involved? What weaknesses and sins represented? What longings and learnings are there in those who are in that audience and how to bring those up before the throne of God's grace that the "incense" might have much more "incense" added to it by the great intercessor, Jesus, who is our high priest? Boldness to come to the throne of grace as priest—what a blessed privilege! In prayer we praise and we give thanks. We intercede for others and bear the names and the petitions of others before the throne of grace.

I recall having heard a story—I don't know just where—of a young preacher who went out into the rural area to preach in the beginning of his preaching days, and as people are in country churches, he was taken to the hearts of those people and treated wonderfully. There was an older brother in that congregation who became very much interested in that young man. But the circumstances of life were such that after that first year the young man did not come there again to preach and some twenty years passed before the brother saw the preacher again. The

preacher had forgotten him for he had seen and met so many. After the services the older brother introduced himself again to the preacher. He said, "I have been interested in you and watching you through the years. I have prayed for you ever since you came down to our place that God might bless you and make you strong and faithful in his service." That man who preached the gospel had received the blessings that come through the intercessions of someone that he didn't know about through twenty years. How many prayers have been addressed to God on your behalf and mine? How many times have our names, our interests been borne to the throne of grace by those we do not know and possibly shall not know until over there? Nevertheless, we have been blessed, benefited, and strengthened by these prayers. In prayer we ask God's blessing; in prayer we confess our wrongs. When we are leading the hearts of men in prayer it ought not to be difficult for us to call upon our Father and to express the petitions and desires of human spirits to God. We ought to avoid the needless repetition of the various titles and names of God over and over again. Instead, let that prayer be direct, simple, and earnest as we lead the hearts of men. How important it is to prepare to lead prayer.

In serving the Lord's table what a solemn and beautiful part of worship we lead. It is a high moment in worship when we come around the table to remember the Lord's death in the Lord's Supper. It is a showing forth of his death till he come. It is a looking backward as well as forward with hope toward the time when he shall come and receive us unto himself.

Thus, to serve a congregation and lead the hearts and minds of individuals so that the Lord Jesus Christ in all of his beauty and love may stand forth the more clearly is a great privilege. Decency and order should prevail. Yet we don't want to let an order become a form—a ceremonial to the extent that we go through a kind of ritual while we deny the power and the spirit thereof and find ourselves observing but inwardly far from the Lord. How can we improve these things in our services of worship? I believe by teaching, by offering opportunities for training in congregations, by having classes where young men and older ones can have the experience as well as the training in leading others in public worship, by having sermons that will impress upon the hearts of men and women the importance of these things and the need for their cooperation in worshipping God.

The last major group of problems that I want to suggest to you tonight is the group connected with getting people to worship. We are creatures of habit and many people go to church to worship out of habit. When the habit is broken they form the habit of not going and it is very difficult then to get them again actively in service. I know this is true because time and again we have the experience of working with people trying to get them to be faithful in a new place. When they moved to a new community they didn't take any initiative to go to the place of meeting to get acquainted, to become a part of the worshipping assembly at that place, and consequently just a few more days of carelessness and indifference and the habit of being at worship was broken, and a new

habit formed of not being at worship. After all it was mainly a matter of habit. If a man realizes that in worship he is approaching the Lord and that there is fellowship, communion, and companionship between his own spirit and God, then he should not have to be reminded of the need for worship wherever he is and of the importance of it in his own life. He would long and yearn for it. He would seek the face of God. But many people are not that strong. They have never learned the blessedness of real, true devotion to the Lord. Consequently, they are haphazard, indifferent, and careless in their attendance. I don't know how it would work out in every congregation, but I suspect that almost any congregation would be surprised to find out how many people who claim membership in the Lord's church in that community are irregular and careless in their attendance at worship, who come possibly one Lord's day out of the month or one out of every two months. We wrestle with these problems because men and women have not learned the importance of true worship unto God. How important it is that we be faithful in attending.

How are you going to work with people like this? someone says. The answer is teaching—public teaching—teaching in the classes—personal contact and visitation—impressing upon people the importance of God's will and the need that they have for God—the opportunities and privileges that are theirs to enjoy in Christ. Yes, Christianity is a way of teaching.

Then we have the problem, particularly in communities as large as Abilene, of drifting members of

the church. Somebody has called them "cafeteria Christians." I don't know whether that's a good name for them or not. They are here this Sunday and there another Sunday. A common question is, "Who is going to preach over here? Well, we shall go hear him today." Like going down the cafeteria line and making selections these folks have no responsibility; they are not anywhere actively working. Nobody knows anything about them. They are just drifting from place to place. Two women have expressed it in this manner about a certain denominational church to which they went, "I like to go to that church. You can go there and they don't ask you to do anything." Well, my friends, maybe that is what some people are looking for—a religion that is a do-nothing religion, and such a religion is usually a be-nothing religion, as well. Teaching, teaching and warning; visiting and constant work on the part of faithful ones—that is our responsibility. Somebody says, "Well, why waste time on these?" Then the phrase comes back to me that I cannot forget from Paul's writing. He is "the brother for whom Christ died" (1 Cor. 8:11). When I see this man, that woman as the brother, the sister, for whom Christ died, I cannot be indifferent, careless, and unconcerned about his or her spiritual welfare. It is my responsibility if I am one of the "spiritual," if I am endeavoring to serve the Lord, to restore those that are overtaken in a fault. Early Christians worshipped God out of a sense of joy. Joy is one of the great notes of the New Testament. Men were joyous in the Lord. They sang praises to God; they glorified and honored him. They wanted to

show forth the excellencies of him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. It was so marvelous to be a child of God, to be free from bondage to the rudiments of the world that they constantly expressed it in terms of rejoicing. "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice" (Phil. 4:4). Early Christians had a profound interest in the word of God. They preached it; they taught it; they instructed themselves and others in it. They were continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine day by day—preaching the word, endeavoring to live it as they heard it proclaimed. They were a powerful people — persistent in prayer, powerful in prayer — in public prayer, in private prayer, personal prayer. They were praying—praying unto God, thanking God, praising him, asking him for blessings, guidance, and strength to meet the trials and the persecutions that beset them day by day. They were Christians who rejoiced to show forth the death of the Lord, to dwell upon the wondrous things accomplished for them on the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ and his resurrection from the grave. They rejoiced in the fact that he had the keys of death and of Hades, that they were members of a body bought with blood, washed clean and pure so that they could show forth that death until he comes—looking for his coming, living day by day in the joyous hope that they should one day live in his presence and see him forever. They gave themselves and their means. They laid their bodies a living sacrifice on the altar of service to the Lord. My friends, New Testament worship was worship that was God-centered; it was worship that was

Christ-centered. It was not individualistic. It was not a kind of worship that got off out somewhere in the quiet aisles of the forest and said, "I can worship God out there better than I can with others." It was a congregational worship. The church was an assembly of the saints gathered together worshipping the Lord as a body of reedemed people and praising him in preparation, yes, and in hope, for that life which is to come. There is the ideal before us—restoring New Testament Christianity in worship, not only in the acts that we perform but in the spirit, in the joy that is the very heart of true worship.

THE CHURCH IN ITALY

Cline R. Paden

In the fall of 1950, Brethren Wyndal Hudson, Joe Chisholm and I were in the Square before St. Peter's Cathedral in Vatican City. From the four corners of the earth this huge assembly had come together to hear the Pope pronounce the latest dogma of Roman Catholicism—The Assumption of Mary into Heaven. If Catholicism be true, we heard that day an inspired man speak, and declare that Mary had ascended into heaven in a bodily form. This was the first infallible (?) declaration that had been made since 1870. It was estimated that there were more than a million people present on that occasion. A million people, regardless of the reason for their coming together, can make an impression upon one's mind. I am sure that as long as memory serves me I shall not forget the impressions that came to my mind as I looked into the face of this sometimes praying, sometimes cursing, but always pushing mob of people. I remember remarking to Brother Chisholm that I would give a great number of the years of my life for the privilege of addressing so large an assembly. We felt that even without the added gift of infallibility that we could speak with more truth than this man who was being carried about on the shoulders of those who worshipped him on a portable throne, and who claimed to be the representative or the vicar of the lowly Galilean. We knew, of course, this was but wishful

thinking and that such an opportunity would not be granted unto us.

I felt that until I stand before him in the day of judgment to be judged of my deeds, that likely I would never be a part of so great an assembly. But I think I was wrong. At least from my vantage point this morning, it seems that there are more here than were present upon that occasion, and if anyone doubts my word, you come and stand where I am standing. Especially if you have been accustomed to speaking to very small assemblies for some time.

While a million people can make an impression upon one's mind, I think that this audience of a few hundred thousand fewer people, makes an impression upon my mind that is more profound than was made upon that November day. If a million people gathered together for the purpose of deepening the darkness of ignorance and superstition can be impressive, then certainly a few thousand of God's people meeting for the purpose of studying ways and means of carrying the gospel into those areas where darkness yet prevails, not only can be more impressive and inspirational but certainly has that which the other assembly lacked—the blessings of God Almighty. I am sure that Abilene Christian College is not aware of the great amount of good that is accomplished here each year. I personally know of some who are absent this morning who were present upon other occasions and whose absence this morning is traceable directly to the fact that they were here on other occasions and received their inspiration to go into distant lands with the gospel of Christ. It is my prayer that before this

meeting or this series of lectures has come to an end that others may resolve to go into places yet strange to them to carry the gospel of Christ.

It is an inspiration to be a part of a great brotherhood that is more than maintaining itself in the world—that is growing perhaps as we have grown in few periods of our history. There are churches of Christ today in places where, ten years ago, it was impossible to find churches. Five years ago there were no churches of Christ in Italy. Today it is possible for one to visit that nation and to spend six months visiting with a different congregation every Lord's day and never visit the same congregation twice. I say this proudly, but I say it not because of the effectiveness of the workers who are there. I want to stress this point—I want it to be the keynote of this address—that we have succeeded in Italy only because of the fact that God has made it possible.

Before leaving Italy it was necessary for me to go by the office of the Commissario, the police chief of the district in which we live, to inform him of our intentions of leaving that nation. This was necessary, for it is not possible for one to stay in a place in Italy more than three days without reporting to the police. They are constantly observing your movements, and it is necessary to advise them if you contemplate a change of residence. The Commissario and I fell into conversation, because, just a few days before, he had called me into his office and had given me five days to remove the sign that has since been chiseled from our wall. I told him, as I had told him upon other occasions, that I would not remove the sign—that

we felt justified in refusing to do so, having obtained from the Italian government the necessary authorization to affix it. The Commissario argued for some time. He tried to persuade me to remove the sign. He admitted that he was under pressure from the local Catholic priest. He said that "there is a mounting wave of protest coming into my office, and even now, because of similar pressure by Catholics upon higher-ups in the government, I am getting orders from the ministry of the interior. It would be better for you," he said, "to remove the sign." We told him we would not remove it, and if it were removed, it would be because they took the initiative. The Commissario then began to insult me. He is an artist at that sort of thing. As he talks, he screams, he rants and he raves. But he can express himself very well. You don't misunderstand what he is trying to say. Passing from a rational or intelligent conversation into this kind of raving, he began telling me, "You are a nobody," and this is one of the greatest insults that can be given to an Italian. To be a "nobody" in Italy is really just that—you are a nobody. He said, "You are dust under my feet. If you were really 'anybody' you wouldn't have the difficulty that you are now experiencing in Italy. If you had influence with your government or with our government, you wouldn't be having this trouble." Perhaps it was surprising to the Commissario to learn that we had never had the intention of being a "somebody." But we said this: "The fact that we are nobodies here brings us to the greatest unexplained phenomena of my experience and perhaps in your experience,

Commissario. Here we are a bunch of nobodies and yet in spite of this fact, the Italian government, with the blessing and backing of the Vatican, which from the beginning of this work, has used every method that they command—and they possess every avenue through which to bring pressure and to establish obstacles, yet this overwhelming combination of powers has not been enough to successfully stop this little group of nobodies. You and other commissarios have closed our church buildings, you have arrested our preachers, you have followed us to our secret places of worship, you have indicated your intention of taking the sign from our door, and yet, in spite of all of these things, this little group of nobodies continues. More than that, we are growing, Commissario. In view of all that you have done, how do you account for the fact that we have been able to stand up against such odds? What possible explanation except this: that above us—greater than you, greater than your government, greater than the Pope, greater than this little group of nobodies, there is a Somebody who has so directed the affairs of this nation that, though you would be opposed to us and hinder our work, everything that you have done had the opposite effect.” How many times have they, like Balaam of old, opened their mouths to curse us only to bless us instead? How many times have they opened their mouths to say, “Get out of Italy and stay out,” and yet these words came out after awhile: “Three months extension . . . Six months extension?” How many times have they said, “Your church is closed,” only to say later, “Your church may now re-

begin its operation?" It is thrilling to work with this Somebody, and we want you to know that the success of the work in Italy is not due to the fact that Carl Heckers, the John Butts, the Gerald and Harold Paddens, the Carl Mitchells, the Howard Bybees, the Wyndal Hudsons, the Dayle Pitmans, the David Lavenders, the L. V. Phieffers, the Melvin Pownalls and the Bernard Howells have worked on the field, but because he has been so close to us and has helped us so greatly. I would hate to be there were it not for this Somebody and for the help that he has rendered. It wouldn't have been possible, and I want you to understand that no one in Italy believes that it is because of anything that they personally have done. We couldn't have done it. How thrilling to walk down a blind alley with the Lord! With opposition on every side stronger than we were able to withstand, with pressure from behind and pressure from all sides and an unsurmountable obstacle before us, and yet with faith that God's answer would be the final answer, we have walked ahead, thinking that our path was right and our cause just. We have thrilled time and time again to see the opposition melt before us as a candle before a flame, and the way open up to us, and the very obstacle itself turned to his glory. Because of his help, today from Como high in the Italian Alps, down through the Italian peninsula, more than a thousand miles winding mountain roads, down to the tip of the Italian boot, then across the Straits of Messina to the island of Sicily, there are churches of Christ meeting for work and worship. The last congregation that I visited in Italy was the

church in Milano. This congregation is about three and a half years old. That's not very long for a congregation to be in existence and to be as numerous as they are. This congregation numbers about 115 members and we are thrilled at the thought that the Italian people can be so responsive to the gospel call. It is but an indication of the power of the gospel that has been preached and is a compliment to the receptiveness of the Italian people. The church in Milano has been served very adequately by Brethren Harold Paden, Carl Mitchell, Howard Bybee and Melvin Pownall. All have worked wonderfully well in the past, though all of these men are not there at present. Brother Harold Paden is assisted at the present time only by Brethren Biuseppe Torrieri and Fausto Salvoni. As I have suggested, the last congregation I preached for in Italy was the church in Milano. Among those present at the evening services was a priest who was not afraid to come to services dressed in the full robes of his office. It takes some courage to do this—especially to a service of the church of Christ. Perhaps before he left the building that night, his name was on file with the police. We have information that would indicate that they are just that thorough. A man who works in the Archives at the Questura in Milano is friendly toward us, and has given us the information that they have on record there the names and addresses, the political affiliation, the place of employment of not only all the members of the Milano church, but all those who frequently attend their services. Together with this is included the brief note that the church of Christ is a

political front and that it exists to hide its subversive activities and political intrigues behind an otherwise harmless organization.

But even with this being general information to all those who attend, they continue to grow. They are building a strong congregation in Milano. They are doing more than building for Milano; they are building for all of Italy. They have in the church building in Milano the training school for preachers where only Bible is taught to seven young men who are ready to go out and we are ready to recommend them to the brotherhood for support. The thing that is encouraging about the work in Milano is this: that though this congregation has been there only this short period of time they have almost reached the point that they are self-supporting. The last Lord's Day I was there, they said, "We could support our own work now; we could pay our preacher and finance our own program," but they said, "It is best that we do not assume this responsibility for perhaps another year that we may be able to establish the cause in another part of the city." We believe that it would be best for them to wait so that they can grow not only more numerically but also financially so as to be able to carry on a program such as that. It is encouraging to know that they will not be depending upon the American churches forever for support. This is the only church, however, in all of Italy that has reached this point. There is only one other church that is older than this, and that is the church in Frascati, and it is not ready yet to take on this responsibility. Brother and Sister Hecker are doing a wonderful work there with the home which now serves 33 boys.

We have been accused of exciting the Catholic people and thus to have brought numerous problems upon ourselves. Actually, our problems are not limited to Catholics. We have a lot of difficulty from the Communists. We have a lot more from Protestant organizations. We have made converts from all of them. A number of Communists have been converted. We've converted a number of Catholics, including about nine or ten of their priests and we have converted a number of Protestants, along with several of their preachers. We have at present time about five ex-Baptist preachers; one ex-Methodist preacher and one ex-Seventh Day Adventist preacher. Brethren Bybee and Paone have a splendid work going over in Padova, and have converted even one from Judaism. This shows that our activities are not limited to Catholics. We're just preaching the gospel, and of course, it appeals to all who are subjects of it. Actually by percentage of population, we've converted more Protestants than we have Catholics.

With the coming of the Wyndal Hudsons, Bernard Howells, L. V. Pfiefers, John Butts and Gerald Padens last summer, we were able to answer some old appeals in some new places of work. In recent months new works have been started in Palermo in Sicily where John Butts and Bernard Howell are initiating efforts with some good contacts. Brother Melvin Pownall has recently moved to Turin and is meeting with much success there. Brother Ugo Monaco, an Italian, started the work there, but had to leave it when he was drafted into the army. Down in Florence Brethren Mitchell and Pfiefer have one of the

most promising works begun in Italy. One of Italy's greatest authors has recently been baptized there. Florence is the cultural center of Italy and the contacts and converts with whom these brethren are working correspond favorably with what would be expected from those who live there. In Leghorn Brethren Hudson and Pittman—laboring under extreme difficulty—have a promising work under way. Apart from the work among the Italian people—which work has gained world-wide attention during the past two weeks—Brother Hudson is teaching Bible to 140 students each week in the school for the children of the U. S. army personnel stationed in the city. Several families on the base are members of the church and we know their presence will mean much to that good work.

This question has been asked time and time again: "When and if the American preachers are driven from Italy, what effect is this going to have on the Italian work?" I know perhaps that you are wondering about this very thing. And I think the answer to this question would be more important to you than to hear or to re-hear something that you have already heard in the past concerning the difficulties that we have had. I would like to minimize those difficulties and to try to steer away from any attempts to be sensational in reporting things that have happened. I think that you are more interested in hearing about the accomplishments, and that we intend to give this morning. "What will happen when and if you are driven out of the country?" This is a logical question because the time may come, and it could

be soon, when we will not be there any longer. The Italian government has no pattern to follow. You can't, therefore, anticipate what the future holds for us. Actually, we can plan our work only about six months at a time, because usually that's the extent of our visa or permit to remain in Italy. But in view of the fact that we have been threatened from the beginning by expulsion from Italy, we have made our plans against that day. Let me give you something of the work that has been done exclusively by Italian personnel. I think that this will help to answer our question. In the province of Cosenza, Brother Salvatone Puliga, laboring under the direction of the church in Jackson, Mississippi, has made a good showing for his labor in that area. There are some sixty members of the church in this work that Brother Puliga has done almost alone. There were only occasional visits from passing American preachers to assist him. In the city of Messina two Italians are laboring, Antonio Buta and Francesco Scarfi, supported by churches in Baytown and San Antonio respectively, and are doing what we believe to be a marvelous work. Brother Scarfi was formerly an Adventist preacher who had broken away from Adventism before we contacted him, but was instrumental in leading this group to a fuller knowledge of the truth. In the province of Salerno we have a young man who was formerly the assistant to the vice-president of the World Baptist Alliance in Rome. He was converted some eight or nine months ago and is now laboring in the province of Salerno. The little group that he has together there has shown some enthusiasm and some initiative

that we appreciate. They already have a building program. They have about \$500.00 in their building program, all on their own, and we believe this to be very encouraging. In the city of Catania there is a small group of about 15 members meeting. One of the brightest lights in this work is an ex-Jesuit priest. This man is not supported by the church, has never received any assistance financially from us in any way, works for his own living, but he was converted and is helping to convert others. We believe that these works and others that are beginning all over Italy will help us to appreciate the work that is being done at present by Italian personnel. We have every right and reason to believe that it would continue even if we were no longer there.

Let me give you something of the quality of the preachers in Italy. I wish we could have time to talk some about each of them, but of course, time forbids.

Brother Lido Petrinia is one of the preachers who has figured rather prominently in Leghorn recently. I don't want to hold him up as a rare example and suggest that there are no others like him there, nor do I wish to say that all of our preachers are as enthusiastic as this man. But he is one of them. Brother Petrini was first arrested in 1952 when he was preaching for the church in Allesandria. I think Brother Carl Mitchell mentioned this last year in his report here at Abilene Christian College, and told about his being arrested and sentenced to fifteen days in jail, fined five thousand lire, and immediately inducted into the Italian Army even though he was not actually subject to draft. They thought, I suppose,

that when they had drafted him and had torn him away from his flock that both the flock would die and his interest in them would die. But it was not to be that way. Brother Petrini, of course, was limited in his activity. Formerly he had been working at one place, the police, at another. He was not then immediately under the control of those who directed his life, as in the army. But in spite of this close control he began his Bible study, and finally made his first convert. He baptized another soldier, and still another, and still others. Finally they were having a great number of soldiers studying the Bible together. The Lieutenant Colonel, who attended the classes, had reached the point that he had asked to be baptized for the remission of his sins. But before they could baptize this man they were called before the colonel who commanded the base and severely reprimanded for carrying on this "subversive activity." They were immediately dispersed in various camps all over Italy. As they were loaded on a truck to leave this place and go to their separating center, and as they pulled out of the army base they sang for the last time together, "The Church's One Foundation." Brother Petrini was released from the service on January the fourth, this year. He moved into Florence and began working there with Brother Carl Mitchell and L. V. Pfiefer, and had to be called over to Leghorn to assist in the preaching there. This was the time when the police came in, arrested him and gave him a one-way passage out of Leghorn. In fact, I think he is not allowed to return to the city of Leghorn for five years. If he does, of course, he will be re-arrested. But this

will give you something of the type man that we have preaching for us in Italy. This man, incidentally, is an ex-priest.

Brother Fausto Salvoni is another ex-priest. I think that most of you have heard of Brother Salvoni. He is an ex-professor of a Catholic University in the city of Milano, and a very brilliant mind he has. We have used him almost exclusively in preaching in our lecture programs or in our gospel meetings. He held a meeting in the city of Rome recently. More than three hundred people were present during that meeting and some were turned away. The Commissario, who unceremoniously removed the lettering of our sign from our building was there, and he ordered the doors closed when so many had entered our building. He was afraid the building would collapse. There was just that kind of enthusiasm to hear Brother Salvoni. There were a number of priests present. They attempted, at least for awhile, to combat the things that he was saying. The vice-director of *L'osservatore Romano*, the Vatican newspaper, was present every evening except one, and attempted to speak on each occasion. Brother Fausto, however, is able, as he did on this evening and others, to put these people to silence. His great knowledge of the Bible, his most kind way of presenting the truth, is very commendable and even the Catholic people who were present and whose religious name was being called continually, were not offended at the way Brother Salvoni presents the truth.

Brother Dario Maffei is another of our gospel preachers. He was sent last summer over to the city

of Civitavecchia, forty-five miles out of Rome to begin a new work. We had baptized only one young man in that city. There was a Baptist church in Civitavecchia, numbering some three hundred members, and they had elders. It's the only Baptist church that I know of anywhere that had elders. I say "had" because at the present time under Brother Maffei's most capable teaching program, those five elders are now members of the church of Christ.

Brother Sandro Corazza, laboring for the church in Rome, is one of our most capable preachers. I say that, not limiting myself to the Italian field. I don't believe that there is a preacher more capable anywhere, or who has a better knowledge of the scriptures, than Brother Corazza. Because of him and others like him, I do not fear for the future of the church of Christ in Italy if we are driven out. I trust that this confidence that I have expressed may become contagious; that you will have confidence in the work done there by the hands of such capable men. Five years ago these were not men of courage. They would have run, perhaps, even from their own shadows. But today, armed with the gospel of Christ, and armed with the humility that should attend each gospel preacher, they are ready for what the future may hold for them. I do not fear for that future with such men to represent the cause of Christ there.

We began working in the city of Rome about a year and a half ago. Starting almost from scratch, we have been able to get together a congregation of between forty and fifty members. Part of our meetings were held in secret because of the police ban against

us. But we have noticed this: that some of the most faithful members of the church in Rome today are those who came to us during the time that we were having to dodge police in order to have our religious services. You can't kill the church in Italy or anywhere else with persecution.

We are not ignorant of the source of the difficulty that has come to us in Italy. In every office we have entered, in our attempts to straighten out our difficulties, we have been told again and again, "we are sorry that we have to do this, but we are under pressure from the Roman Catholic Church." The Catholic party, the Christian Democratic party, which is incidentally a misnomer on two points—it is neither Christian nor Democratic—is in power and has the blessings and backing of the Roman Catholic Church. When the hierarchy excommunicates those who do not vote for the Christian Democratic party, and when this party gets into power and puts into effect its program of suppressing religious freedom, it doesn't take a great amount of logic to reason back to the source of this difficulty. They don't make any bones about it. They'll tell you, "You're just too near the Vatican." Recently, as you read in your newspapers, a letter or several letters have been circulated throughout most of Italy, signed by an unprecedented number of bishops and cardinals and cardinal-bishops, urging the people to avoid contact with the "pernicious errors of Protestantism," because, this warning says, this is "dangerous to our position." They are aware of the dangers that are being presented by the gospel of Christ in that area. Cardinal Schuster in

Milano has singled out the church of Christ in several of his attacks. These attacks have been published in *L'osservatore Romano*, the Vatican newspaper. Mr. Mario Shelba, the present Prime-Minister of Italy, as well as Italy's Minister of the Interior, has made several remarks in the past in Associated Press dispatches, stating that the church of Christ is a Communist organization and as such does not merit any favor from the Italian government. And he has seen to it that we didn't get any favors.

We haven't had our difficulty in Italy because of the fact that we are not recognized by the Italian government. Let's not be deceived by any of their propaganda. We do not have to have recognition in Italy—though it would assist us greatly if we had it. The constitution guarantees religious freedom for all alike. I say this because of this fact: in the city of Rome the largest non-Catholic organization is the Assemblies of God, a Holiness organization. They have more than a thousand members in Rome, and they are not recognized by the Italian government. Their preachers are not recognized as ministers of worship, and yet, they have a sign on their building. Nor is it because of the fact that we are Communists that we had our sign removed from the building, because a hundred fifty yards from our building there is a Communist cell block with a large hammer and sickle plainly printed on the outside of the building, and the letters underneath, "Headquarters of the Communist Party."

We are aware of the fact, then, that Roman Catholicism, which believes in religious freedom for them-

selves behind the Iron Curtain, but does not believe in religious freedom for others in the countries that they dominate, is behind all of this, and we are not afraid of making this charge publicly. We have no reason to believe that Catholicism is any different here from Catholicism in Italy or in any other part of the world. It is the same system everywhere—the same man controls the Roman Catholic Church in Italy who controls it here. If they can chisel names off American-owned property in Rome, they can chisel the name off churches of Christ in America, and would now if they thought they could get away with it. They will do so as soon as they are strong enough. Let America be deceived no longer.

I am not through, but I must close. I haven't even mentioned the fact that we have been to Washington this past week and have found many open doors, and much willingness to help. We talked with twenty members of the House of Representatives and with Two of Texas' senators, and with various members of the State Department, and found a great amount of interest and willingness to help on every level. Mr. Lyndon Johnson contacted General George Beddell Smith who is second under Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. He had a meeting with the Italian Ambassador. We believe our sign will be returned to us in time, and we are going to try to make it a neon sign the next time!

I stood recently upon Gianicolo, a hill overlooking the city of Rome. I looked down upon this city from almost the same position from which Garibaldi looked in 1870. It was near where I was standing that Gari-

baldi stood with his cannons trained upon the Vatican and ordered them to surrender. They did, and thus the war between the Vatican and Garibaldi came to an end. Italy was united. The Papal states were destroyed, the temporal power of the Pope was eliminated and Italy became a nation. But Garibaldi said this, "When the Vatican is destroyed, and it will be destroyed, it will not be my cannons. It will be the word of God." This man was not a prophet; he was a soldier. But he spoke the words of a prophet, and he spoke them well. You and I know only the Bible, the word of God, can destroy Catholicism. It is the the only thing that they fear. They can embrace a nation that defeats it. They can emerge conqueror, but they have had a mighty conflict with the word of God and have not conquered it. It remains the word of God. It is the only thing that they fear. You have sent it to Italy. You have sent us there with this—you placed it in our hands and have given us means to preach it there, and we want to continue. There is nothing that we can say, in conclusion, that will be more important than: Let's continue, yea, let's re-double our efforts in Italy, because the church is there and we believe that it will remain. The possibility that we may some day be driven from Italy makes it imperative that support for the five young men trained in our schools be put in the field immediately with full support so they can get as much practical experience under our supervision as possible. The future of the church in Italy depends upon the Italian preachers, whether we are allowed to remain there or not. The importance, then, of finding

this support for them, and for giving them something to work with, cannot be over-emphasized. If you are interested, you can contact me through the West Erwin Church of Christ in Tyler, Texas, which church has assumed the oversight of our work in Italy.

I thank you very much and in the name of all those in Italy, I thank you. As Paul said in Hebrews the thirteenth chapter, verse twenty-four, "They of Italy salute you!"

"THEIR SOUND WENT OUT INTO ALL THE
EARTH"

(Romans 10:16-20; Cf. Psalms 19:5)

Owen Aikin

To those who made possible my participation in this lectureship program I owe a great deal for it is a distinct honor and a real privilege. No one could fail to be thrilled to his innermost being by an occasion such as this and by the audiences we have already been having. It is especially a rich privilege for those of us who have been away from America for a period of time.

The theme of this portion of the program is evangelism, often called 'missionary work,' with special emphasis on the field of France. Appropriate words upon which to build our remarks concerning this particular labor are noted in Romans 10:18: "Their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

Since the first century, I believe we can safely say that there has never been a time more opportune for the preaching of the gospel to the nations of the earth than at the present time. Briefly here is why we say this:

1. America and her people are held in very high esteem in most of the countries of the world, with the possible exception of the Iron Curtain countries and even here I am certain that the people in general are

well disposed toward us. This gives us more or less free access into most of the countries of the world.

2. The strength of the churches here in America. Never before have we been able to count as many who wore the name of Christ in its true sense. Further, there has never been a time in her history when financial conditions have been better. In connection with the latter we observe the following which also contributes to the truthfulness of our premise:

3. America today enjoys a standard of living unparalleled in any other place in the world. Recent figures indicate our standard of living is six times higher than the nearest rival. Think of the number of comforts we have in our homes. No one thinks anything about having a refrigerator, a washing machine, an automobile or a number of other similar items in their home, but such is true here alone. The people of Europe do not have them as we have them. Then the very high rate of pay we enjoy here points up our advantages over those of our national neighbors. In France, for example, a foreman does well to receive \$100 per month.

Then I would suggest that the time is opportune for preaching the gospel to all the nations of the earth because of:

4. The first-hand reports of conditions in the various countries throughout the world, brought back by those in the service or others from over here. They have told us clearly of the need for the gospel in these places. In addition, they have told us how the people are literally begging for this bread of life.

Now, when all these conditions are present in a greater measure than since the beginning of the church, the 'sound' of which the prophet first spoke, in the words of our introductory reading, and the words of that sweet refrain caught up by the apostle need to—yea, **MUST**, go out into all the earth, and to the ends of the world.

By the grace of God and armed with the power of his might and the sword, against which no foe can stand, a beginning has been made! The footprints of those bearing 'glad tidings' have been seen in places which have long known the gloomy night of ignorance, superstition and oppression. From the continent of Europe, from Asia, from Africa, from the scattered inhabitants of both isolated and well-known regions has come the oft-repeated cry "Come over into Macedonia and help us!" One of the nations from which this appeal seemed to be coming in great strength was France. Now France bears a strong resemblance to the Macedonia of the Roman Empire, in the following respects:

1. She has been and still is a great seat of culture and learning.
2. Her people are of a very philosophical turn of mind. They, like the Athenians, spend much of their time in hearing or learning something new.
3. The moral restraints have largely been thrown off. Corinth, in ancient Macedonia, had her temple of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, with a thousand high priestesses dedicated to immoral purposes. Paris,

in modern France, has over 500,000 whose functions are basically identical.

4. She has been dominated by a religion which has made of true religion one of pagan nature. Virtually all of the principal ceremonies and rites of the Catholic church have their origin in pagan religions.

But let us now look at this country, into which a little of the leaven of the kingdom of Christ has come. That you may understand some of the attitudes and habits of these people, may I briefly tell you of the way of life in France, as compared with our own here in America. We will hurriedly note three phases of life in France: the living conditions, some customs which differ from ours and some of the shopping habits of the French people.

As I have already intimated there are few of the comforts such as we have in our homes here in those of France. In a conversation with a French industrialist, I was asked about living conditions here in America in comparison with those of France. Never wanting in any way to boast of our superior possessions in this respect, for others are very sensitive because they do not have them, I hesitantly affirmed that most of us did have a refrigerator and a washing machine, at which point he interrupted me to say that while I began in my comparison at the point of the refrigerators and washing machine not one house out of every fifty in Paris had a bath and that fully one-fourth of the houses in Paris did not have running water and therefore did not have indoor toilet facilities. Think about that, in a city of 4 million people!

The salaries of the workers are very low and there is little chance for advancement in France. As already stated a foreman rarely draws over \$100 per month though he may have worked at the job for several years.

Despite the lowness of the salaries in France, prices are higher in many instances than here in the States. For example, a 7 cubic foot refrigerator will cost you over \$600; a Bendix washer, made in France, will cost \$500. Food prices, while in some instances the same or lower than here, are in most cases higher. A number 2½ can of green beans will cost 65c; pineapple on the French market is over \$1.00 for a number 2 can. In general, however, canned goods are not in great demand in France, and there is no frozen food at all. The people use that which is in season. Relative to heating in France, the basic fuel is coal and it costs \$55 a ton, with a 7 month minimum for heating.

Now let us glance at some of their habits, or customs. One difference is readily seen in the manner of greeting used by a great many people in France, although I believe this custom is gradually dying out. The French use a kiss on first one cheek and then the other as a greeting and if relatives or close friends are involved the process is repeated. Another difference is observed in their eating habits. The French people will not eat beef that we would consider well-done, they like theirs rare at all times; they are great lovers of snails, the common giant, garden variety. We have also eaten them and they are rather tasty aside from the thought of it. Oysters are always

eaten alive. A dead oyster, according to them, should be buried, not eaten. Those of France love very strong cheeses, especially Camembert, which is one of the smelliest things left on top of the ground. Further, the French are great drinkers of wine, having done so for thousands of years. Strangely enough, though, drunkenness is less of a problem in France than here. We teach concerning the dangers of it and we do not drink it ourselves at all.

The people of France will not eat corn. To them, corn is exclusively for the animals. They eat foods highly seasoned with herbs. They will not feed their small children ice cream. It gives them sore throats and colds, they say. But this part of the subject is unlimited. We must pass on.

The stores in France are largely specialized. To buy dairy products, one goes to a dairy store; to buy bread, it is the bakery; to buy beef, a special store is visited where only beef is sold; pork is likewise separate from the others and so on down the line. There are a few exceptions to this but the vast majority of stores in France are specialized. Open air markets are popular in France with all sorts of products sold at open-air stands, also specialized. Thus a great deal of time is spent in shopping and a lot of distance covered.

Before we pass from this point, let me tell you of the 'baguette'. This is the most popular type bread in France. It has a very hard crust and is very tough in texture. About an inch in diameter, it is about a yard long. We have never ceased to be amused by the small-fry who go to the bakery shop to buy bread for

their mothers. They will come out of the bakery with these sticks of bread in their hands and immediately begin to duel with them, using them as swords. Then, as they walk along they will run the sticks along the iron bars of the fences or hit the telephone post with them. Let a dog come near enough and he will feel the lash of this stick of bread across his back. After working so diligently the appetite is thus increased, and the child tears off a piece of this bread and happily goes on his way munching it. And don't worry about germs! The crust is so hard on this bread that the germ foolish enough to try getting in invariably winds up with a fractured skull!

Let us emphasize here that I am not making these comparisons in a disparaging manner, but am simply pointing out some of the major differences between their way of life and ours.

But, let us now pass to another consideration of this great nation and it is in this respect that we are particularly interested in France. We have no interest whatsoever in making over the French people into Americans nor do we want to change their customs to fit ours for WE are THEIR guests! We are there for a different purpose. We want them to be like us in one respect and that is to the extent that *we are like Christ*. We want to establish and encourage a common resemblance to Christ.

Let us consider then the religious condition of France. Because of her long connection with the Catholic church, France is called "the eldest daughter of Rome," and rightfully so for Romanism is almost as old in France as in Italy. This religious body has

wielded great power and influence in France throughout many of the centuries of her history, choosing her rulers and guiding the affairs of state both internally and externally. According to present day figures, the Catholic population of France is estimated at 39,600,000, or 90% of the 44 million population. But another fact must be considered in this connection and that is that only 4 million, or 10% of this figure can be considered devout. This includes, of course, the priests and other officials.

In addition, there is also a small Protestant element in France. The strongest group is the Reformed church, constructed around the work of John Calvin, the great French reformer. The Baptists are also represented in France by a single body uniting all other Baptist groups and much nearer the truth than their cousins here in America, generally speaking. There are also representatives of almost all the other sects known and some virtually unknown in France.

However, the majority of the people of France, and we include here most of those who have left the Catholic church, are confessed atheists. The reason is given that the leaders of the Catholic church are corrupt and that this organization has so much of a commercial aspect. Unfortunately, these people have seen no alternative but atheism. Of course, other factors have entered into the picture in making them this way. Rationalism, which flourished for a long time in France, encouraged many of them in this direction. The love of pleasure has fastened itself

firmly upon the people of France and has also caused them to throw off the restraints imposed by religion.

Thus no nation on earth could have presented a greater need for the 'glad tidings.' The Shepherd of the sheep was unknown to them. Someone had to rend the veil of ignorance and tradition so that the light of God's love manifested through Christ might be revealed.

But the time has now come for us to speak of accomplishments from the sowing of the seed in France and let it be clearly remembered that we are not pointing boastfully to anything that WE have accomplished. It is rather an emphasis of the power of God's word in changing the lives of sinful men and of the unselfish interest of brethren in America. It is true that we have been the instruments of actual contact but without the other two elements involved the people of France would have continued to slip silently into eternity unprepared to meet God.

From nothing prior to 1949 to over 100 members among residents of France, the church has grown. Now there are seven churches of the Lord in France, including congregations established among English-speaking people, chiefly among American service personnel. There are three of the latter. From zero in 1949 the number of preachers of the gospel in France has grown to six Americans and one 'native.' The latter is not actually a native of France but of the Ukraine, in the southern part of Russia. He is a very devoted young man and a very capable preacher, speaking fluently Ukranian, Russian, Polish, German, French and English.

Then, when we arrived in France four years ago, there was not a single piece of literature in French, to our knowledge, that could be used to point the people of France to the Way. Today, there are four tracts already translated, written and published, along with a small invitation to be handed out in the various places where services are held. On this invitation there are facts concerning the church and obedience to the gospel. In addition, we now have a Bible correspondence course translated, adapted for French use and ready for printing as soon as funds are available. It is not difficult to see that much more is needed in the way of printed matter and we are pushing this matter as rapidly as funds become available.

People often ask us how we go about making contacts among the French and how they receive the teaching we give. In so many ways the making of contacts in France is similar to the methods used here in the States. We meet people on the street, in business establishments, through meetings and classwork, through correspondence, through house-to-house work and through members of the church. In general, the people of France are perfectly willing to listen and to discuss religious questions and yet, because of such a vast change necessary in their lives and because of their past experiences with religious frauds time is required to convince them that they must accept it. Most of the people of France possess total ignorance of the Bible so a foundation must be laid. They need greatly to see Christianity in practice.

Because of complete separation of church and state in France and because of the great tolerance of the French government, our relationships with the government are just about as perfect as could be demanded. We have no difficulty in securing visas, even when the individuals enter the country originally without them. All of us there have at least three year visas and I have a permanent visa. Our activities are not restricted in any manner. We have been able to hold meetings and classes anywhere we have chosen and have been able to carry on unrestricted advertising in every way. In this respect we could wish earnestly that we might be able to share some of these privileges we have in France with our brethren in Italy. But these things serve to point out the great opportunity for the preaching of the gospel in France and the consequent responsibility for doing so.

It goes without saying that in any work there are hindrances, some of which have to be overcome over a long period of time. Others can and must be overcome more rapidly. In closing now, I want briefly to point out two of the greatest hindrances to our work in France, and emphasize that the work will make more rapid progress only to the extent that these hindrances are overcome.

The greatest need that we have in France today is more 'pioneers for the truth'. We have only touched the hem of the garment in preaching the gospel in France. Opportunities are abundant in other cities and areas but there is no one to go. To our ears come these cries for aid and to them we must answer "We shall do all we can to help find someone

to come to you with the message of Christ." The need is boundless for those who are willing to suffer a few hardships as good soldiers of Christ and who are not interested in a 'position.' Men are dying without Christ every second while preachers here in the States are competing in many instances for higher salaries, bigger preachers' homes, bigger expense accounts and a 'position.' Oh my brethren, what will you say when the millions of the earth who have never heard the gospel once accuse you in that day? You say, "I have faith . . ." Show me your faith by your works! Come over into Macedonia and help us! God and good faithful brethren here in America will take care of your material needs.

Congregations are needed who will look out men and send them into these needy fields. Brethren, lift up your eyes to the teeming millions of unsaved on this earth and then have the courage to raise your sights to send Christ to them. The work at home will grow—it has never failed, and others will hear of Christ. Don't let these young men have to come to you and get down on their knees to beg you to send them. Put the initiative where it ought to be.

Another critical need in the work in France is for a small building to serve the needs of the church in Paris. We are now having to meet in a disreputable section of town, on the third story of an old building above a jiu-jitsu gymnasium, from which come the noises to disturb our meditation during services. Though we have searched diligently we have been unable to locate anything as good or better than what we now have. We have been forced to watch people

turn away from the entrance to our meeting place because of its appearance. A contractor has given us a price of \$30,000 for a very nice little building to seat 250, with classrooms, baptistry, central heating and two apartments for workers, and of solid masonry construction. To buy the land those of us in the English-speaking church in Paris have given over three thousand dollars in the last year and a half. Three thousand dollars will come back out of our lease and around five thousand dollars are already on hand to go toward the purchase of land but help is needed for the building. I might add, too, that the Paris church is caring for all expenses, outside of personal support for the preachers which must come from outside France. Our budget last year was over \$3000, or about \$65 per Sunday and this for a group of about 15 members, including several women. Will you help the work in France by helping us secure this much needed tool?

Many will say "We are doing all we can . . ." ARE WE? When we spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in a mad race to keep up with the denominations on their buildings, luxurious trappings and so forth; when individual Christians waste money without end on cigarettes, picture shows, new automobiles, finer houses, television sets and a million other items that are not needed things but in many cases offerings to the god of pride and luxury, I say, when we act in this manner, HOW IN THE NAME OF GOD CAN WE SAY "WE ARE DOING ALL WE CAN?" When, oh when, my beloved brethren, are we going to stop playing at being as our heavenly Father would have

us be? We have the potential so that the 'sound' and the 'words' of our text can go out 'into all the earth and unto the ends of the world.'

May we labor together toward the salvation of our own soul and the souls of men everywhere. Pray on our behalf that God may open for us a door for the gospel in France. Thank you.

EVANGELIST

Glenn L. Wallace

The problems and questions that face churches in the field of evangelization of the world are many and they arise periodically to demand our attention. We have been plagued with those who teach the theory of "evangelistic authority," which gives an evangelist the complete authority over a congregation when it is planted and until such a time as it has elders. The evils of this system can be seen in the arm of evangelistic control reaching into the heart of congregations to unseat elders and often to hold the congregations in subjection for years without appointing officers. We are faced with those who talk about the evils of "the one man ministry." They erect a straw man with imaginary problems, and spend their time in fighting such. "No stipulated pay" for an evangelist; "the stay should not be specified"; "should an evangelist preach to the church or should he teach"; "can an evangelist preach where there are elders;" "must he preach where Christ has been named;" and on we go with men being found in every generation who are ready to grasp some of these theories and feel themselves the appointed prophets of the day.

Paul charged Timothy to do the work of an evangelist. "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke,

exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables. But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry. For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:1-8).

Who Is An Evangelist?

The average man thinks of a traveling preacher, one without a settled place of work, a kind of "circuit rider," when defining an evangelist. To such people, he is one who holds a gospel meeting (a mission) and after a short stay, moves on into other fields. We often hear men say: "I am an evangelist" and another, "I do local work." Then, there are those who object to a "located preacher." It has not yet been decided how a man can preach without being located.

The evangelist is: "a proclaimer of good news" and the stay or pay neither makes him qualified or unqualified for the work he does. Whether he preaches, talks, teaches, exhorts the brethren, "aids the elders," convicts the gainsayers, converts sinners or teaches the brethren, does not change him from an evangelist to be a located preacher or an "elders' aid."

“And on the morrow we departed, and came unto Caesarea: and entering into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we abode with him” (Acts 21:8). Here we find a New Testament evangelist.

“And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers” (Eph. 4:11). Paul lists “apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers” in this text. The listing in the above text does not identify any one as a permanent officer in the church. When we read other passages in the New Testament, we are able to determine which of the above was an officer in the Lord’s church.

Modern day advocates of what is mistakenly called “mutual ministry” have their own interpretation of this passage from Ephesians. One of them has made the text to read: “And he gave some to be apostles; and some to be prophets; and some evangelists: and some pastors; and teachers; with a *view to training*, instructing or *fitting the saints for* the work of ministry, and for the work of edifying of the body of Christ.” According to this private translation of the verse, “apostles, prophets, evangelists” are all one class and their purpose was to perfect the saints. The “saints,” another class, after they have reached perfection under these teachers, can now minister to and edify themselves. These theorists reason that when a preacher has converted the sinner and stabilized the saints, then he should and must move on. The actual practice of those who preach this theory is that they prolong their stay with a congregation by either never

selecting elders (under the pretext that there are none qualified) or they de-elder the elders and stay as long as they like. None but the most prejudiced would deny that such has been practiced and even the "oversight of several churches" has been the rule of these self-styled "anti-one man minister" evangelists. In practice, they are the men with the "pastor system" and the ruling "evangelist." The record is so evident and bitter that none will dare to deny the fruits. Heart-breaking experiences are common in this country with these self-ordained evangelists, traveling about as hirelings, wolves who destroy the flock, fleece the brethren and practice the most extreme doctrines of popery.

Who is to do the work of edifying the church? According to some, an evangelist cannot do so, because he is bound to leave that work to the elders. It is argued that the word "for" is used three times in Eph. 4:11. The first word "for" is "pros" which means "with a view to", and the next use of the word "for" is "eis" which means "unto." J. W. Roberts, a Greek teacher in Abilene Christian College, has well treated this passage in the GOSPEL ADVOCATE of Nov. 12, 1953. He says: "There are two different words for "for" in this passage: *pros* and *eis*. But they have practically the same, if not identical, meaning. Paul, like many other writers, is fond of varying his expression and construction to avoid repetition. This style is called by the grammarians "inconcinnity." Paul often uses two different prepositions, or a mixture of both to express the same idea in a context. Let us notice a few examples of his use of *pros* and *eis* in

the same context: (Rom. 15:2) "Let each one of us please his neighbor for (eis) that which is good, unto for (pros) edifying." This meaning is "let each please his neighbor in what is good and edifying."

(Rom. 3:25) "Whom (i. e., Christ) God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show (eis endeiksin, i. e., for showing) his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the showing (pros endeiksin, i.e., for showing) I say, of his righteousness at this present season."

"In all these passages notice Paul varies his use of *eis* and *pros* without any change in the meaning. It is simply variety. Dozens of such examples of these and other prepositions could be given from the letters of Paul and other New Testament writers. There is simply no basis for the contention that the last two prepositions depend on the first and distinguish the work of saints from the gifts of the apostles, etc. Paul certainly means that the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are to perfect the saints, do the work of ministry, and edify the body."

These "evangelists" of Eph 4, were ministers to the saints and so were the apostles. The work of ministry to the saints was certainly not limited to that which the saints could do for themselves.

Timothy was a "minister." "If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed until now:" (1 Timothy 4:6).

The apostles in Jerusalem were ministers of the

word in the church. "But we will continue steadfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4).

The saints in the apostolic church were edified and evangelists like Timothy did this work. Saints in the church today must be edified and evangelists today have the God given right to participate in this work.

The evangelist in the congregation, under the direction of elders, is not an officer and he has no voice in the oversight in the congregation. Dr. John Paul Gipson say: "The preacher has no 'divine call' above any other. If he has talents for speaking and teaching, the church may ask him to devote all his time in that way under the elders. It is up to them to hire him, give him specific duties and to dismiss him, when his dismissal is best for the church." (THE CHURCH AT WORK).

Leonard Channing, now of Alysbury, England, a great British preacher, in whose home I was privileged to stay while in a preaching mission with the church in London, England, has this to say, after a visit to American churches. "However, it must be recognized that it is ability for a task and not sincerity which is the deciding factor. It is not just a case of 'filling the bill!', but is the manner and matter of the preaching or teaching profitable and edifying? If not, then it may be 'mutual' but it is certainly not 'ministry.'

"Now I believe that such a system is doing incalculable harm to the cause in this country. Not only is it a poor witness for the Lord's church, but it is limiting men of real preaching ability who very often have

to sit back while men of no real ability who would be more usefully employed in another branch of the Lord's service, occupy the platform which they have been taught is theirs by right. I'll even go further, and declare that such a system is not 'mutual ministry' at all, but 'mutual mouth', the spirit of error against which Paul teaches so positively in 1 Cor. 12.

"THE AUTHORITY OF A PREACHER. On the other hand, some suggest by the terms 'one man ministry' or 'pastor system' that the preacher is in sole control of the congregation as is found among the denominations. But this assertion I would vigorously deny. There may be some who abuse their position. There may be a tendency on the part of some members of the various churches to look too much to the preacher, and too little to the elders; there may be elders who endeavour to shift their responsibilities on to the preacher, but these are errors which are not common to the so-called 'College' brethren, nor even to America, but are also found to some degree over here. Of these tendencies the American brethren are aware, and do not hesitate to condemn. Be that as it may, it is still a fact that the exception does not prove the rule, nor the abuse of a system prove that the system itself is wrong. Far from the preacher being in sole control of the congregation, whether morally or actually, from my observations I found that in the vast majority of churches quite the reverse is the case. The preacher is very much responsible to his elders, and in most cases does not even attend the elders' meeting unless specifically invited.

"LOCATED PREACHERS. Often objection is

raised against the idea of a preacher being 'located' with one congregation for several months, or longer periods. The length of time a man is with one congregation does not alter the principle of the thing itself. If one man can be with a congregation three months or six months, then another can be there for three years or six years. Further, the need for 'locating' is clearly seen in the New Testament. Paul was at Antioch in Syria for two long periods, one of them a year. He was at Ephesus three years, and at Corinth eighteen months. Timothy was sent to Ephesus, a church that was then fully constituted, having elders and deacons. Far from criticising such a system then, I think that it has much to commend it, for the British fear of the 'located' preacher has resulted in our full-time men being kept constantly on the move, thus lessening the amount of good that can done" (SCRIPTURE STANDARD).

W. L. Hayden, from CHURCH POLICY, pages 37-38 says: "The evangelical work is a perpetual work. While time endures it will be the duty of the church, through her own chosen and appointed representatives, to convert and baptize the people: to gather the converts together into separate and distinct organizations for their edification, improvement and efficiency, and to have a watch-care over many weak and sickly congregations."

Is An Evangelist An Officer?

"And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;" (Eph. 4:11). Here there is mention made

of evangelists. The text in verse 8 speaks of "gifts" that were given unto men. These were special "gifts" and these men who were mentioned in Eph. 4:11 were all men who were endowed with a work for which they had been qualified by the Holy Spirit. There are no men in the church today who are qualified as these men mentioned in this text by Paul. We must turn to other texts to decide which of these men are officers today. We can read about "pastors" as officers but where is the text that tells us that the evangelist is an officer in the church? He has a work to do but he has no office to occupy.

What then is the authority of the evangelist when he preaches? He is to preach Christ. "And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ" (Acts 8:5). "Preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching (2 Timothy 4:2). "These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Titus 2:15).

The authority of the evangelist is to be found only in his knowledge of the word, with his ability to 'preach,' 'reprove,' 'rebuke,' 'exhort' and 'teach and exhort with all authority.' This is the limit of his authority and he who exercises any more is a modern "hireling," a little pope, and a religious dictator of the vilest sort.

W. L. Hayden, in his book CHURCH POLICY, says: "What are the duties of this office? Let it be clearly noted, the evangelist is not a *law-maker* nor an *original law-proclaimer*. He is primarily a re-

proclaimer of the law of the Lord as he has learned it through inspired apostles. What was thus learned by the primitive evangelists from apostles in person can be learned by modern evangelists only from their writings."

Paul found Timothy, a young man of good report and of faith. He trained him in his own private school and soon he was qualified by knowledge and experience to go out and edify the saints. Today, one man, or one hundred men may and do, accomplish the same thing that Paul accomplished, in the training of modern Timothys, in the class rooms of schools that are supported by individual Christians in this land.

Where Can An Evangelist Preach?

A theory is currently being advocated by a few brethren who say that an evangelist cannot preach to the church. "Preaching," they say, is for non-members and "teaching" is for the church. It is a bit hard to locate all these men. One time they insist that the elders must personally do all the teaching in a congregation. Again, they insist that the members must take their turn, without regard to the ability of the brothers, and all must edify the saints when their turn approaches. This is called "mutual ministry." Dozens of men once lived and suffered under this kind of ministry. Brother Kepple of Kansas City, Mo., best described it when he one time said: "It is not mutual ministry—it is mutual misery."

Paul *preached* to the church at Rome. "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome" (Rom. 1:15).

Paul *taught* the brethren in Rome. "And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him" (Acts 28:30-31). For two years he preached and taught in Rome. Here Paul is doing what it is claimed he could not do. He was "preaching" to and "teaching" the church in Rome.

Timothy *taught* the church at Ephesus and this church had elders. "As I exhorted thee to tarry at Ephesus, when I was going into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine" (1 Timothy 1:3).

Paul told Timothy to *teach* the *brethren* to behave in the church of God. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15).

Paul charged Timothy to be a good minister. "If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed until now:" (1 Timothy 4:6).

Timothy, an evangelist, was told to *teach* godliness, to the brethren. "If any man teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;" (1 Timothy 6:3).

Paul *preached* or *discoursed* to the brethren when they assembled for the Lord's table. "And upon the

first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight" (Acts 20:7) The word "diale-gomai," or "preached" is always translated preach, except in Mark 9:34. We have the same word in Acts 24:25, where Paul is preaching to some unsaved people.

The above texts will reveal that:

a. Paul was ready to preach in Rome; b. Paul taught the brethren in Rome; c. Timothy taught in the church at Ephesus; d. Timothy taught the brethren; e. Timothy was told to be a good minister; f. Paul preached at Lord's table. Can there be any sin in doing what Paul and Timothy did?

How Long Can A Preacher Stay?

Paul stayed at Ephesus for three years. "Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31).

Paul stayed at Corinth for eighteen months. "And he dwelt there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them" (Acts 18:11).

We may conclude that as long as one does the work of an evangelist, does not seek the authority of the pastors, then his stay is limited only by his ability and the need for his service as determined by the wisdom of the pastors of the church.

In agreement with these conclusions, one of the leaders in the present day "anti-located preacher" field, writes from Dallas and says: "I plead for fi-

nancial support not only for evangelists, but for elders, widows, and any needy saint. Surely preachers are to be supported. The act of "locating" does not constitute the pastor system, nor does the length of time a man stays. That he might "preach" (teach would be better) to a church would not constitute him a wrongdoer. He may work with the church, with or without elders, for a lifetime at full support and still not be guilty of the pastor system" (BIBLE TALK, page 61, Jan. issue).

Shall We Pay the Evangelist?

"Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14).

"For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his hire" (1 Timothy 5:18).

"But let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things" (Galatians 6:6).

Even those who oppose what they term "the one man minister" system would agree that the evangelist should be paid and paid well. Perhaps we cannot determine how to pay those who may be in the employ of the "brother-hood," whatever that is, but elders should and usually do decide this question in a satisfactory manner in their congregations.

What is it All About?

There are only two classes of officers in the New Testament Church. These are the elders and deacons.

The evangelist is simply a preacher of the gospel, a minister of the word of God and a teacher of good things. Call him what he is. He is an "evangelist," "a preacher," yea, even a "minister," but certainly not the only minister in the congregation and he may not be the only "evangelist." Call him "the elders' aid" and that would satisfy some. Call him anything you like, just so you call him and use him to preach the gospel of Christ. If he is located or dis-located, he is still a pro-claimer of the good news.

Indeed, as our good Bro. Channing of England has said, the abuse of the rule does not argue against the rule. There are some who occasionally use the language of "Ashdod." They say: "I am looking for a Church"; or "I will take charge of the Church"; or "I have entered the ministry" and other such expressions that may not correctly express the Bible idea. Some ill-informed members are heard to say: "our pastor," when speaking of the man who preaches for the congregation but this does not argue that the churches have gone blindly and madly into the "pastor system."

It is not the pay of the preacher and it is not the stay that disturbs us. It is not even ignorance of the nature of the work that the evangelist must do. We are all acquainted with his work and duties. What then is the problem? The elders need to over-see the Church, the deacons need to serve in their place, and the evangelist needs to "preach the word," whether located or otherwise. Let him "fulfill this ministry" and all will be well with him in the last great day.

THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

John T. Hardin

Accomplishments — Prospects — Needs

Except for a small work begun by our British brethren in Cape Town some years ago, and except for a small Colored mission run by Brother and Sister George Scott, also in Cape Town, the church of Jesus Christ in its pure form was not known in the Union of South Africa before 1948. In that year the gospel was begun to be preached over the Lorenzo Marques Mocambique radio station. This program supported by Central church in Cleburne, Texas, was continued through March of 1953.

To follow up the contacts made through this radio program it was thought advisable to send American missionaries to that country to establish the work on a firm and permanent basis. Brethren Waymon D. Miller, Guy V. Caskey and John T. Hardin and their families and Brother Elred L. Echols were chosen to be the first ones to go in 1949. Later they were joined by brethren Don Gardner and Martelle Petty and their families, and finally, in August of 1953 the Leonard M. Gray's arrived in the country. These men are being assisted by Brother Ulrich Steiniger, who has spent some years working with our brethren in Germany, and Arthur W. Lovett and Leslie Blake, two South Africans who are working full time for the Lord, and one Native evangelist, Brother John Manape.

Although the four original men mentioned above did not enter the Union proper until May 15, 1950 we

are happy to tell you that the following figures have resulted from their work (all figures approximate).

JOHANNESBURG: All four original men on the felid worked together in Johannesburg, largest city in the Union, second largest on the continent of Africa, with a population approaching 1,000,000, until September of 1952. They established one white congregation with between 75 and 100 members; two Colored congregations with a total membership of about 50; and about 5 Native congregations with a total membership of over 100. The white congregation has a very nice church building which will seat around 300, with several class rooms, and which will be quite adequate for their needs for some time to come. This building was paid for almost entirely by churches in America. There are two young men from Johannesburg attending school in America, better preparing themselves for service to the Lord upon their return. They are Victor Lloyd, Harding College; and Abie Malherble, Abilene Christian College. A Native convert, Jackson Sogoni, is trying to make the necessary arrangements to attend Southwestern Christian College, Terrell, Texas.

PRETORIA: The work in this city started a few months after that in Johannesburg by Don Gardner, later to be joined by Martelle Petty. In this capital city of the country, with about 275,000 population, there is now a very good white congregation of about 60 members and a Native congregation of about the same size. John Manape, the only full-time evangelist among our Native members labors with this Native church. The white church has some very valuable property only a short distance from the Union build-

ings—the very capital buildings of the country. Three old residences on the property are being utilized as Auditorium, class-room annex and preacher's residence, but they are accepting donations to build a nice church building on the corner location. There are two young men and their families in America from Pretoria attending school—Conrad Steyn, Freed-Hardeman College; and Andy DeKlerk, Florida Christian College.

EAST LONDON: Brethren Don Gardner and Leslie Blake and their families moved to this city of about 90,000 in about May 1952. In this short time a nice congregation of about 40 members has been established, a small Colored church and at least three Native churches, one of which is about 150 miles away in the Transkei Native reserve and has about 110 members. The white congregation, with the help of churches in America, purchased an old concrete stable building, located on a large plot of ground. This was transformed into a beautiful little church building quite adequate for their needs. That small group, themselves, took over the balance of about \$10,000.00 to pay. One young man from East London, Ramond Voogt, is attending school at Freed-Hardeman College.

PORT ELIZABETH: Brethren Eldred Echols and John Hardin began the work in this city of about 235,000 population in September 1952, being joined later by the Ulrich Steiniger family from Germany and then by the Leonard M. Gray family in August 1953. In Port Elizabeth the small white congregation of about 15 members meets in the Masonic Hall. There are also two Native mixed with Colored congregations

with memberships totaling about 40. From among the Natives of this city have gone two men back to their home countries (Northern and Southern Rhodesia) where they are now preaching the gospel to their own people.

DURBAN: Thanks to an adversity in the home of one of the first families to be converted in Pretoria, the church is now established in the resort and port city of Durban (400,000 population). After bringing their ill son to the warmer climate of Natal, this family in only the recent months has converted 5 or 6 of their acquaintances. Not much is known about this small church other than these bare facts, but we do know that we have no full time worker in that area.

SOUTH AFRICA IN GENERAL: In less than four years, approximately 20 congregations have been established with a total of over 600 members in five main cities and surrounding areas (**EXPLANATION:** There is a very conservative group of the Christian church, calling themselves "Church of Christ" in that country whose only differing doctrine from us is the use of the mechanical instrument of music in worship. Since the Natives do not use an instrument in their worship in any case, they differ from us not at all. Because of reasons not pertinent to this report, some of those congregations prefer to work with us rather than the other group). Without detracting from mission work in other areas over the earth, it might be said that this work was accomplished without the usual fanfare and without the initial impetus that distribution of clothing and food might give a work. Except for the contacts obtained as a result of the

radio broadcasts the work in the Union of South Africa has been that of ferreting out those people interested in our plea, gaining their confidence, teaching them by means of personal work as well as public worship. As yet no schools have been started or orphan homes established, nor are any contemplated at the present time. The number of workers on the field have not warranted any other work other than that of preaching the gospel, and as yet only the fringe of the possibilities in the country have been touched.

Books for distribution and for study have been unavailable except in limited quantities, so much of the time of some of the workers has been spent in duplicating such work-books by means of mimeograph. Two Bible correspondence courses have been produced by the same method—one on the whole Bible and one on the book of Acts—and have proved most effective in teaching those who have enrolled. A very good eight page paper, *The Christian Advocate*, has been published since November 1950, it also proving to be of great help in teaching on doctrinal and controversial subjects. Several hundred, the number possibly approaching one thousand, have taken the two correspondence courses, and over 3,000 papers are distributed each month. Though designed primarily for use in the Union, the "Advocate" goes into over 20 countries over the world.

PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE: Except for the small work as mentioned above in Cape Town, the church of Jesus Christ was unknown in the Union of South Africa six years ago. Much ignorance, prejudice and indifference as well as religious tradition

has had to be overcome to accomplish what has already been done. Much more will have to be overcome as the church progresses. But real religious hatred and bitterness hardly exists, as such, in the Union of South Africa. Rome and the Catholic church is no threat as yet, it being the fourth, only, in size and having a mortal enemy in the Dutch Reformed church, the largest in the country. There is no great language barrier since English is spoken by most all in the country including both English and African sections of the white race and many of the Colored and Native races, especially among those who live in the cities. It is recognized, however, that to completely reach all people of all races one should know their different languages. So far, however, the men on the field have kept busy knowing only the English language.

Apart from the big job ahead in evangelizing fully even the cities where the church is already established, there remain the large number of modern cities varying in size according to population, but varying not at all in their need to have the saving gospel preached, and, as yet, untapped as far as we are concerned. These include Pietermaritzburg (80,000) the capital of the Province of Natal; Bloemfontein (100,000) capital of the range Free State; Veringiging (40,000) where is located one of the two steel mills of the country; and all the additional cities on the gold reef of which Johannesburg is only the largest—Germiston (over 100,000), Benoni (80,000), Brakpan (40,000), Springs (60,000), Nigel, Florida, Roodepoort, Randfontein and Westfontein, ranging

from 15,000 to 40,000 in size—and many others. These things make for a picture of good things in store for God's kingdom if we will only not lose the opportunities that are before us.

Brethren, when I plead for help for Africa, I plead for people like Enos Ncube, a native man from Southern Rhodesia whom we contacted in Port Elizabeth. He was a very wicked man, seeming to revel in telling of the many times he had been arrested for fighting and other forms of violence, never to have been imprisoned. Today Enos Ncube is a Christian and has returned to his home to preach to his own people. In two or three short months, according to latest reports, he had baptized 19.

I plead for people like Eddie Cowie, a young white South African in Johannesburg. He, proving himself a conscientious, hard-working young Christian, was entertaining high hopes of coming to America to study in a Christian school. He had sold a highly valued piece of personal property for that purpose and was saving his money for the venture when health conditions in his family forced him to cancel his plans. The money he had received for his property he had sold, and which he could very well have used for himself, was given to the Johannesburg church to help pay for the seats in their new building.

I plead for people like Walter Paul. Walter was an official in the Ebenezer Congregationalist church, a lay-preacher. Well-read in the Bible, though only with the equivalent of an 8th grade education, he is a brilliant man wasting his talents as a mail clerk and messenger boy for an insurance company because

he is a colored person and according to South African practices he is not allowed to become more skilled. After his baptism he dedicated his life to the conversion of his former friends and relatives. His faith has remained firm and resolute even though the task has been long and hard. This man could be a power for the Lord if he could devote his full time to the work.

The Gillespie family was converted by Brethren Gardner and Petty in Pretoria, the two parents and two young men. One of the young men developed a brain tumor and thanks to the perseverance and faith of the mother, especially, that tragedy has been turned into a blessing. The young man's nurse was converted together with her husband and today that couple are in a Christian school in America learning better how to serve God so that upon their return to their homeland they can be of benefit to the Lord. But the story does not end there. As has already been mentioned, because of the young man's condition the family moved to Durban. Since their arrival just a few short weeks ago, five have been converted as a result of their efforts—truly a case of a tragedy resulting in a blessing in disguise.

Many more such cases of the changing effects of the saving gospel of Jesus Christ in the great country of the Union of South Africa could be cited. But at the same time, we could recite instances where the lack of sufficient workers in the field has resulted in the loss of young, weak Christians who had to be left to their own devices only to lose faith and return to their former life. Brother and Sister G. A.

Hawyes in Queenstown, Cape Province, is a case in point. These two people had been reading our literature and taking our Bible correspondence course and had come to trust us enough that when they needed help in routing a Jehovah's Witness they called on us to come the 450 miles from Johannesburg. We found them to have been baptized scripturally before our arrival. They had been worshipping with a denomination. We urged them to meet in their own home and break bread each Lord's day. But we had to leave them and return to our other work. Our efforts from a distance to keep in contact with them were not enough to keep them from finally being lost to another church.

Brethren Caskey, Miller, and Echols are returning from the Union this year. Unless they are replaced, as you can see, our work will be hindered. In fact, unless more and more men are sent we will be wasting the efforts already performed. Every denomination which can be found in America can be found in Africa. Africa has been chosen publicly by the Catholics and the Adventists as their next big field of endeavor and are putting hundreds of missionaries and millions of dollars into the continent. In order to retain the foothold that we have is not enough. To avoid having the efforts already expended go to waste we must increase the number of men on the field and, of course, provide them with the necessary funds with which to carry on the work satisfactorily. We are losing three men this year, but we have three more ready to go IF we can only find support for them. Brother Joe McKissick of Dalhart already has his

support and travel fund arranged for. But a recent letter from Brother Forrest Rhoads, Princeton, Kentucky, informs me that he has had no success at all in finding support. Here is a man well qualified, willing and ready to go—is there no one to send him? I do not know the status of Brother Votau, who also has expressed his intention of going, but I do know of others who would go—leaving their families, loved ones and friends—if they could find support. I wonder if it is right to leave it up to the individual person to have to find his own funds. It seems to be that it is the church's duty to send these men, and that being true the church should take the lead in finding such necessary support. One would almost think that it is a one-sided matter; that the church is doing the man a favor if he pays him a salary to go afield, while in actuality, the man is doing the church a favor by taking your place in going. Someone must go. If you can't and he can and will surely you will want to hold up his hands.

We in Africa so realize that the one who is native to his own country can be of inestimable help in converting his own people. It is for that reason we have now five young men in this country studying to better equip themselves to preach. We feel that they will be of great help when they return to the Union. At the same time we have men yet in the Union who, if they could spend their full time at the job could right now be of great value. I mentioned Brother Walter Paul. For between \$100 and \$125 a month this man could be put to work and would be of tremendous help. Brother Arthur Lovett is now spending his time with

the colored churches in Johannesburg and is proving his worth. He is receiving \$100 a month from a church in America, but he is trying to support a family of eleven on that amount. Surely somewhere represented in this audience is a church that would help him on that support. The brethren in East London have a native man, Wilson Nomateye, who, for 11 pounds, ten shillings a month—or about \$35—could be spending his full time preaching to his people. I hope there are those here tonight listening to me who are able to do something about these appeals. Here are chances to help in small amounts if you are unable to support anyone in greater amounts.

Brethren, when I plead for Africa, I plead for every mission field in the world, whether it be 10,000 miles away or only 50. The great commission which we quote in almost every breath reads, “. . . go into ALL the world. . . .” It is true that the church was to start in Jerusalem, and then spread to Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts; but you will agree with me that after 130 years in America it is time we really went into the uttermost parts. We hear the cry that there are not enough preachers here in America to take care of the needs of the congregations already established and the needs of a rapidly expanding church. But consider with me these interesting statistics: There is an estimated 160,000,000 souls in America; 10,000 churches of Christ (?) with 10,000 (?) preachers. Outside the borders of the United States there is an estimated 1,840,000,000 souls and the number of full time workers outside the American boundaries is a generous 150! We have

recently obtained a vision and a zeal for the great work that needs to be done, and which we have been so late in doing, and that is commendable. But we cannot, we dare not, stand on our laurels. We cannot afford even to be content with what we are doing. We must increase our efforts, or lose out all together.

In the Union of South Africa we feel that much has been accomplished in the past four years. Our work has not been sensational, but it has been gratifying. At any rate, any new work should not be judged in too much haste. If it has taken the church in America 130 years to reach its present status do not ask that any new work be full grown in such a short time. I hope that you here tonight will never be guilty of trading for souls. There is a thinking today that we must put our money where it can do the most good—as though we must have so many souls converted for so many dollars spent. That may be good business practice, but, brethren, to me it is treading on dangerous ground. If in the sight of God one soul is worth more than the whole world, how can we say that the 1,000 souls that might be converted in one place are any more precious in God's sight than the 50 souls in another place? The truth of the matter is that we must take advantage of every opportunity of preaching the gospel in all places at all times. God is pleased with nothing less. It is the only way in which we will carry out the commission to go into all the world.

“OVERCOMING ELDERSHIP PROBLEMS”

Dr. John G. Young

To approach this subject in a prayerful way with the sincere intention of aiding the church in solving some problems has caused some fear and trembling on my part. I am convinced that the future of the church is centered around the proper functioning of the elders. Had this not been true, then Our Father would have used some other method of leadership and government in the church. To be an elder is a great honor, perhaps the greatest that can be bestowed upon mortal man. At the beginning, I was fearful and almost afraid and I have maintained that viewpoint—'tis an awe-filling position, full of awe and great responsibility. To accept it is to occupy a position, an office of great importance, shepherds of men's souls, one that must give an account in the day of judgment. To strive honestly to be qualified to serve the house of the Lord as a faithful bishop—steward, elder, overseer of the glorious body of our Lord is a full time work, a mighty task, and a most glorious challenge. With this work comes many problems the eldership must overcome.

I am going to discuss these problems under four main divisions:

1. Problems of Qualifications, Duties, and Selection.
2. Problems within the Eldership.
3. Problems within the Congregation.

4. Problems without the Local Congregation.

The first division gives the key to the whole for if entirely properly qualified God-fearing men full of humility are occupants of the office, then with God's help, these instruments of his will overcome the problems they face. But there are often problems in their selection and qualifications that must be sought and evaluated.

There may not be men who meet the qualifications in the congregation. Not time or haste or desire, nor pushing or politicking should replace Biblical qualification nor cause compromise in selecting these officers. Not popularity or prominence, not riches or relations, not age alone or an intellectual novitiate, not courtliness nor countenance grave, not desire or debating ability can take the place of God's qualifications. To know and understand these qualifications, we must know the functions of elders and these are entwined and learned when we know the meanings of the titles assigned to them.

First, they are called *elders*, meaning one of mature years or older man. This eliminates boys and young men from being elders. They were men who had reached an age that they had wisdom, experience, judgment and prudence to exercise good sense in church affairs. Also, there is included the idea of experience and age in spirituality, dedication, and devotion in the worship and labor of the Lord. These elders in age, experience, wisdom, judgment, and spirituality indicate that they have the ability to view with calmness and experience the problems presented.

The second term used is that of *Pastor* or *Shepherd*. The pastor is the shepherd of God's people. To be a good shepherd in the church would of itself solve problems, and when all elders qualify up to the meaning of "shepherd" then they know "the sheep under you" and problems are more simple and solvable.

Christ in John 10 gives the great example of what it means to be a shepherd and not a "hireling." How can you be a good shepherd unless you know the sheep?

Christ leads his sheep. He did not whip them nor drive them. He led them and he went before them. He set the examples they were to follow.

Christ "fed" his sheep for he said, "I am the door, by me if any man enter, he shall be saved and shall go in and out and find pasture." This a good elder-shepherd will do in the church and prevent many problems and overcome many others.

Christ also "tended" his flock. He nurtured them and said in John 10:10: "I am come that they may have life, and that they may live it more abundantly." He watched for them day and night and said "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep. But he that is a hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep." This is what the Lord meant when he "gave some pastors, shepherds." He intended for his flock to be cared for and not to be destroyed by wolves or left to starve. This gives us much to think and meditate over and all elders, shepherds, and pastors of God's church

should so do and this truly lived will aid in overcoming problems. The shepherd is the guide, protector and companion of the flock.

He protects the congregation against false teachers, he convicts the gainsayer. He "watches for your soul," guards carefully against trouble from within. He keeps watch both within and without. He must exercise the utmost care to prevent individual sheep from straying away from the flock; and when one, as it sometimes will, eludes all vigilance and strays away, he is to be prompt and energetic in going out to search for it and bring it back. Much more vigilance is needed to *prevent such* wandering. When the disposition to wander is discovered, he will be prompt to counteract it. Truly, exhortation and edifying is a duty and these will prevent eldership problems.

The elders must watch against ravenous wolves who would come in among them not sparing the flock, and watch that schismatics not spring up within, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. This makes the elders the proper guardians of the church against false teachers without or within. In order to discharge this duty faithfully, they must scrupulously avoid any action on their own part which would unnecessarily excite faction in the church. In this, elders sometimes fail. They may be and do otherwise and by lack of proper control or proper thought become a rallying center of disunion. God forbid!

They must also know every man whom they invite or allow to address the church. They must have courage to deny this privilege to every stranger who

comes among them unrecommended and unknown and every man whom they know to be a promoter of dissension and a teacher of false doctrine. Brother McGarvey said "A very small wolf in sheep's clothing can scatter a large flock of sheep and a man who teaches nothing false, but aims at strife and division can often do more harm than a false teacher. With firmness then, that knows no yielding, but with a caution and prudence which guards against unjust judgment, must the shepherd watch the door which opens into their folds."

The third term used to designate the elders is "*Overseer-Bishop*." The essential thought in overseership, that of ruling, is frequently enjoyed. Paul says to Timothy, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor." Also to the Hebrews is said "Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account." The overseers are over the church and all are under their direction. The deacons are under this oversight and they have no power, no authority only as is delegated to them by the elders of the church, just as the elders have no authority, only that which is delegated to them by the Holy Spirit. They need to have the courage to do their own "overseeing" and straightening out the troubles of the church. This is the elders' responsibility—not the duty of the wives of the elders.

They are "stewards" of God, Paul says in Titus 1:7 "For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God." A steward is one entrusted with the care and oversight of another's property. This is a very grave

responsibility—this being a steward of God.

These stewards must carry out the injunction "Let all things be done decently and in order," must superintend this, assign, arrange, and carry out assignments decently and in order. Also "Let all things be done to edifying" is enjoined and bishops must see to it that what is done in the house of worship, including the singing, the teaching, and the preaching shall be so executed as to edify the body. This requires the utmost good judgment on their part as to what will edify, and the utmost delicacy in advising participants, in the various acts of worship, so as to secure the desired compliance.

Properly qualified and functioning overseers prevent problems coming before elderships and with devoted, qualified, functioning, sincere overseers, the problems that do arise can be overcome. An eldership so equipped will by its faith, example, strength and leadership be the leaders of the flock and will thus have sheep that follow and do not develop many problems but that can be overcome.

Elders must be able *to teach*. The first prerequisite of teaching is the possession of knowledge. Unless a man knows something that his pupils do not, he cannot be their teacher.

The work of teaching the practical duties of the Christian life necessarily implies the exposure and rebuke of such practices and teaching as are inconsistent with these duties. So elders, Paul says, should be able both to exhort and convict the gainsayers. In some instances—the eldership make no attempt at public teaching and very little at private teaching.

This is a neglect of duty, to which the delinquents must eventually be called to account. If this neglect is from indifference, it is a great sin; if from incapacity, then the incapacity should with study be removed or the office vacated.

This capacity in function will eliminate some eldership problems in their incipiency and be a mighty force in overcoming some eldership problems that may exist.

All I have said in general and specific terms relate to the duties of the office and when sincerely considered will point out the solution of many problems. Let me now inquire as to the manner in which these duties are performed and paramount here is the requirement that *elders be examples* to those over whom they are called to be elders-bishops-overseers-stewards. "It is not only required of them that they be examples but being examples is an essential element in the manner of executing their official duties," says J. W. McGarvey. Peter exhorts elders, "Be shepherds to the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock." "Being examples to the flock" is one of the specifications of the manner of taking the oversight. "Take heed to yourselves" is made to precede the charge, "Take heed to the flock." These admonitions are expressed in general terms and cover all the duties of a Christian life. To be examples to the flock is a model not of one, but of every virtue.

To teach by example is all important. They must teach the brethren practical liberality in giving, keep free from appearance of sordid motives in their official action and secular business.

He must not be "self-willed," maintain a "blameless reputation," must not be "soon angry" for the moment he becomes angry he loses moral power over those he is seeking to influence. He must be a "lover of good men," "sober" lest his levity deprive him of weight. *Sober*: This is not limited to just its relation to being drunk; it comprehends the entire scope of man's action as a leader in the church. It comes from two words "sound" and "mind"—hence of a sound mind, having a good understanding and complete government of his passions. Webster says: "Capable of conducting one's self wisely and judiciously; morally and intellectually disciplined, courteous, circumspect and discreet. Not rash or ill advised."

This eliminates the man who can't make up his own mind, who is influenced by others, and who may misunderstand the meeting after consultation with his wife. This eliminates men who vote for a measure today and after talking to a group or to his wife has to "vote" or reconsider matters settled at a previous meeting. *No brawler—not a striker—not contentious*—these three terms are very much alike and overlap and I shall talk of them together under title of "Brawler."

Barnes says, "He must be a peaceable man, not a quarrelsome man." Clark says he is "one who is abusive, insolent." Webster says it means: "Noisy

quarrel; loud, angry, contentious; wrangle, quarrel." No man like this is fit for an elder in the church, in fact is unfit for even a member in the family of the Lord unless he changes.

Of "striker" Lipscomb says: "Ungoverned in temper, ready to fight." Clark says he should be "not quarrelsome; not ready to strike one who may displease him; no persecutor of those who may differ with him." Brother Lipscomb comments on this: "This does not mean that one is not to stand up and contend for the truth, but many are ready to contend over unimportant matters. Such always live in torment and strife." Even truth and right should not be maintained in a contentious spirit. Certainly no man who is known to be "high tempered," "a brawler or striker" or "contentious" should be entrusted with the affairs of so sacred an institution as the body of our blessed Lord. If he is he should be removed after *all* means have failed to secure his qualification and to bring him to his senses.

This brings up another problem:

Can a man who is an elder ever cease to function as or be asked to resign as an elder. I believe he certainly can. If not then he might cease to attend the services, he might become immoral, might get drunk, might be an adulterer, might become a backslider in many ways and still run the affairs of the church. This thing of "once an elder always an elder" is as foreign to the truth as "once saved, always saved." When he ceases to have the qualifications of an elder; when he ceases to function as an elder, he may be corrected and disciplined the same as any

other member. Being an elder does not make him immune from the discipline of the church. Paul says in 1 Tim. 5:19 "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."

It is a fearful thing to be placed in a position the very nature of which proclaims one an example to the church of God, if the example actually exhibited is not a good one.

Dearly beloved, I sincerely believe that an eldership composed of men who are true Christ-like examples can solve and can overcome eldership problems. I believe qualified men who function as qualified and live as examples before the congregation as scripturally outlined will by their life, their love, their work, their service, their leadership, their oversight, and their teaching, prevent eldership problems much of the time; thus solving them beforehand, and be able to overcome problems that exist. To have the right men in office precludes problems and by its nature aids solution.

Let us now consider some more or less specific problems. First, those *problems within the eldership*.

There are scriptural reasons for a plurality of elders, but the number is not stated. *Too few elders* can present problems in our congregations. There may not actually be enough manpower to carry out the functions that must be done, not enough to know the church members, visit them, supervise or oversee them, and do the actual work that needs doing. This fewness in number of elders exists in some of our churches and has been many times demonstrated as a shortcoming. The problem can be solved by having

more qualified men selected to work with those in office and the work can be carried on in a complete way. This selection should of course be carefully done and those chosen should meet the qualifications as recorded—no compromise for the sake of numbers should take place.

Regular and frequent meetings of the eldership of the church is necessary in order to efficiently discharge their duties. It is impossible that a work, requiring the united wisdom, watchfulness, and activity of a plurality of men can be successfully accomplished without frequent and often protracted consultations. The members of a business firm find such meetings necessary. How then can it be expected that the elders of a church, who have the interest of many souls under their oversight, will be able to dispense with such meetings. In many churches, it is advisable to meet once a week and to often spend several hours in consultation. Reports and questions in reference to all the details of the church's work will be settled and the details of labor distributed according to the ability and adaptness of each elder. By this means, the elders will be constantly reminded of duties which might be overlooked and constantly stimulated to the discharge of duties that might be neglected. Such meetings definitely aid in overcoming Eldership problems. They should be held with free discussion and as a deliberative assembly that subjects may be thoroughly explored, pro and con, to the end that decisions and conclusions reached may express the will of the group.

Other problems within the elders and that may

cause some lack of confidence to be engendered are the lack of teaching, little work done by elders, pressures exerted, dogmatism, lack of humbleness and others. Sufficient here to say that these should be solved by further teaching, better preparation, prayer, and a dedication to the work guided by a knowledge of the true qualifications and duties.

Many sincere men freely acknowledge a serious neglect of duty in the eldership, and perhaps the most common excuse for this neglect is *lack of time*. The elder has no time to study and prepare himself, to meet, discuss and carry out, to visit, admonish and exhort. Upon careful calculation, it may be found out that the excuse of a want of time is more imaginary than real.

The elders should remember that they are divinely constituted examples to the flock and that one of the methods by which they should make their example felt is to sacrifice some of their time to the service of the Lord. By thus doing, they will obey Paul to the Ephesian elders, "I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, *how that so laboring* ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than receive."

Problems within the church-local bring many things to mind. Elders should know the teaching being done, should not only have the oversight of the evangelist and preacher and know of his scriptural position and teaching, but also of the Bible classes and other teach-

ing periods. Problems can arise of serious nature here and to overcome them may be difficult, but the elimination of them by proper oversight is the proper function.

The problem of *knowing the members*, their problems, consulting with them and admonishing them can be worked out by divisions of the church members among the several elders with the duty assigned to especially and personally take that responsibility for the smaller group. This requires time, effort, and capacity, but I am assuming this in a qualified eldership. It might be wise to rotate these lists and so over the year each elder could be of aid to each of the flock.

Also *new members* should know the elders and the elders should know the new members. A frequent meeting or get-together of the two groups for an evening can and has solved this problem in some congregations and is heartily recommended.

Elders have a problem in the *selection of the evangelist* to work with the local church, and this has not always been efficiently solved. For proper teaching, proper growth, harmony, unity, and for the good of the church of Christ, this problem should be diligently, prayerfully and deliberately considered a major one. We know that the preacher, because of the very nature of his work, appears publicly before the congregation much of the time. His manner of life, his reputation, his teaching, his very appearance should be known and evaluated. His methods of work, his past work, his position on various hobbies, his position on the qualifications and duties of elders should be known.

All this puts the burden on the eldership to make this selection with care, not in haste. I know of no way to overcome this, except to deliberately and prayerfully do it. No eldership of wisdom will be pushed or hurried in this selection. Not panic, politics, or persuasive tongue should cause them to make unwise haste. Better to do without an evangelist for a time than to secure one not suitable or a trouble maker, a strong-willed man or a hobbieist. Much trouble in the church comes from neglecting this problem. The solution lies in making haste slowly with deliberation and study and a freedom from pressure from members or individual elders. It may be not difficult to fill the office, but it may be hard to fill it full. It may be difficult and full of sorrow to empty the office if a mistake is made.

The problems of *overseeing the various activities of the church* I will mention to say that they are usually not difficult of solution if personalities can be left out and devotion to the cause only maintained.

Bible school instruction and oversight, the church singing, the vacation Bible school, the week day Bible classes and others are successful depending on the wisdom, devotion, and activity of the elders and those assigned this work.

The *young people's work* of recent years has developed into a good work in many churches and in some is a major problem. A warning may be needed right here. I believe this work needs the close overseeing of elders. The activities of these groups must be supervised that good be done and no harm at all. The ages may be difficult, the awakening awareness of

instinctive urges must be reckoned with. The teaching given must be controlled and may, at times, even need to be censored. Watchfulness here is needed and will bear fruit. The overcoming of these problems lies in an understanding, sympathetic, tolerant, yet scriptural oversight by elders conversant with the aims and ambitions of the work and of the young people.

Lastly, under the problems of the elders in the local church is that of the *duty of the church*. This implies something else, that the "flock," the church, is to follow their instructions that it may be well with the church as with the elders. Congregations need to learn they must respect the elders and their leadership and overseeing or they, too, will be condemned. Each has a responsibility to the other. Members should not forget this on their part. Lack of cooperation or a rebellious attitude against the elders just because they do not like something that is being done or because they want it done another way is contrary to Bible teaching. So long as they lead scripturally, the members are to follow and the deacons to serve. "Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give an account."

Overcoming this problem includes most I have said up to this time. The respect for qualified men who fulfill the duties of the office of elder-overseer-bishop-steward in the Lord's church will be merited from Christians who are converted and are taught the true teaching and have true Christian examples. I believe herein lies the most potent solution. To talk

or teach one way and be an example of another way is to court distrust and lack of confidence and disunity. To secure proper and loyal followers, all rule must be both firm and gentle, both consistent and dependable. It must respect the flock and strive for their love and devotion without compromise, favoritism, or cliques. The picture brought to mind by the elder's title of shepherd carries forth the thought desired. He is kind, loving, confidence begetting, feeder, protector of the flock, seeker after the lost, consistent, dependable, leader, and he "tends" his sheep in all ways. When elders do these things, the members will give support. They will neither be barren nor unfruitful. The Lord's cause in that place will prosper.

Some *problems of the eldership without the local congregation* do also exist. The first duty of the church is to preach the word—it is "the pillar and ground of the truth." How much should the elders plan on doing this outside the local church? This is a problem and the solution is this: Do all that can be done not neglecting the local church. This so called "mission work" is a great opportunity and should be entered into. The problem of financing and planning such work is the work of the elders, and with an eldership with vision and practical application, will make this a major work. Paradoxical as it may seem, this is a most effective way of building up the local congregation. I have often told others upon inquiry that the way to build up a local congregation in the Lord and toward devoted and sacrificial work is to do more work outside the church. This doing causes

new devotion and sacrificial desire to do, to go beyond ourselves, to do for others and this, when carried out, leads to a more dedicated, alert and alive church. The giving into the Lord's treasury increases with each new mission work taken on by the church. I am convinced and very sincerely so that the church of Christ will meet almost any good Biblical founded challenge presented to it that is within reasonable reach. This, to me, is very, very true. It may take courage and vision of the elders to see and plan, but when once planned with reason and inspiration, I believe the members of the church will meet the challenge. Our fault has often been that we did not present the challenge, were of insufficient vision or fearful of failure or afraid to plan so great an advance for the Lord's work. The leaders can solve and overcome the problem of lack of mission effort usually by prayer, preparation, and planning, and then presenting the planned work to the taught congregation. An example: Skillman Avenue Church of Christ in Dallas, where I am one of thirteen elders, about ten years ago had a budget of about eight thousand dollars and not any regular mission activity (giving here and there upon appeal) and a membership of approximately half its present membership. During these past years, we have increased that budget to one-hundred and forty-three thousand dollars, and regularly support wholly or a good portion of nine in the mission field in this country and abroad, have been the means of building two houses of worship outside of our own and have aided in others. Our total mission budget this year is forty-three thousand

dollars. This problem is being solved daily and yearly by business-like planning, vision, and a loyal membership, many of whom give sacrificially and many of whom give beyond the vision they had several years ago. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." During this period we have also built our present house of worship, a wonderful plant for the Lord's work, and instead of cutting the mission work, we have increased it each year.

To overcome this problem of mission effort, or lack of it in the congregation, again let me repeat, the eldership should have vision of great work for the Lord, a willingness to devote time and energy to planning and a taught membership to present with the challenge. This pays great dividends to the church at home and enlarges the borders of his kingdom.

The problem of starting new work in the same community or city of the local church may be faced by an eldership. This problem may be a serious one and cause enmity, confusion and undue competition unless it is planned and some unselfish thought and magnanimous attitude developed. We must remember that our sole aim is to spread the Gospel and make and keep people Christians. If energy and financial aid will be more productive in a portion of our city unoccupied by a congregation, and we can aid in beginning that work, we should plan on doing it. Study of locations, populations, accessibility, and many other things should go into the planning. It is much better "to swarm" with the aid, comfort, and cooperation of another congregation, and often times the

moral and financial support, than to in any way begin the work as a disgruntled competitive group. It might also be the part of wisdom to confer with other established congregations in the same city or community that no ill will, strife, or feeling of too severe competition develop. This problem of the eldership can be worked out.

In conclusion, I would sum up my thesis with but a few statements. "Overcoming Eldership Problems" will be approximated when the elders are true and qualified elders, pastors, shepherds, bishops, overseers, rulers, and stewards of God. God's plan is perfection. Our working of that plan may leave unsolved problems, but if the elders in every congregation approach the qualifications enumerated in the inspired word of God, there will be less and less, for the duties are set forth in the qualifications and titles given.

Perhaps there will always be unsolved problems, "the poor ye have with you always." Also, there is the sinner, even though immersed, the trouble maker, and sometimes the hobbist.

Let us strive on toward perfection, learning more, praying more, planning better and more, doing more, and with heaven as our goal and God as our guide, forgetting self, but living for him, we shall finally overcome and by his grace be with the redeemed flock of our Lord over there.

Dallas, Texas

GERMANY

by Richard Walker

There is only one reason why there are men and women who have gone out from American Brethren, and who are preaching and teaching the gospel in Germany, Italy, France, Africa, and Japan, or wherever it may be. It is because we read in our Bibles, "Go teach all nations." When we read a thing like this, our going and preaching is not purely an optional matter. It is not dependent upon many things which we often consider. It is not dependent upon our state of health, our financial security, or upon the sentiments of our loved ones. But there is laid upon us the necessity to preach the gospel of our Savior to every nation in the world.

My wife and I had the privilege to live and work in Heidelberg, Germany. Heidelberg is located on the Neckar river, just as it flows from the hills of the Odenwald on to the Rhine plain. It is nestled beautifully against the hills. There is a famous old castle there, where Martin Luther was wined and dined, on the occasion of his disputation in Heidelberg.

If you were to go along the main street leading north from town, along the Bergstrasse, you would pass a lovely little church building on the left. A sign out front says, "Gemeinde Christi." The church meets there. Before this building was built, the church met in a beerhall. This was not a proper place, but nothing better could be found. You can

imagine our joy when, a year and a half ago, we were able to meet in this new building.

In Heidelberg, several meetings have been held. Fred Casmir held the first one. As a result of this meeting, a man has become a member of the church, who for twenty years played the organ for the Evangelical church. Dieter Fritsche and Dieter Alten have also held us good meetings. Last spring Otis Gatewood held us a good meeting, and in September Roy Palmer was with us in a meeting. All in all, about 75 people have been baptized in Heidelberg, and 50 are faithful. Several have fallen by the wayside, some have passed on, and some have moved to Canada. Betty Roemer teaches thirty-five children each Saturday afternoon in Heidelberg. There is also a class of about twenty young people. Delmar Bunn and his wife are working in Heidelberg now, along with Klaus Gobbels.

One of our German members was formerly a train conductor. He was riding on a train, fourteen days before the war came to a close. It was torn apart by airplane fire. Many people on the train were killed and this brother lost his right arm. He said tell the brethren in America, "I have no resentment about the war, or about the loss of an arm. I look forward to the time when there will be peace among the nations in Jesus Christ."

Klaus Gobbels said tell the American brethren, "The German brethren are not ungrateful that the brethren in America have made it possible for there to be churches in Germany."

The American congregation in Heidelberg began, a year ago, a program of preaching to some of the surrounding towns. The town of Eberbach was first selected. What would you do if you were faced with preaching in a town where you knew no one, and no one knew you? How would you begin? We rented a hall put an advertisement in the paper and hoped that someone would come. Several people did come to the initial service in Eberbach, and after a year five people have been baptized.

Another place we preached was in Bruchsal, to the south of Heidelberg. After the service here, two ladies said, "You preach what we believe." I supposed that my German was so poor that they had not understood me. A week later, after the second service in Bruchsal, these two ladies still maintained that we preached what they already believed. We found that a small group was meeting in their homes. They told us about Albert Pfitzenmeier, an old German farmer, who began the work in Bruchsal. It seems that Albert Pfitzenmeier was wounded during the first world war. He had to lie in bed for many months. During this time he began to read his Bible. He learned to love the Bible. He read it all during the 1920's and the 1930's. In 1936, a wandering German evangelist came through the little town where he lives. There are many wandering evangelists in Germany. This evangelist preached the gospel plan of salvation. When Albert Pfitzenmeier heard it, he recognized that here was what he had been reading in his Bible all along. So he and his wife, along with some of their friends, went out at midnight and were

baptized in a muddy stream. They felt they had to do it at night out of fear of the people. A group has continued to meet in Albert Pfitzenmeier's front room to the present time. He brought together the group in Bruchsal, and a group in Karlsruhe, which worships with the brethren where Reiner Kallus preaches.

Dieter Alten, who was here in the states, is in Mannheim, Germany. I wish you could see Dieter getting on his motorcycle and going across Germany in all kinds of weather to preach. Dieter has done some very effective meeting work. He held a meeting last summer in Hindley, England. A new building is nearing completion in Mannheim, constructed by the Charlotte Avenue church in Nashville.

Fred Casmir, who was also in the states, is in Heppenheim, Germany. It has been very difficult working there, due to the Catholic influence. But, of late, this work has made good progress. Recently, there were over 70 different people attending the various Bible classes and services which Fred holds. A few weeks ago, a lady drove up in front of the church building in Heppenheim and asked to see Herr Casmir. She told him that her husband owned a factory, and had built a church building for some of his employees. She wanted Fred to come and give them instruction on how to set up a New Testament church. Fred went to their services. He baptized some of them. He persuaded them to partake of the Lord's Supper regularly, and to give up instrumental music. One young man in this group plans to preach the gospel.

Another of the young men who studied here in the states is Hans Novak. He and his wife spent a year

working in Stuttgart, but they were persuaded by brethren stationed in the US Army near Kaiserlautern to come and work with them. The first group which met in the French Zone was in Pirmasens, where M-Sgt. Jim Capps gathered a few soldiers together. They persuaded Dieter Gobel to come hold his first gospel meeting. All arrangements were made and literature was passed around Pirmasens announcing the meeting. And only one or two came to church. But one night a whole crowd came. It was a little church group. They liked what Dieter preached and decided to come back the next night. But this time they brought their fiddles, guitars, mandolins, and everything else which one could use to make a joyful noise to the Lord. Of course, the brethren could not let them use these things. They went off in a huff. But some of them are meeting with the church in Pirmasens now. This little work in Pirmasens was a real test of faith. It looked like it could not continue. Many brethren assisted in that work. Even Dr. Schug frequently rode the German trains down to Pirmasens from Frankfurt, preached, and arrived late at night back in Frankfurt. After Jim Capps was transferred by the army, George Daniel was there a while and carried on that work.

There are now five congregations of varying sizes in Frankfurt. The Bornheim congregation is the oldest in Frankfurt and has some very capable German leaders in it. Dieter Fritsche preaches in Bornheim. Otis Gatewood is working with the Bokenheim congregation. Dr. Howard L. Schug and Hugh Mingle

spend part of their time working with this congregation. This is one of the fastest growing congregations in Germany. Roy Palmer works with the Niederrad and Saxenhausen congregations. The Saxenhausen church has also been growing well lately. It is one of the newest congregations in Frankfurt. Dieter Fritsche preaches for a little group in Offenbach, a large industrial section of greater Frankfurt. Irene Johnson and Georgia Carver teach children in the Bokenheim congregation.

There a number of young German preachers who have not had the opportunity to visit the USA. They are all gaining experience daily and developing into good preachers. Rudy Walzebuch is in Stuttgart, working alongside of John Hadley. Klaus Gobbels is in Heidelberg, working with Delmar Bunn. Lucian Botcher is in Hanau, working with Bob Helston. Gunther Rochtroh is in Wiesbaden, working with Loyd Collier. Ludwig Hopfl and Otto Miller are working in Munich.

Behind the "iron curtain" there is a congregation in Leipzig, Germany. Ulrich Steiniger, who learned the truth in Africa from George Hook, was used of the Lord to bring this little group together. There are about a dozen members in Leipzig. They meet secretly in their homes. Brother Steiniger has now returned to Africa and is working with Eldred Echols in Port Elizabeth.

Munich has two congregations. Ted and Jack Nadeau are working with them in the "down-town" congregation. Bob Hare and Gottfried Reichel preach for the Munich-Laim congregation. Brother Hare

also preaches in Salzburg Austria. He drives a hundred miles to preach every Sunday, in addition to his work in Munich. Ted Nadeau carries on preaching work in Augsburg, in addition to his other duties.

One of the newest works in Germany is in Hamburg. A year ago Dieter and Margaret Gobel moved to Hamburg. A nice hall has been rented for services and a good nucleus has been brought together. There are about two dozen members of the church in Hamburg. Don Finto and Weldon Bennett and their families have moved there. They are carrying on an aggressive program.

We feel that the Lord has blessed the work in Germany. There are now about twenty-two congregations of German brethren, and around twenty little soldier congregations. Thirteen German men are preaching full time, and several others are preparing themselves to preach. Much has been accomplished, and there is much more to be done.

My wife and I are planning to go into Berlin when we return to Germany. There is no congregation in Berlin. There is one member there. He is Dieter Abendroth, who visited in Granite, Oklahoma and was baptized by E. E. Mitchel. Brother Abendroth teaches in the public schools in Berlin. The Herring Avenue congregation in Waco, Texas is undertaking to send us to Berlin.

Otis Gatewood and I were in Berlin a few months ago. There are 3,000,000 people there. We saw wide streets with street-cars and double-decker buses. We found many large sections where one sees no scars left by the war. We saw one street, where for

thirty-six blocks there are nothing but retail stores. One can buy fur coats, suits, shoes, jewelry, groceries, fruits from Southern Europe, furniture, radios, ice boxes, T V sets, and automobiles. The people in West Berlin come and go as they choose. They have the right of assembly and freedom of speech. There is every indication that this would be a receptive field.

Berlin might be the gateway to East Germany. Americans cannot go into Russian held territory, but many devious ways can be found to make contacts over there. We stood by a bridge which spans a river that separates the Russian sector from the American sector of Berlin. Within 10 minutes we counted 200 people who went back and forth. They were not being stopped. We asked a West Berlin policeman if these people were in danger going back and forth. He said they were not as long as they did not try to take something with them. If they carry packages they will be stopped. He said that most of the people hide what they want to take in their clothing. We asked this policeman if we could stand at the crossing point and pass out tracts to the people going into the Russian sector. He said we could, but suggested that we go around the corner so the people would have time to hide them in their pockets. We asked him if we could put up a tent for a meeting near the border and if people would come over to attend. He said he thought they might come over, since many people do come to West Berlin on Sunday just to go to church. He suggested, however, that we go a few blocks back away from the border to put up the tent. Where the likelihood would be lessened that people who come

over would be spotted by spies from the East. It could be dangerous for people from East Berlin to have very much to do with Americans.

Churches in Berlin might be a stepping stone to the future. One of these days that old "iron curtain" is going to go rolling back. How fine it would be if, when it rolls back, brethren could go from Berlin to all parts of East Germany, and possibly to the countries East of Germany.

There are many opportunities now in Europe and in many places in the world. The large industrial cities of the Ruhr Valley are virgin territory for the church. Bremen and Bremerhaven have no churches. There ought to be congregations in Denmark, and Scandinavia. There are many places in southern Germany where there are no congregations. Two young men are returning this year to Switzerland to preach in their native city of Zurich. There ought to be congregations in Basel, Lucerne, and Geneva and other places in Switzerland. There are no preachers in Austria. The opportunities now in Austria equal those in Germany. I believe a way could be found to preach in Greece. The church of God people have built a building in Athens, Greece, and have, they say, people hanging from the rafters. Salonika, on the north shore of Greece, has around a million people. I believe that someone could collect the names of people in Greece known to brethren in the states and visit these people speaking to sizable crowds every night, perhaps through an interpreter.

There has never been a time since the first century that equals our day in opportunities abroad. Ameri-

can ideas, ideals, products, and army personnel are scattered everywhere. May God give the church the courage and strength to go in through the doors which he has opened.

PREACHING THE WORD IN MEXICO

Pedro R. Rivas

THE EFFORT to spread the news of salvation in Mexico was begun in the summer of 1933 when this writer made some weak attempts to start the labors of the Gospel of Christ in Monterrey, N. L., and Nueva Rosita, Coah., on his own account. Those were days of trials and uncertainty, for there was no precedent to follow neither were we depending for our support on the fellowship and prayers of the Brotherhood north of the Rio Grande. However, in spite of all we did what we could under the circumstances to keep the faith and try our best to hold our position and win others for the Master's kingdom, it was not until 1939 that the church in Mexico began to take its actual shape through the contribution and prayers of the saints who, knowing about the great opportunities to preach Christ to the people of the neighboring southern country decided to see this work established on firm basis.

We want to take advantage of this opportunity to express our cordial appreciation to each and every one of those who directly or indirectly have lent their support to the men working in the field and also to buy property and erect some buildings wherein we can worship God with freedom and great hopes. As the years go by we can see signs of progress at every place where the work is started, and we do believe that with a stronger faith and determination to stay and grow the church of Christ in Mexico will eventual-

ly reach the status of a self-supporting institution. This, of course, is our ideal and toward this goal we are working day and night trusting that with God's blessings we may some day be in a position to take the Gospel to other peoples, depending on our own resources to support our workers as we ought. However, for the time being it is only a cherished dream, although dreams sometimes do come true.

Even though the brethren in Mexico have been exposed to the organized opposition, misrepresentation, and at times violent persecution from the Roman Catholic fanatics, the Lord has been merciful protecting them to go ahead with our plans of evangelization, and we hope to keep on regardless of the consequences, for we know in whom we have placed our trust. Protestantism, in general, has suffered from persecution from those who in high places exercise a strong influence over the rulers of the land to such an extent that one often finds himself occupying a strange position as though he were a foreigner in his own country. Because of the lack of better information they take for granted that every one preaching there must be by necessity a protestant, and so they have mistreated everybody alike by throwing obstacles in his way either by false claims or direct persecution. But we are happy in doing our small part to assist in laying out the foundation for a strong church in Mexico in the years to come. May the Lord have the glory for all.

BEGINNING at the zero point in Torreon, Coahuila, at the present time there is a fine group of small, struggling congregations, thirty-one in number, lo-

cated in 8 states and Mexico City, with 26 preachers doing the work. The following is the list by states:

1. COAHUILA. El Cambio, Francisco I. Madero, Ignacio Allende, La Florida, Sabinas, San Pedro, and Torreon. Preachers working here: Agustin Sanchez, Juan M. Alvarado, Lazaro Cisneros, Josue Carrillo, and Pedro R. Rivas.

2. DURANGO. Bermejillo, Durango City, Gomez Palacio, Lerdo, and Vicente Guerrero. Francisco Avila, Ernesto Reyes, Marcelino Ramirez, and Agustin Arroyo, are doing the work.

3. ZACATECAS. Fresnillo, Calera, Rio Grande, Las Esperanzas, and Ojocaliente. Jose Lopez, Epigmenio Zuniga, Francisco Varela, and Pedro Davila are doing the work.

4. NUEVO LEON. Two congregations meet in Monterrey. Humberto Figueroa and Jose Ruiz Cruz do the preaching.

5. TAMAULIPAS. Matamoros, Ciudad Victoria, Santander Jimenez, and Valle Hermoso. Pablo Villa, Arturo Rodriguez, Santiago Figueroa, and J. Elizalde, are preaching in this section.

6. CHIHUAHUA. Ciudad Juarez (two congregations), Chihuahua City, Delicias, and Nueva Casas Grandes. Manuel P. Gutierrez, Ben Cano, Jose Espino, and Juan M. Garcia are doing the work.

7. SAN LUIS POTOSI. San Luis Potosi, the capital city. One preacher, Bro. Victorino Najera.

8. AGUASCALIENTES. Aguascalientes, the capital city. One preacher, Bro. J. C. Saucedo.

9. MEXICO CITY. One preacher, Bro. Agustin G. Figueroa.

Now to the best of our ability to recall facts, the following congregations of the church in the United States are helping in the Mexico effort:

CENTRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST, Houston, Texas, supporting three full time workers; WEST BERRY CHURCH OF CHRIST, Fort Worth, Texas, supporting four workers in Mexico; COLLEGE CHURCH OF CHRIST, Abilene, Texas, supporting Bro. Francisco Avila in his work in Durango and also as one of the teachers in Torreon; CENTRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST, Nashville, Tenn., contributing toward our work in general and paying for our monthly paper La Via de Vida, which to a greater extent is distributed free of charge; CENTRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST, Cleburne, Texas, special contribution for—\$185.00 earmarked to buy 12 armed chairs for one of our classrooms in Torreon; GEORGE WEST, Texas, contributing regularly for the work in Torreon and vicinity; Muleshoe, Texas, church, supporting Bro. Juan M. Alvarado in his work at Francisco I. Madero and LaFlorida; MORTON, Texas, church supporting Bro. Juan M. Garcia in his labors in Delicias; Artesia, N. M., supporting Bro. Marcelino Ramirez in Lerdo, Durango; FOURTEENTH AND VINE, Abilene, Texas, supporting Bro. Ernesto Reyes in Gomez Palacio, Durango; Russel Avenue, Abilene, Texas, helping toward the support of Bro. J. Carrillo in San Pedro; Hamlin, Texas, supporting Bro. Santiago Figueroa in his labors at Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas; Hope, supporting Bro. Josue Carrillo in San Pedro, Coa-

huila; JEFFERSON CHURCH OF CHRIST, San Antonio, Texas, supporting Bro. Agustin Arroyo in Vicente Guerrero, Durango; Otter Creek, Brentwood, Tenn., contributing regularly for the Torreon work, and VENICE CHURCH OF CHRIST, Venice, Calif., contributing also for the Torreon work and its vicinity. For the lack of information we have omitted the names of those congregations supporting the workers at Fresnillo, Zac., Ojocaliente, Zac., San Luis Potosi, Nueva Casas Grandes, Chih., and Sabinas, Coahuila, but our heart-felt appreciation is hereby acknowledged.

Local Church in Torreon

Now as a consequence of the work that is being done in Mexico we realize the urgent need of a place to train the workers for this field. For a long time we thought on the possibility of founding a school after the pattern of those already operated by members of the church in the United States, and actually took the initial steps to raise the funds for this project. Some negative factors, however, were responsible for the failure of this attempt although some brethren worked hard and raised about six thousand dollars, in round numbers. But no decision was taken until the summer of 1950 when some of the members of the Board of Trustees of the Mexico School Project at the request of some brethren decided to invest this money to increase the facilities of the local church in Torreon that it might do a better work. The funds were used to build an upper plant atop the preacher's home in Torreon. Up to the

present time it is being used by the local church for its teaching programs. We started the special classes for preachers on January 21, 1952, although to a lesser extent the church in Torreon had done it almost from its beginning. This work is not a private institution, but rather a part of the local church work as the other phases of this work. Nevertheless, the opportunities to do good are great and every church should be doing more and more in training workers.

When we first began to preach in Mexico we felt the need for adequate leadership, and at present we believe this leadership is a must if we should ever attain the strength and efficiency that circumstances demand. As the work is expanding the need for preachers, elders, and other qualified Christians who may be able to teach, is strongly felt and we do sincerely hope that this work if properly carried on, will do something toward the preparation of the workers not only for Mexico, but for other Latin American countries as well. Language is not an obstacle for us, for most of the countries to the south speak Spanish and, therefore, it is obvious that we could, with God's blessings, render a better assistance to the church program of world evangelization.

Once again because of the lack of actual experience we miscalculated the expenses—thinking \$35.00 a month was enough for a brother to pay for his board and incidentals, but in practice it didn't work. However, we have tried to save as much as possible in order to make ends meet, although we know now that the minimum expense per one man is at least—\$50.00 a month. We offer this as a suggestion to those who

might be interested in supporting a man for the Spanish-speaking field.

The work the Torreon church is doing, as you may readily suppose, lacks some of the essential materials to offer a better training. First the teaching personnel. During the first year of labors this writer worked alone with the full responsibility of teaching, preparing teaching materials, etc., besides his other duties as minister for the Torreon church and editor of our Spanish paper *La Via de Vida*. To relieve us of this pressure Bro. Francisco Avila, minister in Durango, with the approval of the elders of College Church of Christ, Abilene, Texas, has been with us since Jan. 26, 1953 working from Monday to Friday and going back home on the week-ends. At present he is teaching four subjects daily and helping also in other church activities. We are sincerely thankful for this help and certainly appreciate the decision of the brethren to let him come and take such a splendid part in the preparation of the future leaders for the Spanish-speaking field. Now in order for us to do a better job we need additional facilities at the local congregation in Torreon. Torreon is a city of 160,000 where not only one or two, but many congregations could and should be established. The city limit spreads over 5 miles across. The local congregation has purchased four small lots with a surface of 5,428.00 sq. ft. in one of the most desirable additions to the city about two miles away from the church building where we could build another building and start another congregation. Thus we are in need of another man who would assist in this work and at

the same time assist in our program of teaching for the preachers' class. Also at the present time we are missing better teaching materials even good maps and blackboards, which are essential in every standard classroom. We have a blackboard and some old maps which we are using with appreciation and gratitude, but we hope that as the years go by we might be able to see things improving.

Central Church in Houston is carrying a heavy load in this work in Torreon, for besides its local work it is paying the salaries of Agustin Figueroa in Mexico City, Humberto Figueroa in Monterrey, and myself in Torreon. This suggests that notwithstanding their great love and interest to expand the frontiers of God's kingdom farther still the fellowship and prayers of others will be much appreciated.

The following, besides Central Church in Houston, are contributing regularly toward the support of those men who are studying in Torreon and laboring in that area. We love to acknowledge their contribution with sincere appreciation:

Central Church, Nashville, Tenn. ..\$	35.00	a month
College Avenue, Roswell, N. M.	100.00	"
Jackson Park, Nashville, Tenn.		
(until Dec. '53)	35.00	"
West End, Nashville, Tenn.	35.00	"
Shady Vale, Dallas, Texas	50.00	"
UNA, Church, Nashville, Tenn.	55.00	"
Los Fresnos, Texas	35.00	"
Weslaco, Texas, (Ameri. and Mex. congregations) each	45.00	"

Sometimes some of these brethren have failed in sending in their contributions and this has caused some problems, for our brethren under training need their support to buy food. Even now there are several young men anxious to study and preach if congregations could be found to support them for this work. This coming spring three young men will complete their training with us—Moises Perez Flores, Zenaido Sanchez, and Ernesto Reyes. Bro. Perez is contemplating to start the work under the supervision of the church in Dalhart, Texas. Bro. Reyes is already in charge of the work in Gomez Palacio, Durango, under the sponsorship of Fourteenth and Vine, Abilene, Texas, and we would like to keep Bro. Sanchez in Torreon as a fellow worker.

In conclusion, the Mexico field offers great opportunities and this is a challenge to us and the fine Christian men and women who with a great love and vision for the future have done their best to back up our efforts, trusting that the souls we may convert for the glory of God are worthy of the money and prayers they are so freely giving in their behalf. We want also to express our appreciation to "our papers" that in a most unselfish way have carried the news of the Mexico field and encouraged us to keep on. May the Lord bless the combined efforts of his children the world over and may the reign of peace, justice, and universal brotherhood be a reality upon this earth!

"AMERICAN MISSIONS"

Leslie Diestelkamp, 3421 Aldrich Ave. S.,
Minneapolis 8, Minn.

Jesus said, "Go, teach all nations," but by the conditions of my assignment in this lectureship, *my field is America*. Let it be remembered that while I speak of gospel needs and opportunities in America, I do not in any sense intend to minimize needs in other fields. Other men are here to discuss those fields, and what I say must not in any way detract from opportunities they present. We shall think, especially, of the United States of America, but we must also remember the challenge presented by opportunities in Canada, Alaska, Hawaii and South America.

But my field is America, the land of the free and the home of the brave. America, the land of freedom—freedom to think, to speak and to write without regimentation. America, where the gospel can be preached to every soul and no power can restrain us. America, where we can disagree with either the president or the preacher without fear. America, where every soul can have his own Bible, and where that Bible has had greater influence than anywhere in the world in recent years.

This is the land of the "Bible belt." In this fair land a million living souls have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine and are members of congregations that worship scripturally and regularly. In this great nation, the good seed of the Kingdom has been sown from shore to shore and from state to

state. We have seen a great increase in the sowing process in recent years. One community after another has been invaded by faithful preachers, and hundreds of congregations have looked beyond their own immediate community, to send out a sower of the seed into the more distant fields—some 50, some 500 some 1000 miles away.

In the last few years I have sometimes been asked, "Why does the church not prosper in American mission fields as it does in Germany and Japan?" Without hesitation, I answer that it does prosper as much here as it does anywhere in the world, under the same conditions—that is, in proportion to money spent and men sent. America is not a harder field. Send money and men into Louisiana, Maine or New York as they have been poured into foreign work, and the results would probably startle us. Too often we have sent a poor boy into Montana, the Carolinas or the Dakotas and then have wondered why the work he does is not as glamorous as that done by two or more men with every financial resource in a foreign field.

In this discussion I shall not try to emphasize one American field above another. For nearly eleven years I have lived in Wisconsin and Minnesota—North-Central States—but in this discussion, *my field is AMERICA*. America, where there are hundreds of counties and thousands of cities with no New Testament church. America, where we have one metropolitan area—Detroit, Mich.—with perhaps 40 congregations, and yet where there are 55 counties in that same state with no assembly of the body of Christ. America, where 8 or 10 states out of the 48

have within them perhaps 75% of all the Christians. America, where a great section of the "old south" stretching almost uninterrupted from the eastern border of Texas, around the Gulf of Mexico and up the eastern seaboard to our national Capitol, is, in spite of its closeness to the "Bible belt," still a mission field. America, where, in the North-east, one fourth of our total population lives in an area much smaller than Texas, and yet these New England states and their neighboring states have perhaps less Christians than Dallas. Remember, this is with a population of PEOPLE 5 or 6 times greater than Texas, but with a population of CHRISTIANS less than Dallas. America, where, in the North-central and North-western states, there is a vast territory, stretching from the Great Lakes to the Pacific Ocean, lying in one great body along our northern boundary, and comprising one-third of the total area of the whole U.S.A., but where it is easy to live 100 or more miles from the nearest New Testament church, where there are cities of half a million souls with less than 100 faithful Christians, and where there are whole states with less than 100 members of the Lord's body.

These mission fields in our own land do not have the glamor of some others—the glamor of a far-away-land and a foreign language; the glamor of an ocean voyage or a trans-world flight—but they *do have plenty of opportunities*. America needs a lot of "missionaries" who are willing to live in the land of their birth and speak English. America needs a lot of churches who are willing to send a preacher to some

field 500 miles away, over the plains or the mountains, as well as 5000 miles across the ocean.

Many people ask, "Why is the church so weak in the northern states?" They usually imply that there is something wrong with the people of the north, or perhaps something wrong with the churches of the north. That is not true. Here are four reasons why the church is weak in the north: First: So many northern people are first or second generation Americans. They have come so recently from a foreign land where the restoration movement was unheard of. Second: That movement had its principal origin and growth in the south and those states bordering the south. It hardly reached into the north at all. Third: When the division came, the northern part went digressive, largely—and too many brethren have been content to let it remain that way! Fourth—and most important: Too many congregations and too many preachers have been entirely too satisfied with results of gospel work at home, and have failed to grasp America's opportunities.

But we are on the march at last. Real growth is being made. In some sections there are now ten times as many Christians as there were 10 years ago. Northern churches are already sending out preachers into the fields and in other ways helping enlarge the kingdom there and elsewhere.

Perhaps the challenge is greater today than ever before. America's mission fields are calling. It is often the call of some lone family, miles and miles from an assembly place. Sometimes it is the call of a small group in need of encouragement and train-

ing. Much too long we have contented ourselves with the old alibi: "There is plenty of mission work that needs to be done right here in Texas or Tennessee." We also sometimes excuse ourself from *personal* participation in mission work by remembering that others are doing such work. We are too willing to let the other fellow do the work we boast about.

Some excuse themselves from work in new fields by saying, "You can't preach plainly in the north." That isn't so! If a preacher doesn't preach plainly in the north, it is because he doesn't want to—he wouldn't anywhere else. Some think modernism has largely taken the churches of Christ in the north, but that isn't true either. With the exception of the Chicago area, modernism has not made much progress in American mission fields. Liberalism and compromise find new advocates among men who have gone into the newer fields in America.

What are the needs in American mission work? First we need men! Men of proven ability in defending the truth and proclaiming it understandably. We need men who can be trusted to preach the pure gospel even if the circumstances seem to demand a compromise. We need men who are willing to leave the encouragement of large audiences and fancy buildings and go into the rented halls and tiny meeting houses and convict, convince and persuade the few men and women and boys and girls who gather there. I don't want to be misunderstood. I am not criticizing preachers who preach for large, established churches. I pray that the Lord will bless your work there. But let me beg you to give some of your life

to work in new fields. Please do not alibi that you are not suited to such work. Be suited to it! Make yourself suited to it! Suitability to such work is not an inherited gift from your parents or from God, but it is a matter of your own will. Please, also do not soothe your conscience by going into mission fields for a meeting or two. We need men who will go and LIVE with those people who have not heard the truth. Don't say, "I'm needed at home." Every gospel preacher in Dallas who has preached the truth for ten years could leave tomorrow and it would not materially hurt the cause of Christ there—or at least it should not hurt it—but if they would all go into a new field, it would be one of the greatest things that could happen to mission work. If one-hundred mature men—men of proven ability—men whose feet are already on the ground and who will not be swayed by modernism or any other ism—I say if one-hundred such men would go into mission work each year, and stay five years, the next decade could be the greatest in modern times for the cause of Christ. We need men of ability in new fields. Some brethren seem to think that a man is suited to mission work if he is an humble person and willing to "do personal work." I say we need men in the newer fields who can preach. I am thankful that men in those fields are usually men of above average ability. But if there are men of superior ability, we need them in the newer fields, at least for part of their life. We need some of those \$150.00 and \$200.00 per week preachers in the needy fields of America. I am not criticizing men who get such salaries, if they need that amount and are worth it.

But we need men who ARE WORTH such salaries—we need them in new fields. Of course if you get such support and say you will come to mission fields the church will suspect you are past your prime and will offer you about half that—and you should accept it and come. And, when you come for half as much, it will still not be a sacrifice. You may have to wear \$5.00 shirts instead of \$10.00 shirts; \$40.00 suits instead of \$80.00 suits; your wife may have to economize; you may have to eat hamburger instead of roast; you may have to feed your company meat-loaf instead of steak, but it still won't be a sacrifice. And if you must think of such as a sacrifice, then stay where you are! Some preachers may say, "I can baptize more people in a month in Ft. Worth than I could in New York City in a year." But brethren, what is our work? Baptizing? No. That should result from our work. Our mission, as Paul's, is preaching the gospel. That must be done everywhere, regardless of the results.

We need men who will leave their hobbies at home; men who will forget what color a man's skin is, or what brogue or colloquialism he uses; men who will be more concerned with fishing for men than fishing for fish. We need men who will preach sound words and live sound lives; men who will preach the whole truth and practice what they preach. We need men who have proven their ability to work where there are elders, but who also have the courage to go out and work where there are no elders. We need men who will go into the highways and by-ways of America. If you are one of those who must preach in the city,

indicate your willingness to go to a new field and we promise to find you a city in America, larger than the one you are now in, that needs you. If you prefer smaller cities or towns, it will be easy to find many places begging for your services.

But, if we cannot have all the men we need in mission fields, then give us *more boys*. As long as I can remember, the young men have carried the burden of mission work. Of all the men I know who are now in America's mission fields, a vast majority went into such work as very young men. Most such men have done magnificent work. Give us more and more of these young men just out of college, or who never saw the inside of a college, and who have that unbounding faith and zeal that is characteristic of youth. Give us more such young men who have the courage to face all of Satan's forces, in and out of the church in order to take the gospel to the lost. Let us have more young men who **KNOW THEIR BIBLE**, and who have enough faith to believe that God will enable them to do his bidding. Mistakes they will make—some mistakes that older men would not have made—but they will not make the mistake of failing to try. They will not make the fatal mistake of saying "I can't" or "I won't." Yes, give us more boys, and then pray with us that God will bless them every one.

In addition to men, we need godly women in the mission fields. Most men need a wife to encourage them, to help them teach other women and to share the joys and sorrows, the happiness and the disappointment, the eagerness and the anxiety of the lonely

work in new fields. Give us more women who are willing to leave their mothers and go with their husbands—and then we shall have much less trouble getting men for the work in new fields.

But, besides manpower, America's mission fields need money. We need the help of established churches to enable us to have the financial means to make the work prosper. One great need in almost all new fields is buildings. All too often a work is started in some hall and almost permitted to die there. A decent meeting place that can be used by the congregation any and all of the time is highly beneficial, even if the group is very small. Appeals go out over America every week for help on buildings. Such appeals may seem like a nuisance when you get them, but your response to them may mean the difference between success or failure to the new work. Usually it is unwise to GIVE a building to a new congregation. Usually it is much better for them, to simply enable them to get the building without unreasonable debt, but to let them pay for as much of it as possible themselves. Please, then, let me beg you to give due consideration to appeals for help on buildings. Will you help us by begging the church where you worship to consider such appeals and respond to them in accord with the needs and your ability.

While we are discussing buildings, let me urge that money be spent wisely on buildings in mission fields—and, naturally this very suggestion is equal to saying that I do not believe it has always been so. We can build twice as many buildings, all completely adequate, if we will be more careful in our spending.

Too many appeals go out for money for buildings, each of which costs the fair price of two good buildings. Let me cite an example of careful spending. The new church in Vienna, Missouri recently erected a building that is adequate and is one of the prettiest buildings in the town, and the total cost was less than \$3,000.00. I will probably be laughed at for mentioning such a figure, but I have pictures of the building in my pocket to show you, and I also have the list of expenditures. They did have many advantages—cheap native material, cheap labor, and no building code to meet, but IN YOUR TOWN, double the material cost, double the labor cost, and then double the whole thing to meet other needs, and you still have a building for less than \$15,000.00. If you think my example is extreme, let me remind you that it has almost been duplicated in Pine City, Minn., and in Merrilan, Wis. It can be nearly duplicated in dozens of places, and where it can't be duplicated, much, much money can be saved, and many, many more buildings can be built with the same money, by careful use of funds. Wild-eyed preachers in new fields need to quit advocating that "brethren down south have the money and we just as well get it." All of us need to recognize our responsibility to make that money go as far as possible.

But our greatest need for money in the newer fields is to support gospel preachers and gospel preaching. All over America faithful men are sacrificing much to preach the word of truth in destitute fields. Already dozens of men need your support. Worthy men in the North-east, in the South-east, in the North-

west and in the North central states, need your help. Other genuine men are ready to go into such fields, if they can find support. Someone may say that the preachers should go into mission fields regardless of support. I shall not disagree—BUT WHICH PREACHERS? But let us never say that preachers alone must shoulder this task. Churches must be responsible. God has given the responsibility of spreading the truth to the church. If you worship with a church that is not trying to help in the mission fields, then let me beg you to put off your hypocrisy and just cut the great commission right out of your Bibles. Some of these days we must all stand before the Lord of heaven, and then brethren, it will be too late to put into practice the words we have quoted so often. Then it will be too late to remember that the last request of our Lord before he left this earth never again to set his feet upon it was, "Go into all the world." It will be a sad fate then to remember that his hands were pierced with Calvary's nails, his side was pierced by the soldier's spear, his life was given, his blood was shed, for lost souls *whom we have failed to give the gospel*. In that day he will not ask about the souls we *could not save*—those whom we could not reach because of circumstances or because of the powers that be—but he will be concerned with those who face him unprepared because we *would not* take the gospel to them.

A congregation does not have to have large sums available to help in mission work. If you can send \$10.00, send no less. If you can send \$500.00 or \$5000.00, send it all to some worthy work or worker.

I have no visionary plan that would convert America in the next generation or even in the next century. God has not promised that even the most faithful efforts by all of his people would produce such results. He has commanded us to preach the word, and he has promised to be with us always and everywhere. He wants all men to hear the truth, and he has given us the task of proclaiming it to them. He expects us to do all we can—which is to preach the gospel to all men. What he wants us to do, we can do, *with his help*. If America does not hear the truth, it won't be God's fault, will it? Then whose fault will it be? Will you, my preaching brother, answer with me and admit that it is our fault. Will you say "Here am I Lord, send me?" And if you just can't give that answer, will you help send someone else? Some anonymous author gives us the story of a Christian who grew interested in mission work. He first prayed, "Lord, save the lost." Later he prayed, "Lord, send missionaries to the lost." Still later he prayed, "Lord, if you don't have somebody to send, send me." Then in truest humility he prayed, "Lord, if you can't send me, send somebody." Finally he prayed, "Lord, send whom you will, but help me to pay my share of the expenses."

The Holy Spirit motivated Paul to write, "Today is the day of salvation." For us, Christian friends, today is the day of opportunity to bring the saving gospel to a lost America. Now is the accepted time. Now, before it is too late. Now, while we have freedom to preach and while men are free to hear. Now, America is the land of opportunity. It is the land

of gospel opportunity. America, where the gospel can be preached without a visa, or without persecution. Let us use America's opportunities NOW, before it is too late—before opportunity flies away.

There was a door that stood ajar,
That one had left for me;
But I went seeking other doors,
To which I had no key.

And when at last I turned to seek
A refuge and a light,
A gust of wind had shut the door,
And left me in the night. (anon.)

Let us never be content to stay at home with the gospel, but in our eagerness *to go*, let us not forget or fail the opportunities in our own land, under our own flag and among our own countrymen.

Finally, this admonition and this plea to all Christians and especially to my preaching brethren, applying an old man-made saying to gospel work in new fields: "Push it! If you can't push it, pull it! And if you can't pull it, GET OUT OF THE WAY."

OVERCOMING THE TENDENCY TO PHARISEEISM

J. P. Crenshaw

“Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

To read that single passage is to announce the seriousness of our present thought. Such tendencies as those prominent in the Pharisees will keep us out of heaven.

We have available at least three sources of information concerning the Pharisees, the New Testament, the writings of Josephus, and the Talmud. This last, the Talmud, being the work of the Pharisees, may be taken as a full delineation of their religious system, but tell us little of their position and influence as a political party.

The name Pharisee means “The Separated,” and of course it meant separated only in a religious, not in a political respect. The Pharisees seem to have come into notice with the Maccabees as a reaction against the tendency to adopt Grecian customs. It became the largest and strictest sect, and was devoted to strict conformity to the Law of Moses. Herein is seen the reason for its popularity. We all admire strictness in adherence to the Law. They were the men who separated themselves from all Levitical impurity. Admirable trait indeed. The world today clamors for good mixers; the Lord is still looking for good separatists, men who will so far depart from

all iniquity that God can afford to bless them and their influence among men today. As we watch the slow development of this sect, it gives us ground for serious thought in our religious growth and development.

Our New Testament introduction to the Pharisee is in Matthew 3:7, when John the Baptizer was preaching in the wilderness of Judea, "When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism." He called them a "generation of Vipers." Here we find Pharisee and Sadducee joined in heart and action and notice no difference between them. But as our references multiply we are impressed with the zeal of the Pharisee. He is outstanding in this respect, and who among us is not deeply moved in the presence of real zeal in matters religious. True, their zeal always had one end, the restoration of the Hebrew Commonwealth in all its ancient glory and power, together with its ancient institutions unimpaired.

They were the acknowledged religious teachers, as Jesus puts it "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat" (Matt. 23:2). Here is where, in following the line of thought and growth of the Pharisee, my mind begins to become disturbed, and I begin to examine my heart and life to see if I have like tendencies. See now the danger, men with such zeal and yet their worship and teaching "Not according to knowledge."

It may appear strangely inconsistent that a body of men who affected such an extraordinary zeal for the preservation of the Mosiac institutions in their purity, should have overlaid them with a mass of traditions for which no authority could be found in

the written word. But when the religion of a body of men has taken the direction of ritualism, as it did in the case of the Pharisees, they are urged forward by a strong impulse to multiply rites and ceremonies, for in such observance their religious life consists, and the more they multiply outward forms, the more devout do they seem in their own eyes. The result is inevitable; the bringing in, one by one, of rites for which no warrant can be found in God's revealed will.

You ask; are not men afraid to thus add to the things revealed? I answer, ground for justification can always be found, and made to sound plausible. Maybe their reasoning was something like this: the Law of Moses does not insist on daily prayers. Now, surely Moses could not have omitted from a Law that specified so particularly daily teaching of God's word, such an important thing as constant prayer. So what? He must have given such commandment orally to the elders in his day, and from them the teaching was handed down from generation to generation. Is there anything in this line of reasoning that sounds familiar and up to date?

Josephus wrote, "The Pharisees have delivered to the people from the traditions of the Fathers many observances which are not written in the Law. They make these of equal authority with the written word." If you care to read the same language in a much later document, read the argument the Roman Catholic church makes for the authority of their traditions.

Can you now think of any departure from the New

Testament pattern that might not be explained and justified in this manner?

We have little interest in the hundreds of human additions to divine law as the Pharisees introduced and observed them, but may I suggest, We have an abiding interest in the SPIRIT that led to Phariseeism as it was in the days of our Lord on the earth. This SPIRIT may be defined as one that begins on ground both safe and sure, a devotion to God's truth that leads to separation from worldliness, but at the same time gradually adds human ideas until it becomes a self-righteous, self-sufficient attitude which slowly but surely reaches a state of conceit and self-satisfaction that is willing to legislate where God has not spoken.

Now, this condition is fatal to holiness "Without which no man shall see the Lord," for it involves wrong motives, and no one can serve God acceptably while moved by motives that are displeasing to him. Another thought that frightens; this spirit may develop in my heart without being recognized and identified in my appraisal of my thoughts and actions.

Am I today in danger of being found the unhappy possessor of any tendency found in the Pharisee of the long ago? A few minutes of earnest, honest examination of self and of every longing that moves us may be most profitable here.

According to the Talmud the Pharisees were of seven kinds:—

1. The Schechemite Pharisee: Who keeps the Law simply for what he may profit thereby, as Schechem submitted to circumcision only to obtain Dinah (Gen.

34:19). Now, I am quite certain that Jesus taught that we are to choose to serve him with a full consideration of what it costs to be a Christian. And I am equally sure that when a man is more concerned about what he can make out of being a Christian than what it may make out of him, he has missed the mark. When a man's religion is shaped by his business or social needs he has the tendency of the Schemite Pharisee.

2. The Tumbling Pharisee: who to appear to men to be humble walks always with his head hanging down. This man and the No. 3 The Bleeding Pharisee: who in order not to look on a woman walks with his eyes closed, and thus often meets with wounds, are of the same mind. How often are we seen in some action which is intended to denote a humility or some other trait that we do not actually feel at all? Why such action? To appear to men in a certain light. Until we reach the place where we are much more concerned about how we appear to God than how we seem to men, we are surely leaning toward Phariseism. Now, I count it an extremely difficult thing to feel the eye of God on my daily conduct much more keenly than I respond to the criticism of my fellow man. It seems to me, so much depends on how you speak of me. In the preparation of this lesson, did I think of having you commend me for it, or did I think of hearing Jesus say when I see him, I am glad that you called attention to that danger; issued that warning.

One of the occupational diseases to which preachers are susceptible is "I-strain." I mean the perpendic-

ular pronoun; the personal pronoun, first singular, nominative case. A spot appears before the eyes of the soul which distorts the vision, blurs the insight, and causes spiritual myopia. The spot may grow larger until it blots out the landscape. Progress toward any significant goal becomes more difficult. The sufferer may remain blissfully unconscious of his condition until he runs headlong into other human beings who resent being jostled and pushed around. This spot is the preacher himself. It is due to acute inflammation of the ego. Jesus once told a story of a successful citizen who has become known as a man of dubious distinction under the title of the rich fool. In the Bible the story is told in five sentences, one hundred and seventeen words. Of this number sixty-one are spoken by this prosperous farmer. Thirteen of these sixty-one words consisted of "I," "my" and their derivatives. "What shall I do; I will tear down MY barns, I will store MY goods." Jesus told another story about a wonderful Father who had two sons; one of whom said "Give ME the portion of goods that falleth to ME." The other said "Lo, these many years have I served thee, and I have never disobeyed thy command, yet thou never gavest ME a kid, that I might make merry with MY friends."

Some one had said that the cross is a cancelled "I."

"I-strain" is not limited to preachers, but we are peculiarly susceptible to it. Invested with authority as ambassadors of Christ, it is perilously easy for us to feel we are the authority. Well-intentioned listeners encourage this dangerous tendency in us. We talk: they listen and approve. When we open our mouths

let no dog bark, let no listener question what we say. You know, my friend, a gospel minister must speak with authority, but always "Thus saith the Lord" is the secret of that authority. As a minister he is a transmitter of the word of God which carries its own power and authority. It is when the minister becomes more enamored of the quality of the transmitter than of the message and its source, that he ceases to be a gospel messenger. Some self-confidence every minister of Christ must possess; but the Christian paradox is that true self-confidence comes when we place our complete confidence in another, in him whose servants we have promised to be. "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). The people that are in the most danger of frustrating God's gracious purpose are not men and women steeped to the eyebrows in the stagnant pool of sensuous sin, but the clean, respectable, church-going, sermon-hearing, people who enjoy a tendency toward Phariseeism.

4. The Mortar Pharisee; who wears a mortar-shaped cap to cover his eyes in order not to see any impurities or indecencies. Here is a very serious thought. What do I see along life's way? As I peep out from under my self-devised protective cap, what do I see? The Pharisees saw Jesus "eating with sinners." They saw only a serious breach in what they had decided should be his proper conduct. He saw the sick that needed a physician, the lost that needed a saviour. Do I see what he saw or what the Pharisees saw? Do we see a brother who needs loving, tender, reassuring saving help, or do we see one out of line with what we have decided must be his course?

One on whom we are ready to heap scalding, heart-breaking criticism and ridicule? Jesus and the Pharisees looked at the same woman and saw these very different things. I believe we have tendencies either like Jesus or the Pharisees. I pray God we may see what Jesus sees today when he looks at us. Did it ever occur to you that in the day when Phariseeism was born and flourished the Jews were a long way from God? They had witnessed no prophet for hundreds of years, and maybe, the same spirit developing among us would indicate the same distance from God existing? In the presence of the divinely inspired prophet of Jehovah no tendency like that of the Pharisee, so cold, so formal could have taken root. Maybe, beloved, when so tempted we are walking in the wrong atmosphere. Did you ever hear Brother Don Morris preach his sermon on the subject, "The Jericho Road?" Each of the three men looked at the same "Certain man" but O; what an eternal difference in what they saw.

5. The what-am-I-yet-to-do Pharisee; who not knowing much about the law, and never desiring to learn for himself; as soon as he has done one thing, asks some one else, what is my duty now? I do not know which of all these characteristics of the Pharisees is more prominent in my life; I hate to suggest that maybe I have some of each one in my make-up. But, I do not know that just at this point, I am nearly sure to blush as I preach. How much of the word of the Lord have we learned individually? I mean, how much have I dug out and appropriated for myself? Did we ever memorize a sermon, the

product of great thought of some deeply spiritual mind, or nearly memorize it, and preach it, and claim for our own the praise; is that a tendency to Phariseism? I am not pleading for originality on the part of each of us, I am pleading for actual indwelling of our preaching material. I am suggesting that we become what we learn, and learn all we can. In Jeremiah 5:1 God gave us his definition of a man, "One that does ALL that he knows God wants him to do, and at the same time, learns more and more duty." Executes judgment and seeks truth. A very different idea of a man from the popular conception. I believe that God expects me to know of his will and Word to read for myself the signboards along the road of life, and not to have to ask another the way. Just how much do I know?

6. The Pharisee from Fear; who keeps the law because he is afraid of future judgment. That a man ought to be afraid of judgment is certain, that a man remember that he will be judged according to the deeds done in the flesh is plain teaching, but I remember too, that "perfect love casteth out fear." A man can appreciate all the solemnity of eternity and still obey the commands of the Lord and so trust his promises that the reward of his presence far outweighs the fear. One of the troubles about being led by fear is that one day a man forgets his fear, then what will control him? Boy slipping off the roof when his trousers caught on a nail. When he started slipping, he started praying, "Lord, help me." When he caught on the nail he said, "Never mind now, Lord, I'm hung on a nail."

7. The Pharisees from Love; who obeys because he loves God with all of his heart, his soul, his mind and his strength. No tendency here I wish to avoid. Only imitate.

The severity with which our Lord denounced the Pharisees seems at first view surprising when contrasted with the general mildness of his dealing with sinners. But we must remember that they sat in Moses' seat, they were the acknowledged leaders and guides of the people in religion. Does that sound to you like the position preachers occupy today? It was therefore, of supreme importance that the hollowness of their system and the hypocrisy of their lives should be fully exposed by the all-knowing Saviour for the benefit of all of us who were to live in after ages.

Though there were among them honest and good men, such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, yes and Saul of Tarsus, still as a body they were the representatives of formalism and hypocrisy, twin vices that nearly always are found locked in each others' arms. The history of the church of Christ for nineteen centuries shows how needful it was that the great Master himself should lift the veil, once for all, from such a system, and exhibit it in its naked deformity that all future generations might see and abhor it.

In turning your mind and mine to what Jesus said to and about the Pharisees, I would first remind us that the difference between the Old Law and the New that was, at the beginning, most evident was that the New Testament gospel was written "in the heart" of men, not on tables of stone. Did you ever hear the

remark from the lips of a gospel preacher that it makes me mad to have one say of us, "You folks do not believe in heart-felt religion." It frightens me, beloved. To think that a man acquainted with me, watching me live day after day, should say that I lack heart conviction. As long as a man might draw such a thought concerning me, I am in danger of being led by tendency to Phariseeism. The New Law to which Jeremiah 31:33 pointed was to be "written in their hearts" and thus a law that does not command my affections could not be the one to which reverence is there made.

The Pharisee taught such a servile adherence to the letter of the law that its remarkable character as a schoolmaster to lead to Christ was completely overlooked, and that its moral precepts, intended to elevate men, were made rather the instruments of lowering their reverence and even their morality. Jesus points men only to the law of God as the supreme guide of life, the Pharisees multiplied minute precepts and distinctions, their traditions, to the point that the law was almost lost. Here I am confronted with two tendencies, either of which will prove ruinous. I can select certain things in religion, things that I think are favorable to my way of living, and I can magnify them and their importance out of proper proportion in an attempt to make myself look good; or I may lean so far from such danger that I will just not require anything definite in religion, not even keeping one's self unspotted from the world. Jesus taught that true piety consisted not in forms, but was born out of deep, abiding convictions; not in any outward observances,

but in an inward Spirit. The Pharisees in all their teachings encouraged exactly the opposite. Any vain or trifling question might take precedence over great principles of duty to God or man. Am I always on safe ground here? Is my interest in both my salvation and yours so great that I may not notice any personal slight or injury arising; may not get excited unless the matter may lead to someone being lost?

Christ taught humility as an essential, integral part of true Christianity; the Pharisee had no place for this cardinal virtue either in his thinking or living.

When Jesus said: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20), that statement was very significant: He claimed a superior system and maintained that it took more devotion to follow him than any Pharisee had ever enjoyed. I am asking you to remember that statement: it takes devotion to follow Christ. If we are trying to follow him today by attending so many services with strict regularity, and giving so much with proper regard, and in all this are forgetting to love him supremely we are walking the way of the Pharisee. Jesus charged the Pharisee with many things. A few of them are:

1. Hypocrisy.

We say that here at least, we are not guilty. Are we sure? Altogether free of it? Matt. 23:23: "Ye tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith."

The law of Moses said in Deut. 14:22: "Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year." Jesus said, "These ought ye to have done." That is right; but that which Christ here condemns, and that which gives me a scare, is "Ye have omitted." What? Judgment, justice to others, both in matters of action and consideration of their feelings: Mercy, compassion and kindness to the unfortunate; judgment and mercy toward men and faith toward God.

All things of God's law are weighty, important, but those are most weighty which are most expressive of inward holiness of heart; the instances of self-denial, turning away from worldliness, submission to the will of God. "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah 6:8). This, beloved, is the obedience that is better than sacrifice. This, my good people, is not hard to learn, not difficult to understand, just tremendously difficult to practice. But until I learn actually to live a life consecrated to the principles here involved, I cannot see how God can tell me from a Pharisee.

2. In the same chapter, Matt. 23:26, Jesus says, "Thou blind Pharisee, ye make clean the outside of the cup, but within it is full of extortion and excess. Cleanse first that which is within the cup, that the outside may be clean also."

If I kept the outside of my home so well landscaped, and painted and cleaned up that you could not pass without remarking, "that fellow really takes care of his place," but on entering you immediately

saw the inside never had been swept or dusted, what would you think of me as a housekeeper? What does God think of us as heart-keepers? Do you suppose the Saviour would have to call us blind? The Holy Spirit used Peter to say: "He that lacketh these things is blind." What things? He lists them plainly: virtue or courage, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love. Friend of mine, just what is your true condition today in regard to these plain, simple, vital Christian virtues? Are we blind? God said if we lack these things we are blind. Are we blind to our inward holiness or lack of holiness? No formality here, these things are products of a man's heart. Jesus spoke of these same Pharisees in Luke 18:9 as "They which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others."

I must check closely here. Has my obedience been so entire and my consecration so complete that I may despise my brother who stumbles and falls? Tendency to Phariseeism. The parable Jesus used to teach these people the needed lesson pictured the Pharisee as arrogant and intolerant. "I thank God that I am not as other men are." Jesus one day said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The contrast is very striking. The trouble with us may be that we want to be partly like one and partly like the other. As usual, brethren, there is no middle ground. I have to make up my mind which characteristics will be developed in my life. Jesus said, "Everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Many, many other charges Jesus brought against the Pharisees, any of which may cause us much honest heart-searching to be sure that we are free of them. Here is one more:

Matt. 23:5-7: "But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi."

We thought along this line a few minutes ago when considering the Pharisees who were so anxious to appear to men righteous that they butted their brains out walking without looking where they were going. We need not again to dwell on it, but I feel personally, that right here may be one prominent danger spot for me. I wonder how many of the most serious mistakes I have made in life might have come from the desire for prominence among people. Why is it so hard for us to acknowledge we have erred; is it fear that we may lose standing with our public? Think for a minute here: God will not forgive me until I repent, but I will not repent because if I confess my wrong, it will give someone a chance to point out my weakness. That becomes increasingly serious. I wonder just to what extent I am a slave to public opinion.

But we must hasten on: the subject assigned me was "Overcoming the Tendencies," not just pointing them out. Can these be overcome? Surely? Certainly? I am persuaded that we can get a one hundred percent vote here; unanimously in favor of

"Yes." These things in your life and mine can and must be overcome. Otherwise we are without hope. Jesus said "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven." That's final. But, beloved, it cannot be done in a day. We have lived with each other too long to change so greatly, that quickly. It is a matter of growth, development in the heart. Love is the answer. Jesus said in Luke 10:25-28, "A certain lawyer tempted him saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, what is written in the law? How readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: This do, and thou shalt live."

No tendency to Phariseeism or any other ism to which the human mind is heir could live for one hour in the blazing light of such devotion. My mind dwells on the love of God to me, and it swells and swells and rises to heights almost sublime. How much time and thought spent on my love to God? Surely there should be some balance here. It is not even natural to be so loved and to be indifferent in return. Love always begets love among us. But for a moment, let us break this thought down a little. Let us analyze love partly.

1. Humility.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Do you really want to be poor in spirit? If you today could pick any position in the world around you, and occupy it for your own,

I wonder which of us would be found poor in spirit? Jesus said they are the ones who have the kingdom of heaven as theirs. Do we want to feel our dependence, or do we wish to stand alone? Do you feel right now like your only hope to become great lies along the path of service to God and to men made in his image? Is that your idea of success?

I think what I need is to start all over on the basis of my comparisons. If I feel like I have worked hard, and have a right to rest awhile, instead of comparing my efforts with those of my brethren, why not use Paul as my measuring stick?

Are we humble enough to go to heaven? I mean, way down deep in my heart, do I have the true humility that must mark the heavenward bound man?

Humility is an essential characteristic of the man who is right with God. The poor in spirit are the humble, the teachable, the open-minded, the trustful. The most dramatic illustration the world has ever seen of this spirit must have been the time recorded in John 13: "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God—began to wash the disciples' feet." Read that verse over again. Humility is the door to all progress, and no man may enter into the kingdom of heaven without it.

2. Reverence: I am persuaded that a basic constituent of love is reverence. I am afraid that we are losing that attitude of heart in our present day. Ask yourself honestly about your own reverence and that of your fellow associates. How often do we preach

on this subject? Read any modern translation of the New Testament; are the changes such as tend to increase or decrease reverence? Take, for instance, the practice growing among us now, to use the pronouns "you" and "your" in our prayers instead of "thee" and "thou" and "thine." Why be anxious to make talking to God sound like we are just addressing one another? I deplore any effort to bring God down to our level. Let us rise toward him instead.

3. Holiness:

"But as he which hath called you holy, so be ye holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15, 16).

We have read this passage in years now past, marvelled at it, decided that its claims were too high, and then treated it as though it did not mean what it clearly said.

I am now fully persuaded that holiness is our great need. Surely that would cure the tendency to Phariseism. True separation from the world instead of some act to cause men to see that we are separated. In the Old Testament the word "holiness" meant the separation, or setting apart of the thing described as sacred to the purposes of God alone. Please do not cast that thought aside before considering it carefully. It meant that the only purpose of the thing described was to be sacred for God's use. That is exactly what we mean by the term now if we use it seriously. The Prophet once said: "Be ye clean, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord." The men who were to handle the holy, separated vessels were themselves to be holy,

separated. How much more men who are the vessels?

In the New Testament another word for holiness and sanctification means precisely the same thing. This word signifies something that is awful, full of awe. Holiness in a man is awe-inspiring. The reason is the man is separated to the service of God—belongs to God.

Have you ever considered this? The real difference between men is to whom do they belong? Have we really been born again? "Not your own, bought with a price." If not, beloved, that may explain our lack of power. We are actually trying to be holy without the possibility of success. Where is the power we lack? (See Phil. 2:12, 13).

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Because the verse ends there, we quote that part and stop in the middle of the great thought. Listen: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Both to will and to do: both to desire and to accomplish his good pleasure. That, my brother, is sanctification. That will overcome every tendency to Phariseeism. But, oh beloved, let us not stop with any general idea here—let us be plain and specific and even personal. This condition of sanctification involves: First, a renunciation of all things of which the life of God disapproves. What things? All sin. "Transgression of law." Everything I know to be wrong. Certainly, you say. But listen to James: "To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

Not only is it sin to do wrong, but to neglect to do right is sin. James illustrates it thus: "We ought to say, if the Lord wills." Do you feel that in your every day plans, let alone say it? We ought to say it. Wear the label of your loyalty. Use the speech of your surrender.

Paul goes even deeper: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." "He that doubteth is condemned." So long as I am doing anything, either that which seems to be wrong or seems to be right, wondering whether I ought to do so, I am singing. My listening friend, eternity is too long for a man to be fooling around in his devotion to the Lord.

Almost daily someone asks: "Do you think I ought to go to this place; take part in this thing," or some question of that nature? Suppose I reply: "Ask your Master, you claim to belong to him. Look into the face of him whom you call Lord and King, ask him if you should go there? Remember this, however, that fact that you are in doubt answers your question. "He that doubteth is condemned."

There must then be the cutting off of all things of which God disapproves.

Then there must be an abandonment of the whole being to God. Paul said in Acts 27:23: "My God, whose I am and whom I serve." Just to what extent do we belong to God? Do we feel that we have been bought and paid for and delivered?

I think that these would naturally be followed by the maintaining of simple, quiet trust in him which expresses itself in joyful obedience and patient waiting for his leading in the guiding of his word.

If the dangers of tendencies to hypocrisy and pretense are to be overcome in my life; if the life of God is to be maintained in my heart and life, there must be this renunciation, the wrong things must be left out of my actions at all costs. The neglect of right doing must be remedied. The doubtful things along the border lines with which I have played and wondered and about which I have worried a little, must be cut off, however innocent they may seem. I must live upon the principle of simple faith in my Lord and Master, with immediate and ready answer to every demand of his gracious word and will.

He that comes still loving the world—still looking with regret upon what he must give up to follow Christ, is not going to be able to enter the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour. How searching this test to all who profess to be Christians. It is perilous to tamper with the world, to look at its pleasures, or to seek its society. He that would enter heaven must come with a heart full of love to God; full enough to crowd out all other loves.

SOUTHWESTERN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

H. L. Barber

It is a distinct pleasure to bring you greetings from Southwestern Christian College; the only college in the world today that is supported by members of the church of Christ and dedicated to the training of negro youth.

More than two thousand years ago the greatest teacher that ever walked on the face of the earth gathered unto himself a small group of men and gave them intensive training so that they might go forth and teach others. They were intensely trained so that they might carry his message to all the world. Through the centuries this principle has remained unchanged. In order to teach others, we must first be trained. We must be familiar, not only with the principles we are to teach, but also with effective methods of presenting these materials. A little more than half a century has passed since a few forward thinking men among us came to the realization that our young people must be trained in a Christian environment if the church were to prosper and if they were to effectively carry out the great commission.

It is not necessary for me this evening to go into the history of this movement among us. Suffice it to say that many attempts were made to establish Christian colleges. Even though only those probably in the better locations and under the strongest leadership survived, we have today colleges from coast to coast wherein the youth studies and lives under a

Christian environment. It would be impossible to evaluate the direct and indirect influence of these colleges upon the growth of the church in the past half century, but it has been tremendous. Never, since the days of the apostles, has the church of Christ enjoyed such growth nor exercised such influence in the world as today. Certainly we cannot discount the great part our colleges have played in this tremendous growth.

Now let me give you another picture. I doubt seriously today in the sight of our great Master that souls are tinted black, white, red, or yellow. When the day of judgment comes, I doubt seriously that our Father will say to those gathered before him, "You that are white approach my throne through the front gate, and you of other colors will be shown through the back door where you will be judged by some of my lesser helpers." A thousand times no! I do not believe that one soul is more important in the sight of God than another, regardless of the color of the body in which that soul is temporarily housed.

Living next door to us is a race of people twenty million strong. As history goes these people are only a short while out of bondage. They, too, are crying desperately for a Christian education. They have few leaders. Millions of them have never heard from the lips of a gospel minister that there be a God. Realizing the great need for leaders, three times an attempt was made to establish a Christian College by themselves, and three times their efforts came to failure. They are as yet too few in number and their

economic status is yet too low to support such an institution by themselves.

Realizing these limitations a few short years ago, a group of the Negro leaders appealed to a group of white leaders in Texas for assistance in establishing an institution wherein their young people might enjoy some of the privileges which we as a race are now taking for granted. Through the grace of God and the Christian love of these men such a movement was started. The result was Southwestern Christian College. A board was set up consisting of both white and Negro; a faculty was employed consisting of both white and Negro; both groups joined hands to make Christian education available to a race that had been greatly neglected for so long. The people laboring in this movement have one purpose in mind, and that is to prepare the young men and women with whom they are working in order that they can go back to their homes or to a location of their choice and spread the teachings of Christ before a hungry people.

According to the best information available, and we believe it to be reliable, twenty-five years ago there were eighty thousand members of the church of Christ among the Negroes of America. Today there are forty thousand. During a period when the church is growing by leaps and bounds how could such a situation exist? There have been and still are a few great leaders among this race, such as Brother Keeble, Brother Hogan, Brother Bowser, Brother Miller and others. These men at that time spent most of their time in evangelistic work and baptized literally thousands of people. They were moving constantly, how-

ever, from city to hamlet. They established hundreds of congregations, but of necessity they left these newly founded congregations and went on to other areas. In most instances they were left without trained leaders and in time thousands of these people slipped back into the world. Many congregations are no longer in existence. Brother Bowser has passed on. Brother Hogan, Brother Keeble and others of these great evangelists are now devoting most of their time to local work. A new generation of leaders must be trained.

Thirty miles east of Dallas, one block off highway eighty, in Terrell, Texas, is Southwestern Christian College. There these leaders are being trained. It is new; it is unique in that there is none other in the world like it. As is true in most new colleges, it is struggling, and yet it is developing much more rapidly than we have dared to hope. It is worthy of your interest, support and your prayers.

Never have I seen a group of young people more responsive to these teachings, nor have I seen a group more willing to do anything that is honorable in order to obtain such an education. The total cost of attending this college is less than half that of our average Christian college and yet more than seventy-five per cent of our students are unable to pay fifty per cent of their expenses in cash. They are all, however, willing to work. They must either pay all their expenses in cash or work for these expenses. No student has a free ride.

As yet the work opportunities are limited. We now have a modern print shop. Several students pay their expenses by working in this shop. We have a small

canning program. Our buildings need much repair. The grounds must be kept. Students work in the kitchen, serve as clerical assistants, library assistants and in many other capacities. We now have ten hogs, we are planting a spring garden; are in the process of setting up to raise chickens for our own consumption and plan to secure a small herd of cattle for both dairy and beef purposes. The future plans for a work program involve a complete woodworking shop where we expect to manufacture moderate priced church furniture, and a sewing room where we expect to manufacture the simple items of clothing. We will not pay students cash for this labor, but rather give them credit toward their school expenses. The college may, however, receive operating cash as a result of their labors. This is not an experiment. It has proven to be successful in several American colleges and under proper direction, it will succeed in Southwestern.

The development of this program will take time. Equipment such as is needed here costs money. In the meantime we have applications from dozens of young people who must work for the greater portion of their expenses. Mouths must be fed and teachers must be paid, therefore, we cannot accept many of them until these work programs are ready to function.

We must not forget the purpose of Southwestern. The Bible is taught daily. Devotional services are held daily. All teachers are members of the church of Christ. A sincere effort is made for a Christian environment. All students must take a course in the

Bible. This must have a wholesome influence on the lives of these young people.

Within the few short months I have served as President of Southwestern Christian College, I have been given a much greater insight into the goodness of humanity and the richness of Christian love. I have seen various groups from this college received into more than two hundred fifty church buildings where they plead the cause of Christian education for Negroes through the medium of beautiful songs and speech. More than seventy-five thousand people have heard these young people. Seldom ever is there sufficient seating space in the buildings. I have seen women who have been accustomed to being served, out of Christian love, serve these young people with food they have prepared with their own hands. I have seen them in Christian fellowship received into white homes on numerous occasions. I have seen both Negro and white join hands as many as forty strong and donate their labors at making old buildings serviceable. I saw this work go on for eight weekends until we ran out of funds for materials. I have received on behalf of the college a substantial contribution from the parents of a young man who was slain by a Negro soldier. In their words this contribution was made to assist in a small manner in the development of Christian love and understanding between the races.

The first few weeks of my tenure at Southwestern, it was a little difficult for me to sleep. I wondered where the next dollar was coming from. Now I know. Now I lie down and go to sleep. I no longer have any

fears for the future of Southwestern. Now I know all we have to do is see enough Christians and carry the message to them and our prayers will be answered. If God gives us the strength, these young people and I will carry the message to the far corners of these United States. We will be heard.

There is no way to measure the great influence this college may exercise during the years to come. At this great lectureship we have thousands of the leaders from among the church people of the Southwest. If you so desire you can do much to further the cause of Christian education among the Negroes of this land. I humbly but earnestly beseech you to remember this great work as you return to your homes. Remember it to your friends. Remember it when you make your individual plans to support benevolent work. Above all remember it in your prayers. Pray that a hungry people who as yet are unable to do too much for themselves may be fed.

OVERCOMING WORLDLINESS

Ira North

My heart overflows with happiness to be back again at Abilene Christian College. I remember so vividly and pleasantly my school days on this campus. I shall always be grateful for the influence this school has had on my life. It has been a thrilling experience to watch my Alma Mater grow in service to the young men and women of our generation. As long as there is value in Christian young people associating together, associating with Christian teachers, and studying the Bible, just that long will there be a need for Abilene Christian College. I am glad that I have the privilege of making a small and humble gift to this great work each month.

The subject that has been assigned to me is "Overcoming Worldliness." I would like for us to note 1 John 2:15, 16: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, if a man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him, for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world."

We use the word "world" in at least three senses. First, we use it to refer to the material creation, such as the rivers and the mountains, etc. It is certainly right that we love and appreciate such beautiful things of nature. David teaches us that the earth showeth forth the handiwork of our God. We have a greater appreciation of our Heavenly Father when we take

time to enjoy the beautiful things of nature that he has provided. God has always wanted men to love the beautiful. This we learn in the very beginning when God in the Garden of Eden surrounded man with the beautiful and the good.

Secondly, we use the word "world" to refer to people on the earth. We find the word so used in the Scriptures. In John 3:16 we are told, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We are taught to love the souls of men and women everywhere, and in this sense we must love the world.

Thirdly, the word "world" is used to denote the love of the material as opposed to the spiritual. John tells us to love not the world neither the things that are in the world. He then lists the things in the world: (1) the lust of the flesh, (2) the lust of the eye, (3) the vainglory of life. It is in this sense that Christians must not love the world. We must not yield to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the vainglory of life.

Thayer defines lust as a desire for what is forbidden. A desire that is legitimate, that is fulfilled in harmony with the word of God, is not lust. There is no normal and natural desire within the human body that is wrong when fulfilled according to God's law. It is the abuse and the misuse of God-given desires that is the lust of the flesh. Brother D. Ellis Walker makes this thought very clear in his excellent booklet entitled, "A Bible Definition of Worldliness." For example, in regard to the sexual desire he says:

“ . . . let us consider the sexual appetite. Here is a desire which rivals hunger and thirst in strength. The Bible teaches that it may be satisfied not only for the purpose of procreation, but also for the mutual pleasure of husband and wife (1 Cor. 7:2-6). The mere presence of the sexual drive is not to be construed as lust—unlawful desire. It is both natural and right for young people, passing through middle and later adolescence, to desire the company of the opposite sex. It is both natural and right for them to marry (if they do so in harmony with God’s ordinances) and to render unto each other the “due benevolence” (1 Cor. 7:3) which each is entitled to in the conjugal relationship. But the desire to satisfy the sexual appetite in an unlawful way is lust. Marriage was not ordained of God just to satisfy the sexual appetite—marriage is much more than that. But the desire to satisfy the sexual appetite through fornication or adultery is lust—it is forbidden by Christ (Matt. 5:27, 28).”

Let us, therefore, remember that lust is the desire for that which is forbidden by God. And let us determine to keep our heart free from fleshly lust; for unless we do, sin will surely overtake us. James says, “. . . every man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished bringeth forth death” (James 1:14, 15).

Brother Walker also points out in his booklet on worldliness: “An unlawful desire in the heart, like the germ of life in a fertile egg, will hatch out into the very act of sin, whenever the proper conditions are present.”

The vainglory of life is worldliness just as is dancing, drinking, and cursing. Christians should give

careful consideration to this matter of the pride of life. There are two outstanding dangers that face man everywhere—one is the love of money, and the other is the love of power. It is hard for man to be satisfied with either, for the more he gets, the more he wants. Christians are not to glory in money or power. The man in the church who glories in power, the fellow who is in favor of anything that is his own idea but opposed to anything he does not think of, may well be glorying in his own prestige and power. The pride of life, the vainglory of life, may well be the seed of dictatorship in the church as in politics. Brethren, when we glory in our power, our prestige, our money, we are indeed worldly.

In Jeremiah 9:23, 24, we read:

“Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercises lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.”

If we glory in our wisdom, our might, or our riches, our glory is vain—in other words we are worldly. This does not mean that riches and honor cannot come through service, but it does mean that we must not glory in them.

There are women who live to show off beautiful clothes, big automobiles, and fine homes. This is the very purpose of their lives. They live for delight in showing off these material things. Such a woman is

worldly even though she does not drink or commit adultery.

Apparently, the time has come when those of us who teach in Christian colleges must do graduate work. We are compelled to get higher degrees if our colleges are to be fully accredited. However, we *must* remember that we are never to glory in these degrees. If we glory in these academic degrees or in worldly wisdom, we are most assuredly worldly. Let us remember always that the power lies not in a degree, not in worldly wisdom, but in the word of the living God. Paul says in 1 Cor. 2:1-8:

“And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, not of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”

I would like to mention four things this evening that I believe will help us greatly in our fight to overcome worldliness. First of all, there must be a realization that there *is* a sacrifice in living a Christian life. We think too often that while the people of the

first century were persecuted, we, on the contrary, do not have to sacrifice for Christ. It is true that we are not tortured physically today; it is true that we are not called on to forfeit our lives at the stake or in the mouth of the lion. However, Paul's statement that they that live godly shall suffer persecution is true today. Our persecution may be of a different nature, but it nevertheless does exist. There *are* perils in the twentieth century. There *is* sacrifice in living the Christian life.

Many times mental or psychological persecution might be as hard to overcome as physical torture. Let us take, for example, the modern business man. When this man goes to a convention, he may be tempted to drink, to curse, and to commit adultery. There might be pressure brought on him to do the things that he knows a Christian ought not to do. This man must keep in mind that Christians are a peculiar people and not yield to the temptation to be like those around him. The average high school student faces grave problems in living the Christian life. One of the most effective means of persecution against this particular group is that of ridicule. The devil knows that the youth who will brave bullets without flinching might quickly be overcome by ridicule. The young man or woman of our modern day high school must realize that there is a sacrifice to living a Christian life and must stand for purity even in the face of being tortured by ridicule. The very fact that persecutions come today as they do, in somewhat disguised form, may even be an added factor of danger.

We must realize that as Christians we do not think

as the world thinks, we do not speak as the world speaks, and we do not live as the world does. A Christian is a changed man. All things are new, old things are passed away (2 Cor. 5:17). When a man becomes a Christian, he has a different set of loyalties and a different source of security, for he no longer looks to his money or land, but to the Lord. He has a different purpose in life, a different outlook on life, for all things are become new. He has been born again.

Secondly, the study of God's word will help us to overcome worldliness. It is hard to over-emphasize the need for study. There may well be a danger of rearing a generation in the church that does not know God's Word. I sometimes am amazed at how little freshman students (members of the church) know about the Bible. I remember a young lady in my freshman class in Bible who, on taking a test the first day the class met, declared that Moses was a New Testament character. It is also surprising to learn that many of these boys and girls cannot give book, chapter, and verse for the plan of salvation. I am talking about boys and girls who have attended Bible study in some congregation of the church. The girl who did not know that Moses was an Old Testament character, stated that she had attended Bible classes at her local congregation for seventeen years. I wonder if we are really doing a good job teaching the Bible in the local congregation. We invest very little money and very little time in this important thing of teaching. An honest sincere study of the Bible will help the Christian overcome worldliness.

I have heard the story that in Centerville, Tennessee, on one occasion years ago, the judge in the court, not having a Bible, suggested that the witness just place his hand on the head of a member of the church. A Baptist teacher in Nashville, Tennessee, a few weeks ago was asked to select a member of his Civic Club to appear on a television program. He was requested to select a man, not a member of the church of Christ, yet one who was familiar with the Bible. He replied, "It will be very hard to find any businessman who knows his Bible who is not a member of the church of Christ." This was indeed a compliment and I hope members of the church are worthy of it.

If we are to avert the danger of worldliness in the church, we must encourage every member to study the Bible. And we must do a good job placing the word of God in the minds and hearts of our boys and girls. It is not enough for them to know the words of the Bible; we must also put within their hearts Christian attitudes. I have known men who knew what the Bible said and yet were great liabilities to the cause of Christ. They had the word in their head but not in their heart and life. Let me emphasize the fact that the danger of worldliness is for the old as well as the young. We never get too old to study the Bible. I was speaking the other day to Brother Price Billingsley, and he was telling me some of his experiences with Brother David Lipscomb. He said after Brother Lipscomb had passed eighty years of age, he had seen him sit as long as five hours at a time reading and studying the Bible. Brother Lipscomb, when asked a question, re-read what the Bible

said before giving the answer, even though he had read the answer many times before. We never get too old or too intelligent to study. As long as we live, we need to take seriously Paul's advice found in 2 Timothy 2:15.

Thirdly, in overcoming worldliness, we must realize the value of work. In Brother L. L. Brigance's sermon outline book, he has a lesson on worldliness in which he suggests work as the cure. This wise and beloved preacher, who taught for many years at Freed-Hardeman College, had something. The New Testament has much to say about *work*. John 9:4 reads: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: The night cometh, when no man can work." We are told that the brother who will not *work* is not to eat. Ardent toil will solve a multitude of problems.

When I was a young boy, my father gave me a dollar a day to drive the tractor for the tenant on his farm. The farmer got up about 3:30 in the morning and worked until sundown. I could not understand at the time why my dad would give me a dollar a day to drive the tractor for the tenant. It was not his responsibility to do so. But, of course, I now know why. If he could keep me busy, he had solved a multitude of problems.

In the church of our Lord, I fear we have a lot of worldliness simply because the members are not kept busy. Every member of the church should toil and visit and pray. Let us not be afraid of *work*. Too many people in our country today feel that Uncle Sam owes them a living and do not appreciate the dignity

of honest toil. Brethren, too many in the church think that work is for the elders, the deacons, and the preacher, and for the other fellow. It is indeed amazing what can be done when every member of the church will *work*. It is surprising how little can be accomplished when the preacher tries to do all the praying, the visiting, and so forth.

I had a conversation the other day with my good friend, Harris Dark, who preaches for the Franklin Road congregation in Nashville. He told me this: "Starting with one Christian, telling one other person the gospel and each of those telling another, the process would have to be repeated only thirty times to include every individual on earth, white, black, yellow, rich or poor. Or again, if you assume 550,000 Christians to start with, the process would have to be repeated only eleven times to reach the entire world. Thus, allowing one month for each person to tell another, you could reach every creature on earth in eleven months." Brethren, this beats any method of communication known to man. Brother Dark has a Ph.D. in mathematics. His figures should be correct. We will convert the world if we can teach every Christian to work. The early church went everywhere preaching the word—we go everywhere period. God wants every man on earth to be put on the spot—God wants every man to hear the gospel and say yes or no to its plea. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned."

I'd like to say one more thing about this matter. When you get every member of the church to work, don't be overcome at the success it brings. "He that

soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully and he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly." This principle surely applies to congregations as well as individuals. It does seem to me sometimes that we are upset when our work brings a goodly measure of success. We think surely we have done a big thing and have gone digressive if our labor brings many souls to Christ.

Brethren, we have been thinking too small and our vision has been too limited. You may think Abilene is a big, big school. I am proud of this college, but, brethren, it isn't anything to brag about in size. It is small. The last time I was a student at the University of Illinois, if I remember correctly, we had 29,000 students. This one university in a little town about the size of Abilene had three times as many faculty and staff members as we have students here at A. C. C. You could probably put most of the buildings at A. C. C., David Lipscomb, Harding, and Freed-Hardeman College in the football stadium there at Champaign. I heard the other day that there are 30,000,000 Catholics in the United States of America—and this a protestant nation! I am told there are only a million and a half members of the church of Christ. Some seem to think that the church is getting big and powerful and they boast at what has been done. And apparently, some think that it is time to bring in the wrecking crew, split churches, sow discord, and cause trouble. The truth of it is, we haven't even begun to work. The truth of it is this—we have not even scratched the surface, no not even in Texas. God help us to lift up our eyes and look on the fields. I suppose Jesus Christ had more vision

than any man that has ever lived. He was the most optimistic man the world has ever known. He told twelve men to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had the vision, the optimism, and the enthusiasm of Jesus? If we did, we could turn the world upside down in this generation. The church today, as in the first century, would know something of multiplication. We know a little about addition and subtraction, but brethren, in the first century the church knew something about multiplication.

The fourth suggestion that I have for overcoming worldliness is courage. This we must have to overcome the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the vainglory of life. Christians must be men of courage and conviction. I fear today in this great land of ours that we are rearing a generation of young men and women who do not have convictions about many things. One man with conviction will do more to influence the world than a hundred men without it.

A year or two ago, while doing some research in the Library of Congress, I visited the site of the Battle of Bull Run over in Virginia. I stood on the hill where a famous Civil War general received the nickname of "Stonewall." Many thought in this first great encounter between the North and South, that the North would squelch the South in one battle and the war would be over. During the early part of the battle, it seemed that this prediction would come true. The South was retreating in the earlier stages of the battle. But when the Northern troops came to Henry Hill, they ran up against a stone wall. In the valley

below a Southern general said to his retreating soldiers: "Look, there stands Jackson like a wall." The magnificent courage of Stonewall Jackson was an inspiration to the Southern troops. They rallied and soon the tide of the battle had turned. The Union withdrawal finally turned into one of the most disorderly retreats of any American army in history. I am suggesting that as Stonewall Jackson courageously stood in the carnal fight, let us with just as much courage and moral stamina stand in the fight against worldliness. We must have the faith and the courage to do what the Lord says, to place our complete trust in him, and courageously stand against the forces of evil.

I heard this illustration the other day, and although many of you have heard it, I want to repeat it. A man was walking a tight wire. He asked how many of the people in the audience believed he could walk the wire backwards. Many hands went up and he walked the wire backwards. "How many of you believe I can push a wheelbarrow across the wire?" he asked, and many hands went up. He then rolled the wheelbarrow across the wire. "How many of you believe I can roll the wheelbarrow across the wire with a man in it?" Hands went up again. After this came the real question, "How many of you are willing to get in the wheelbarrow?" Not a single hand was raised. To overcome worldliness, we must be willing to get into the wheelbarrow. We must be willing not only to live for Christ, but if need be to suffer and die for Christ. With this type of courage we can overcome worldliness.

In conclusion, I want to emphasize the fact that we CAN overcome worldliness. Genuine Biblical faith will certainly lead us to a realization that there is sacrifice in living the Christian life, to a diligent study of God's word, to an active work in the Kingdom, and to the highest type of moral courage. With this in mind I know of no better summary of what I have tried to say than that which is found in 1 John 5:4. "... and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

PANEL DISCUSSION:

“Teaching the Bible in Connection with State Schools”

Clifton Rogers

RELEASED-TIME TEACHING

What It Is

Released-Time teaching of the Bible in connection with State schools is very closely akin to Dismissed-Time teaching as just described. The Bible is taught as an elective for which one credit toward high school graduation is allowed. The requirements vary somewhat with each school system but are in main similar to those imposed by the Dallas, Texas, schools. However, instead of classes being conducted following regular school hours, the students are released during school hours for attendance at Bible classes.

Generally in small towns the students are released one period each day for Bible classes in their respective church buildings near by—each student being released in response to parental request. In larger towns and cities the classes may be scheduled for classrooms in the school buildings. In either instance, there is the explicit understanding that this is released-time teaching for which there is to be no expenditure of monies by the school system.

Who Teaches

When the classes are conducted at the church buildings each religious group chooses its own teacher

(generally the minister), with the requirement being that he or she have at least a high school education. Much the same procedure is followed in those programs where each religious group is privileged to teach a class in the school building. But in large high schools where only one instructor is provided for all Bible classes, the teacher is usually one who has been recommended to the School Board by the Ministerial Alliance of the community. The salary of the instructor is provided wholly by the Alliance or by other outside sources.

What Taught

Two courses of Bible study are usually offered: $\frac{1}{2}$ credit in Old Testament and $\frac{1}{2}$ credit in New Testament. When the classes are conducted at church buildings the teachers are free to give whatever emphasis to the lessons they may desire. When the instruction is given in the school classrooms, the "non-denominational" rule must be followed—"the Bible only," without sectarian emphasis.

Your Part

Recognizing the splendid value of studying the Bible daily under circumstances which require real "learning," several responsibilities become yours as a citizen in your community. If such instruction is not offered in the high school, you may deem it very important that you work for such a program. At the very outset you must come to a decision concerning the relative values of Dismissed-Time and Released-Time teaching. If you decide that the latter has definite advantages over the former, you need

yet to decide between classes at the church buildings or at the school buildings. In the former greater freedom is provided in actual teaching, but in the latter more students will study the Bible without sectarian bias (and, if you are the instructor, more non-members will be exposed to the truth).

If, on the other hand, the Bible is being taught each day in a school classroom, you must help your son or daughter decide whether or not to enroll in the course directed by one not a member of the church of Christ. Too, you can approach the problem from a more positive standpoint by trying to assure that a member of the church will be the instructor. Sincere, humble, prayerful effort in this direction may bear fruit sooner than you have imagined. True, the minister (as would-be-teacher) may have to explain to the Ministerial Alliance just how only the Bible will be taught, but this does not require affiliation in any way with the Alliance. The School Board's concern in the matter relates to general public approval of their actions—a fact which you can well appreciate.

Moreover, in a number of instances where each religious group was privileged a Bible class either in the school building or in church buildings nearby, the strenuous demands of such daily instruction prompted most of the groups to "drop out" within two or three years. At Gilmer, Texas, this very condition developed, and it was my privilege to teach two large classes a day of high school students of many religious convictions.

Can the whole counsel of God be taught under such an arrangement? Certainly so. The restriction "only

the Bible" is not a restriction but a liberty. Upon occasions the principal may be urged by parents to question the teacher (as was my experience) concerning the "sectarianism" of various lessons. Example: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." When the Bible is opened before the principal and explanation is made that this is but an accurate reading of Acts 2:38 without sectarian interpretation, the response nearly always is, "Well, that's what it says, doesn't it?"

THE WORK OF THE BIBLE CHAIR

Stephen Eckstein, Jr.

During the past few years, the church has become increasingly aware of the need for more spiritual training for the young people, especially those of college age. When we consider nine out of every ten young people who are members of the church attend state institutions of higher learning, the need becomes more apparent. However, the following facts make it absolutely imperative that some spiritual instruction be given our youth during the time they are enrolled in college:

1. From fifty to ninety percent of the young people who are members of the church become indifferent to the Lord during their four years in college.

2. A lesser percentage renounce their faith in Christ. This varies according to the school and environment.

3. This loss is brought about by a lack of parental guidance, influence of bad companions (1 Cor. 15: 33), false teaching by unbelieving professors and a failure to be grounded in the faith before going to college.

It seems to me that the Bible Chair is the very means which may be used by the church to eliminate this tragic loss of our youth to the evil one. The Bible Chair does not attempt to take the place of the Christian college but rather to provide spiritual nourishment for all who will avail themselves of this fine

opportunity, studying God's Word while attending college.

To my knowledge, there are now nine Bible Chairs in the United States supported by churches of Christ. However, I am sure further clarification is necessary to picture the nature of a Bible Chair. I shall use as an example the chair I am associated with now, the one at Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, New Mexico.

In 1947, the elders of the 4th Street church in Portales met with the university officials with the intention of establishing a Bible Chair. Problems to be solved were those concerning a physical plant, curriculum, number of hours of Bible which might be counted as credit toward a degree and teaching qualifications. Fortunately, the university was very receptive. Soon a site was acquired adjacent to the university, a building erected comparable to university facilities and an instructor selected with necessary academic requirements. In 1950, the building was enlarged and additional courses added to the curriculum. I am happy to say that we are able to offer a B.A. or M.A. in Bible fully accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. The offerings vary from place to place. For example, most Bible Chairs in Texas offer up to twelve hours of Bible which may be counted toward a degree. This is the principle upon which all Bible Chairs are established with minor differences at each individual school.

It should be made clear that the Bible Chair is supported financially by the church, not the state and is

under the oversight of the elders of the local congregation. This gives the instructor complete freedom in teaching the Bible and at the same time complies with the American concept of the separation of church and state.

The work of the Bible Chair consists mainly in teaching the Bible. Where I teach, it is possible to offer a course in any part or parts of the Bible desired. This is truly a marvelous opportunity. In addition to teaching God's Word, daily devotionals with prayer, singing and short talks by the young men are excellent in providing fellowship and spiritual exercise of the talents of our youth. Through personal counselling, the instructor can stimulate the student to a more active work in the local congregation and help him overcome problems which may confront the college student away from home for the first time. Recreation, such as parties, games or visits to other Bible Chairs, meets a need of active youth. Because of favorable geographic location, the Bible Chairs at Eastern New Mexico University, Texas Tech and West Texas State try to visit each other at least once each school year. This has provided for a fine spirit of fellowship between these young people.

Adequate advertising is necessary to acquaint the congregations in the surrounding area of the wonderful opportunity offered that the young people may avail themselves of it to the utmost.

I believe that the evangelists, elders, parents and young people should be made conscious of the fact that a four year college education is incomplete unless spiritual advancement is parallel with that made in

the academic field. Many of our American youth graduate with considerable favor in the eyes of men, but with little toward God. They may be academic giants, but most are spiritual pigmies. Let us encourage our youth to follow the divine example as given by Luke in portraying our Lord: "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52).

Encourage all Christian youth to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18) that they may take their place in the world as useful servants of the Lord, the church and their fellow man. Whenever and wherever possible, let other Bible Chairs be established to meet this great challenge and render a great service, the teaching of the Bible in connection with state schools.

SUNDAY TEACHING FOR CREDIT

Hulen L. Jackson

The plan for accrediting Bible study in the Dallas high schools for work done out of school is an outgrowth of the movement begun in Dallas by the "volunteer Bible Study Association for High School Credit." The first local syllabus, Bible Study Exercises, was printed and used by the different classes in 1926. A much fuller course—the Bible Study Course—was published in 1928 and was reprinted and revised several times up to 1940. Since that time separate courses on the Old Testament and the New Testament have been printed and taught for credit in the high schools. The courses are intended to give a general knowledge of the Bible and to present a study of topics that will be of vital interest and importance to students of high school age.

Classes may be organized by any religious group in the school district. They may teach either or both of the courses. Any high school student is eligible for either course. For some years a student was required to study the Old Testament course first. But, now he may enroll in either course as soon as he enters high school. The religious group selects the teacher, decides the hour of assembly and even the day for the class work; supervises the course, and teaches the material exactly as they want to teach it. The school system makes one requirement of the teacher: he or she must be a high school graduate.

Here is the only connection the school officials have with the class: 1. the school provides the textbooks (students or the church pay for them). 2. the school office qualifies attendance records. The application blank giving necessary information about the class is filed at the beginning of the course with the Superintendent of schools. 3. the school officials supervise the final examinations given in one of the high school buildings at which time all students from the entire city come together for the written examination. Just before this examination each teacher must certify in writing the names of his pupils who have fulfilled the necessary requirements.

There must be a minimum of 40 class periods of 90 minutes net teaching time; or 60 sixty minute periods, or 80 forty-five minute periods. In no case will fewer than 40 class periods be accepted. Most of the classes meet each Sunday morning during the regular Bible school time but assemble a few minutes earlier than the other regular classes in order to meet the time requirement. This does seem ordinarily to be the better plan. The majority of these young people will be attending a Bible class anyway every Sunday. They may come a few minutes earlier and receive high school credit for their study. The student who qualifies receives $\frac{1}{2}$ credit for the Old Testament and $\frac{1}{2}$ credit for the New Testament course. Naturally the teacher must keep accurate records of the attendance and the date of class meetings. Often classes will have extra class periods in the Spring before the close of the school year. Sometimes this is necessary in making up for lessons missed.

Such work is very advantageous to churches of Christ for several reasons: 1. We do not have to align ourselves with denominations in any way in order to teach the courses; 2. We select our own teachers; 3. The work is offered in our own buildings where the elders may closely oversee the classes; 4. The textbooks are based only on the Bible and 5. We teach the material exactly as we want to teach it. What could be better than an outlined study of the basic facts of the Bible?

As an added incentive for superior work in the classes the Linz Jewelists, Dallas, present Linz pens to all those whose grades have averaged 90 or above during the year and who make at least 95 on the final examination. The "Evert's Award" is given each year to the Old Testament class of the city with at least eight students having the highest class average. You would be interested in knowing that in 1953 the Sunset church of Christ won second for the Evert's Award and in the New Testament work, first and second places were won by the Skillman Avenue and the Hampton Place churches of Christ respectively.

During the present school term, 1953-54, there are thirteen hundred pupils enrolled in the many classes taught in the 120 different churches of Dallas. This is the largest enrollment ever. Among these this year are one Jewish and two Negro churches.

ATTITUDE OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Eldon Sanders

One of the primary reasons for the establishment of public schools was to provide an opportunity for each child to learn to read in order that he could read the Bible by and for himself. As moral character was the main objective of education in the early days of the public school, the reading of the Bible was believed to be the chief means of attaining it. However, Horace Mann said: "The Bible was an invaluable book for forming character of children, and should be read without comment in the schools, but it was not necessary to teach it there."

Down through the years training for character has been fundamental, although the public school has added new subject matter to the curriculum and revised teaching methods. In the late 1920's and early 1930's laymen as well as educators were concerned about "improving the social order" and believed that an intensive program of character education was necessary to achieve this change. At the present time there is concern for the teaching of "higher values" or the fundamentals of character education.

Some educators advocate the teaching of these character fundamentals or "spiritual values" in an indirect method. That is, they believe that each course of study and the various activities of the school contribute to the development of moral and spiritual values as follows:

1. Physical education—provides the occasion for developing sportsmanship, fair play, and respect for following the rules.

2. Social studies—help pupils realize that democracy is an attempt to achieve spiritual values in civil life.

3. Language Arts—students become acquainted with the great minds of the ages and develop an awareness of the reverence of all people for a God.

4. Science—emphasizes the orderliness of the universe and attempts to explain the known and to teach a respect and reverence for the unknown.

5. Fine Arts—develops sensitivity to beauty in the environment, appreciation of the arts of all ages, and the expression of personality through a variety of mediums.

6. Music—reveals the ideals and strivings of people recorded and expressed through song.

7. Homemaking, health education—offer opportunities for developing moral and ethical character.

8. All phases of school life provide experiences that promote critical thinking in connection with democratic group activity.¹

There are other persons who believe that proper moral character cannot be developed without the teaching of the Bible. These persons may be grouped into two classes: First, those who believe that the

¹Stone, William J.—The Nation's Schools—"San Diego Schools Teach Spiritual Values", December, 1949.

Bible should be taught in and by the public school; Second, those who believe that the Bible should be taught, but that the public school is not the place to teach it. Thus the teaching of the Bible by and in the public schools remains a controversial issue.

Today, the attitude of the public school toward the teaching of the Bible has been determined by several factors:

1. Persons who believe that the Bible should be taught in the public school.

2. Persons who believe that the Bible should be taught, but that the school is not the place to teach it.

3. Persons who do not believe in the Bible, therefore they are opposed to the teaching of it in the school.

4. Persons who believe that the Bible should be taught in the school, but who desire to teach it in the light of church dogmas.

5. Persons who believe that moral character can be developed indirectly through the curriculum and activities of the public school.

6. Influence of state constitutions.

7. Interpretation of the constitution of the United States.

The resultant of these various factors includes three generally accepted plans of the teaching of the Bible throughout the public school systems of the United States where the Bible is recognized in the educational program:

First, a definite scheduled course in the Bible is offered to high school students. These courses are a part of the curriculum of the school, and the students are granted regular credit. The courses are elective. The Bible is taught for its literary, historical, and moral values, and the course is strictly non-sectarian.

Second, many states have a released time plan for religious instruction. Under this plan students are released from regular classes for a period to attend the church of their choice for week-day religious instruction. Usually the school requires a written statement from parents asking that the children be excused to attend the classes in religion. The week-day classes meet in respective churches. This plan has been ruled unconstitutional in many states; in other states, it has been ruled legal if the plan is not the same as Champaign's.

In Champaign, Illinois, teachers of religion, chosen and paid by the churches but approved by the school superintendent, came into the public school buildings to teach the pupils who were segregated into religious groups for the purpose. The public school teachers distributed consent cards to pupils who took them home for the parents to express their choice of class—Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish. Attendance was reported by the teachers of religion to the regular public school authorities. The Court said this program was a "utilization of the tax-established and tax-supported public school system to aid religious groups to spread their faith" and was therefore unconstitutional.²

²Illinois ex rel. McCollum v. Board of Education of School District No. 71, Champaign County, 333 U.S. 203 (1948)

Third, there is the dismissed time plan for religious instruction. This program is about the same as the released time, the only difference being the hour of the week day school and possibly the place of meeting. Under this plan the religious instruction is given after school is dismissed. Students desiring this instruction are invited by non-school authorities to participate on their own time. The School offers no aid.³

Many public schools apparently realize the value of the Bible and have conformed to the third plan as set forth above, in order to include the teaching of it to the children.

The state of New York has a program of teaching the Bible which has been upheld by the Supreme Court of the U. S. In New York about 75% of the students in grades and sections are reached by a program which is composed of after school classes.

In Virginia a statewide plan for religious instruction is provided—360 communities carry on an organized week-day program under the direction of Virginia Council of Religious Education—96% of those to whom the program is offered attend the classes—only 53% attended Sunday School.

In Texas the teaching of the Bible is believed to be expedient. In 1947, Texas had accredited Bible classes in 177 high schools and academies. The Texas plan has been outlined as follows:⁴

³Williams, H. W.—“What Can Be Done About Teaching Religion in the American Public School”—*Nation's School* 48:64-66; September, 1951.

⁴Bulletin No. 507, Standards and Activities of the Division of Supervision and Accreditation of School Systems, 1948-49, Page 62.

High schools wishing to grant credit for Bible study are required to follow same procedure as required in other courses.

The Bible course must be non-sectarian. The Bible should be taught for its literary, historical, and moral values.

The teacher of the Bible course shall be subject to the same qualifications as apply to teachers of other high school subjects, except in the matter of holding a certificate.

The local school board is not to bear any of the expenses of the Bible course.

Only students regularly enrolled in the high school grades may be permitted to take Bible courses for credit.

The only text used should be the Bible itself. It may be supplemented by syllabi.

The local school board, through the superintendent of schools or the high school principal, shall be charged with the responsibility of seeing that the following requirements are met:

- a. Teacher qualification.
- b. Classroom and equipment.
- c. Standards.

Surely, with the evidence which has been presented, we may conclude that the public schools yet believe that the development of proper moral character is one of the primary aims of our educational program, and that the teaching of the Bible contributes to the accomplishment of this aim. Therefore, the public schools have adopted programs which approve the teaching of the Bible by other institutions, yet in harmony with the principle of the separation of the church and state as set forth in the Constitution of the United States.

By the manifestation of a favorable attitude by the public schools toward the teaching of the Bible, we are assured of a brighter future for our people. The Bible no doubt sets forth the standard of righteousness which gives strength to our Nation, and every child should be enlightened concerning this standard of righteousness in order that we may exercise our leadership in the world of today for the building of a civilization wherein all men may be free to serve one another and to glorify their Creator.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS:

"The Use of Audio-Visual Aids"

THE SCRIPTURALNESS OF AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

Leonard Mullens

Words are powerful. Words make it possible for us to communicate with one another. Words are signs or symbols for those things that can be known only through experience. Words stand for something beyond themselves. By the use of the spoken and the written word, we are able to understand others. Words are vehicles of thought. Words are the packages in which we wrap up our ideas.

If we do not understand the words of others, there can be no communication of ideas. There must be a common ground of understanding between those who would impart or exchange ideas. Language is the great tool of the teacher, but the pupil must understand the words that the teacher uses. When the hearer does not have the words spoken or written tied up with his own experiences, they lose their meaning. We have words for the many things about us; we have words for feelings, emotions, and actions also. But if the hearer has never experienced the idea behind the word, or does not understand the word used, no communication is possible.

Visual education is the use of pictures, signs, and symbols to help the student learn through seeing. When we join the seeing with the hearing, we have an audio-visual method of teaching. It has been said

that "one picture is worth a thousand words." Truly the use of the eye along with the ear will make learning faster and more effective.

Now the question arises: "Is it sinful, evil, and wrong to make use of audio-visual aids in teaching?" Certainly it is not evil. If it were, we should all have great difficulty in teaching anything, for even a gesture or a bodily motion that emphasizes the spoken word can be classified as an audio-visual aid. To say that it is wrong to use audio-visual aids would do away with all blackboard sermons, the use of charts, maps, and other such materials.

In the Old Testament audio-visual aids were commonly employed for the teaching of God's will. Joshua had twelve stones from the bed of the Jordan River set up as a memorial of the safe crossing of the Israelites. He said, "This may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then shall ye answer them, That the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever" (Josh. 4). Then there was Jeremiah who was told by the Lord to "Go and get a potter's earthen bottle," and take it to the valley of Hinnom by the east gate. The prophet was instructed to break the bottle in the sight of the people and then say, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be

made whole again" (Jer. 19). This is a good example of audio-visual education!

Our Lord used visual aids in his teaching. The New Testament makes this very clear. In his sermon on the mount Jesus said, "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns: yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" (Matt. 6:26). Here is a splendid example of audio-visual education! Again Christ said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" (Matt. 6:28, 29). Jesus taught the great lesson of humility by placing a little child before his disciples, and saying, "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3, 4). Once more the Lord went out by the temple in Jerusalem, and his disciples came to show him the buildings of the temple. Christ asked, "See ye not all these things?" Then he declared, "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matt. 24:1, 2). Also there is the example of the fig tree in Matthew's gospel record. Jesus was staying in Bethany and going during the day into Jerusalem. One morning as he returned to the city he was hungry. Seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he came to it and found nothing but leaves. Jesus said, "Let there be no fruit from thee henceforward for ever." Immedi-

ately the tree withered away. This was amazing to the disciples and Jesus used this event to teach a lesson to them. He said, "If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do what is done to the fig tree, but even if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into the sea, it shall be done" (Matt. 21). Such a list of the Master's use of the audio-visual method of teaching could be extended, but this is enough. How can it be wrong to teach as Jesus did?

In the use of audio-visual aids we are trying to place the abstract into the concrete. This was the purpose of the Lord in his use of audio-visual aids. Certainly it is scriptural to make a general truth applicable to our life situations by the use of an audio-visual aid as long as we do not violate the principles of truth in doing so.

Now most objections to the use of audio-visual aids will come from the use of pictures or filmstrips. Some people will oppose a picture on a screen because of its connection with the theater—the "movies." But not all pictures are evil. Some books are evil, but not all books are evil. Many pictures are sinful, but this does not mean that all of them are harmful to us. It is not the use of visual aids that determines the good or the evil of them. This is determined by the aids you use. Certainly none of us would ever desire to use anything in teaching that would lead the pupils astray or undermine their faith in God and his word. We are talking of the use of aids in teaching the truth; not about that which will aid in teaching an untruth! We must keep in mind that our purpose is

not to entertain but to teach the Word of God. Sometimes those who think they are opposed to visual aids in the teaching of the Bible will use them in their teaching. A sermon outline on a blackboard or a diagram on a chart is audio-visual education. What is the difference in drawing such helpful material on a board or a chart and in projecting such material with a projector? Actually the latter method will be more effective usually. Surely we must be careful of the pictures we use in our teaching, but every preacher in the church must be careful about the material he puts in a sermon, whether he uses a blackboard or not!

We should always exercise caution and discrimination in the selection of any pictures used. The pictures used should be true in their presentation of any characters or events. Weak, misleading, and distorted pictures of Bible characters can be harmful and hinder the teaching of the truth. We cannot know how Moses looked, for example; but we can have a picture or a drawing that stands for Moses that will be true to the character of Moses as he is presented in the Bible. Jesus looked like a man for he was in the flesh of man. God sent "His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). Paul says in Phil. 2:7 that Christ was "made in the likeness of men." In verse 8 of the same chapter the apostle says that he was "found in fashion as a man." Surely it is not wrong to portray the Lord as a man, because he was a man and lived as men do! Naturally we have no photographs of Jesus or of any other Bible characters, but when-

ever they are pictured as men, what violence has been done to the Scripture? The teachers of all classes can make it plain that we do not know how any of these men or women actually looked, but the point remains that they were men and women. By the exercise of the right kind of care, there will be no violation of the Word of God. By a study of the times and the conditions in which these various characters lived such portrayals can aid us a great deal in making the events and the characters of the Bible come alive before us. We can be made to see that the events and the characters of the Bible are as real as the concrete matters of life about us today.

Truly care must be exercised. We can misuse some of the very fine mediums of teaching that are now available for us, but that is no reason to bury our heads in the sand and ignore them entirely. Let us approach the use of audio-visual education with an open heart. Let us reject the evil while we use the good to the glory of God and to the better understanding of the truths of God's Word.

EQUIPMENT FOR BIBLE CLASSES

W. W. Freeman

1. *How to Start.* Start using what you have. If you can make your lesson more understandable, use a map or chart with this definite purpose in mind. Make an inventory of all materials and equipment you can find, whether in the classrooms or in the homes. The simplest apparatus is the best if it will get the job done. Let those in charge of the work know what you are trying to do and see what they have or will get that will help your instructional work. A few stereographs on the subject in hand will add much to the small classes. A large picture, suitable chart, or diagram you make will be of definite value. Let your pupils know what you have in mind and they can help you. Some of them will have pictures, illustrated books, slides or even a movie. Anything that will contribute to the interest and understanding is what you want.

2. *The Opaque Projector.* The small class can utilize chalkboard, tackboard, bulletin board, flat pictures, felt board, objects, specimens, maps, and even letters about places of current interest. Smaller materials require an opaque projector to throw them on the screen or wall so all in the room can see at the time and the teacher or student can point out the items of interest. The opaque projector can be used to show real objects and to make enlargements, drawings, and maps, whether on screen, on the board, or cardboard as posters. Such class activities can be

shared. Audio-visual aids are aids; they are not substitutes nor are they automatic. They motivate instruction. Mounted materials and printed materials or pictures (up to $8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 inches) can be used in the newer type opaques. An opaque projector can be shared from time to time throughout the entire school.

3. *The Filmstrip-Slide Combination.* Several companies have on the market, at around a hundred dollars, a light-weight projector that shows 2x2 slides and 35mm filmstrips in natural colors. Get one with a fan on it to keep your slides cool. There is more material available at reasonable prices for this than for other machines. With this projector, the pupil or teacher can present to the class nearly anything in our world today. Less blackout is required with transparent slides and filmstrips than for opaque materials on an opaque projector. Slides cost 25c up, filmstrips one to three dollars. Color slides are easily made.

4. *Recorders and Other Sound Aids.* Tape recorders are much used today in preparing materials for broadcast by radio. Thirty minutes to two hours of material can be readily recorded and then played back as and when desired. Materials can be recorded on special occasions or from radio and filed away for later use as desired. The newer disc recorder is good if the pupils wish to make short recordings to take home and to reproduce on an inexpensive playback. Both types can be had with public address feature for class use. For reading and speech as well as music,

debate, and sermon these recorders are invaluable. Centralized sound has its use in any larger system of educational work.

5. *Overhead Projection.* Keystone and Beseler have this type of apparatus. Rooms but slightly dimmed can be used since the projector is near the screen and has a powerful lamp. The Keystone takes all sorts of slides up to $3\frac{1}{4}$ x 4 inches, and the Beseler takes materials up to ten by ten inches. Typed slides, photographic slides, color slides, and other home-made materials are used with the overhead. The teacher is seated and can face the class, observe the slide, and point out the items of interest as the pupils look at the screen. A certain amount of action or drawing is feasible. The Keystone overhead shows microscopic slides revealing for the whole class all the details seen in a powerful microscope. It is also used to increase speed and span for reading. Microscopic slides are cheap and give valuable scientific data.

6. *Motion Pictures.* Each type of apparatus has its own special advantages. The sound movie is the last word for depicting motion, presenting drama, and showing the several stages of sequence in nature or art. The 8 mm projector is much used in homes and for small groups and the 16mm for school purposes. Since the power of the motion picture is great, it is important that in religious instruction there should be very careful selection from the hundreds of available films. All materials must be authentic if students are to learn the truth rather than error. The recent addition of magnetic recording to the motion

picture projector now enables the teacher to make his own sound recording and use it rather than the sound (music and speech) regularly found on a film. Time limit forbids speaking further.

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS AND THE LEARNING PROCESS

Ben F. Holland

Learning is usually directed toward the formation of desirable habits, skills, attitudes, tastes, appreciations, and ideals; and to the acquisition of various types of knowledge, including percepts, images, and concepts. Audio-visual aids may be used to help pupils or students acquire these outcomes with the greatest of ease and economy of time, and to help them retain what is learned so that it will function in a useful manner whenever it is needed.

Most of the learning that goes on in Bible classes is the memorizing of words and statements that the pupils do not understand. Our problem is that of making what we teach meaningful to each pupil, and to stimulate such learning activities as observation, discovery, creativeness, and reflective thinking in addition to memorizing. The use of audio-visual aids is one important approach to this problem; and this approach involves the selection and utilization of objects, models, demonstrations, examples, pictures, drawings, graphs, charts, and the like. Each lesson may involve one or more types of materials. In directing the learning process by means of audio-visual aids, it is important to keep in mind the factors discussed below.

Attention. The use of audio-visual aids helps to attract and hold attention. It is easier to attend to objects, pictures, graphic representations, and the like

than to words. Such an item is the center of attention for an entire group, and the social atmosphere tends to heighten attention. Anything that guarantees attention helps to induce learning.

Observation and Discovery. Audio-visual materials may be used to stimulate observation and discovery. With an item exhibited, the teacher may stimulate active observation and discovery, and even the recording of facts. The pupil is an active explorer rather than a passive listener. This type of learning is interesting and absorbing; it challenges and stimulates. It does not kill interest.

Imagery. Words may stimulate inaccurate imagery. Audio-visual materials may insure the accuracy of imagery. Everyday experiences help little in understanding statements referring to the long distant past. The past must be recreated in objective, pictorial, or dramatic forms before it can be understood, or imaged, with any degree of accuracy. Many Biblical references suggest a great amount of imagery that needs to be aided by the use of audio-visual aids. The parables spoken by the Lord were based on concrete objects and situations with which we are unfamiliar. "A sower went forth to sow," "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a fishnet," "Behold the fields are ripe and white unto harvest," are examples. How may these be made meaningful to a person who has never seen a sower, a fishnet, or a field of ripened grain?

Repetition. Learning requires a considerable amount of repetition. One contact with items being learned does not suffice to make learning permanent.

The use of audio-visual aids makes it possible to repeat what is being learned at any time repetition is needed. One may show and reshow various types of materials, and also review particular materials studied a long time ago. A picture, an object, a filmstrip, or a film may be brought back to the pupil any time there is a need for relearning or recalling what was learned a month or a year ago.

Symbolism. Thinking would be a ponderous process without the use of symbols, but symbols that are not understood have little value in thought and communication. In order for symbols to have meaning, they must be grounded in concrete experience. A word, a fable, a parable is given literal meaning until its symbolic nature is understood. In order to have meaning, symbols must be evolved from particular facts or other products of observation. Audio-visual aids are essential to the development of the meaning of symbols.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

"Tendencies in the Church Today"

THE PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH IN THE
LAST FIFTY YEARS

S. A. Ribble

Our time will permit the discussion of only the more important lines of progress. Of course these will of necessity be studied briefly, and from the narrow limits of my own experience.

Among the more important lines of progress is that of being more insistant upon the teaching and practicing of the things of the last part of the Commission. Earlier we had few congregations, and these were many times unable to have meeting places other than borrowed rooms, often in school houses, and even in private homes. Most of the gains of the summer meetings were lost by next meeting. There were no competent leaders, and our congregations were few, weak, and not influential. Most of our preaching was of necessity upon faith, repentance and baptism.

Our progress is shown also in the better prepared preachers of today. Our attention to more and better Bible school teaching, and the use of more printed material has resulted in this advance. Formerly many of our preachers were poorly prepared to meet the debaters and preachers of the denominations. They had better schools, more of them, and outclassed our men in many ways. Our better schools and more training

have enabled our people to plant churches in the towns and cities, whereas before few preachers had the courage to face the task of city work. Hence most of the churches were small and country groups. The drift towards the cities has been in our favor. We do not lose the country members who come to town.

In another way we have grown in showing much more attention to the teaching and training of our children, our young men and women, in Bible studies. This advance has been accomplished largely by the use of common sense arrangements for teaching. By the use of well organized classes we have obtained much better opportunities for teaching. We have also used the best prepared women and men available, for such classes. The guides, helps, quarterlies have enabled us to build up gradually a much better informed membership. In the past fifty years many churches took no interest at all in doing class teaching. Many thought it an evidence of disloyalty to Christ to favor any teaching except that of one man to the entire gathering. As a result of such we lost most of our young people to the denominations around us, who wisely provided for such teaching of the young as we now use ourselves. Fathers and mothers were usually too poorly prepared to teach the children at home. The preachers could not, or would not, plan for better teaching. Much of our present day good work has grown from the class work of our churches.

Another way of progress is that we have taken a deep interest in encouraging and developing of men and women who love to teach, and can successfully teach groups of children and young people. Our

teacher training classes show a very important growth along such lines. Many of us in the older days who saw the need of better teachers, and better teaching, could do little or nothing about it, for we could be with the churches only a day or two each month. Our work was scattered, and so poorly paid we could not give more time even when we saw the need for such.

We have grown to see the need for better meeting places for the whole congregation, and for the groups. Our educational building and our better auditoriums are the result of a growth in liberality and wisdom along such lines. Our better buildings have resulted in giving our people a justifiable pride in our work. Our children are more willing to go to classes, and are in a much better frame of mind for being taught.

Another line of progress is seen in our greater liberality in supporting all kinds of mission work, both at home and abroad. Fifty years ago most mission work was done at expense of the evangelist personally. These men were forced to farm, to teach, to sell groceries, etc., in order to support their families and preach. Often those who directed the church affairs thought of the local church as a sort of "Savings Bank." Every effort was made to economize in the Lord's work. Little was spent on the home work, and nothing on other work. Money for foreign work was unthinkable. Our efforts on the frontiers of our own country and in the foreign fields show how far we have progressed along such lines of thought and endeavor.

Another notable line of advancement is that of selecting and using better prepared men for bishops and deacons. We are now seeing the need for selecting men who have shown the habit of being successful in what they undertake. Brethren are demanding and using better prepared men for evangelists. Formerly many of our selected bishops were so poorly prepared they could neither teach nor direct, manage or plan such work. They were failures in the Lord's work. Our present day leaders, bishops, deacons, and evangelists are mostly of a fine type of successful men.

In another way our progress has been shown, in the methods of teaching and preaching. I think we have learned that it is not disloyal and sinful to use some diplomacy in dealing with those whom we are trying to teach and persuade. Blunt, uncouth mannerisms are no evidence of a greater love for the truth, and are now being frowned upon by most churches. We have so far progressed along this line that we are now seeing that our evangelists should be useful, influential members of the local community where they work. We have progressed far enough now to see that good citizenship in the country is not an evidence of disloyalty to the church.

Another very valuable line of progress is that of seeing the need of building and using Orphanages, Old People's Homes, Colleges, etc., to help "bear one another's burdens." Our liberality and interest in such bears evidence that we have outgrown the foolish fears of doing wrong in using such facilities. In the former decades we let the Masons, the Catholics, and

the County Poor Farms and Homes care for our needy, old, and unfortunate. Our work is wise and expedient progress.

In a numerical way we have made great progress. In countless towns and cities within my own personal knowledge, fifty years ago there was only one, or no congregation, where now they number from five to fifteen. Some outstanding examples of such may be seen in the cities of Brownwood, Snyder, Abilene, Lubbock, El Paso, Midland, Odessa, Colorado, Big Springs, in the west and almost every city in the central and east part of our state. Other states of the southwest have likewise grown in congregations, buildings and in memberships.

God has so richly blessed us that we should never again be discouraged over the outlook for the future. I thank God I have lived to see and enjoy this great progress around my old fields of labor.

THE CHURCH AND THE FUTURE

Athens Clay Pullias

There has not been a time since the days of inspired men when the opportunities and prospects for the growth of the church were brighter than they are today. In spite of many problems, the church of our Lord is stronger in faith, purer in life and teaching, and more zealous in the execution of the Great Commission than it has been at any time since the days of the apostles. The phenomenal growth of the last fifty years has been solid and scriptural. My work requires me to travel a great deal, especially in the area from Texas and Oklahoma to the Atlantic Coast and from Canada to the Gulf. It is amazing and inspiring to observe on every hand the rapid spread of New Testament Christianity.

It is necessary to remember that even with all we have done it is only a tiny part of the task envisioned by Christ in the Great Commission. We have scarcely touched the hem of the garment. In the years that lie ahead I firmly believe that the church can enjoy a period of purity and expansion unparalleled in its history. The accomplishment of this will require the observance of a few fundamental principles:

1. Strict adherence to the simple teachings of the New Testament.
2. A zealous proclamation on the widest possible scale of the gospel of Christ.

3. An unwavering faith in the power of that gospel to save rather than any plans or devices of our own.

It would be easy to be deluded into believing that as the church increases in number and power something else must be added. This is the trap into which efforts to restore primitive New Testament Christianity have fallen again and again with disastrous consequences.

I suppose there will always be two major problems confronting the church. On one side there will be the liberals, who want to water down the teachings of the Bible and to gradually relax emphasis upon adherence to New Testament truth. On the other side, there will be the radicals and the extremists, who want to make a thousand matters of judgment tests of fellowship; who want to impose upon the brethren as matters of faith innumerable human traditions and opinions.

It is my prayer that the church in the future will refuse to be pushed from its grand purpose in either of these directions. I will not say that we should stay in the middle of the road, for that sounds like compromise, but I will say that we should stay in the road of truth and right and not be enticed or frightened off into the innumerable side roads of error, opinion, and doubt. The headlight of a train is intended to light the main track. The wise engineer keeps his eye glued on this objective. He does not stop to explore the sideroads and paths into the wilderness which continually are glimpsed as he races on toward his major objective.

The gospel of Christ is powerful enough to convert and save the world. You and I should learn it, live it, and preach it, and if we do we have only started to win the souls that can be won to Christ and to salvation.

So I would say with the great apostle, if you want to insure the future of the church, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2), and in the face of false teachers, ungodliness, errors, hobby riders, and all other problems that men may create by their shortcomings let us "be established in the present truth" (2 Peter 1:12).

WEAKNESSES OF THE PRESENT

G. H. P. Showalter

We have under discussion the general theme of "Tendencies" and Webster defines this word as "A proneness to a certain course of thought or action, a propensity." Weak tendencies would be a proneness in thought or action to a course of weakness. We may observe people's actions and know what they are: their thoughts we may never know, and we may reach safe conclusions only by a careful consideration of their actions, or their conduct. Our Lord, and he only knows the thoughts and intents of the hearts of people, either as individuals or in groups, has said: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Mt. 12:34). In the prayer of Hannah this great and good woman said: "The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed" (1 Sam. 2:3). The God of knowledge knows our thoughts; men are left to surmise them, or infer them in connection with actions.

1. *People are thoughtless.* In all ages this has been the trouble with God's people. "Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider" (Isa. 1:3). These words of the great Jehovah set forth the fundamental reason why the Israel of God in the days of Isaiah were a "sinful nation." They were wayward and sinful. The extent and the limits to which the people of the Lord had gone—their awful condition into which they had fallen was expressed in the plain, piercing, awful words of God himself: "Ah sinful

nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward." But what was the cause of it all? Or as the Lord would say: "Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint." They had heart trouble; that was God's diagnosis. Their trouble was in the head and heart; it was in the realm of the mental, the intellectual, the spiritual. They plunged into their reckless way of life and into the quagmires of sin, corruption, and degradation for lack of knowledge. Hosea said of this same people, They were destroyed for lack of knowledge. They were busy doing things that they did, and all they did was displeasing to the Lord. They were thoughtless; they proceeded in the ways of inconsideration and downright ignorance. They were responsible for all the troubles and sorrows that came upon them. The desolation of their country, the burning of their cities, the occupation and devouring of their lands—their farms and their vineyards—and their utter overthrow by invading hordes of strangers—all of this wreck and ruin and its consequent destitution, suffering and sorrow, they brought upon themselves, simple because they did not think; they were thoughtless. That was the explanation that was given by the Lord.

2. *Are there weaknesses in the church today?* And what is the cause of them? Also of greater importance is the question, What is the cure for them? Some of our brethren don't think we are weak, or at least

that we are afflicted with any very serious cases of weakness. We persuade ourselves that we are strong, great and mighty, and that the church is in every way doing well. That the churches of Christ are doing well in many ways cannot be denied. There are more of them being established; their financial and numerical strength is clearly recognized, and there is a spirit of optimism that is entitled to merit. But there are many evils among those who make up the children of God in the day in which we live. Yes, we have weaknesses. And as one old brother expressed it: *Many of these are mighty strong weaknesses.*

The cause of "Weaknesses of the Present" is the same as of the past. It is primarily, as with God's ancient people, a trouble of the head and heart. People do not think. Troubles and sorrows are in the churches today because Christians are thoughtless in their attitudes and activities. They do not consider. And their inconsideration brings on innumerable troubles of varied nature and of different kinds. There are many weak brethren—weak in faith, in courage, in knowledge, in many other of the virtues of the life in Christ. This weakness should be cured, but it is not. Those who are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves. But this forbearance as it is required and urged in the word of the Lord by which we claim to be governed, is not observed. The weak brother is offended and falls, and the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ suffers. It could easily be that the weak brother will be lost eternally, and all because a "strong"

brother in the church, who knew his Lord's will did it not, was both thoughtless and neglectful in the exercise of Christian love and a Christian's forbearance.

3. *An Inefficient Eldership*: We have more men of ability in the church than usual and more elders that ought to be well qualified for the oversight of the congregations. Some seem to think that the most of their work is to hire and fire preachers. They have little general knowledge of the Bible; many of them have never read it through; many more have never studied the Bible in its entirety; and another considerable percent of them exercise very little of their ability as teachers. They are not apt to teach. In some localities they select the best business men, or the richest man, or the banker, thinking that his standing will help the church; but this is not always the case. Sometimes he hurts instead of helps. It is true that he must have a good report of those that are without, and it is also true that he must not be greedy of filthy lucre, "not a lover of money." Many men seem to be too busy to be elders. Do they frequently visit in the homes of the people? Do they know the names of the members of the church where they serve as elders? I have observed the behavior of elders in many congregations for many years. My father was an elder and they thought he was a good one. Seventy years ago elders were conspicuous for visiting in the homes of the wayward and for their prayers and Bible reading where people were sick—as much so as they now are for building fine meeting houses. And it is certainly right to provide

houses that are comfortable to accommodate those who repair to the house of the Lord for worship, or as "outsiders" to witness our devotions and receive our teaching. The Savior said to certain ones whom he criticised: "These ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone" (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42). These Pharisees thought they were sufficiently liberal in giving—maybe they were, but they had passed over justice and the love of God.

Well, when we get properly started on weaknesses we can find lots to say—fault-finding is easy, it is easy to find fault, there is so much of it. After all, it is so much easier to pull down and destroy than it is to build. But again, after all, to locate weaknesses and correct them is a very essential part of the work of building up the spiritual body of Christ. We have larger churches, larger and far more expensive church buildings, and many other things that seem favorable. But these, in and of themselves, will never accomplish what God has designed should be done. And I am fully persuaded that as a class the elders in our congregations do not compare favorably with what they were a half century ago. *There are exceptions.*

4. *A Social Affair.* The church of our Lord is not a "Social Affair." In some localities those who are leaders in the churches of Christ are undoubtedly too much concerned over recreational and social entertainments and social pleasures. Bridge parties and forty-two are the order of the day or night in many of the homes of the members, and an enormous amount of valuable time is wasted, and all this at a fearful sacrifice of spiritual development. Most gaming to

my mind is beyond all doubt to be classed with the pleasure of this life, the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life. Brethren and sisters who are wild about "bridge parties" and who spend three or four days of most weeks in these games, up till near the midnight hour, in their own homes or in the homes of others, have so far failed to demonstrate the spiritual values of this course of conduct.

A brother in another congregation in my home city rang me up to say, "Brother Showalter: I just called to ask if we might use the basement auditorium of your church for a special meeting; we have about 50 young people who may be present." "And what is the nature of the entertainment?" I asked. "A bridge party," he promptly replied. "I can answer that question without waiting to see the other elders. No." We do have a large and expensive building for the University Avenue Church of Christ, but it was built and is being used for the convenience of people who come to worship, and for teaching the Bible, and for the proclamation of the gospel. We have never used it for "Bridge Parties," nor offered its use to others for that purpose. In fact we don't believe in church bridge parties. The Christian Church has such parties, and adds to them bazaars, raffles, auctions and many such things in order to have a good time and lots of pleasure while they raise money for the Lord. *Perhaps the greatest weakness in the church today is worldliness, and a love of carnal pleasures, in this pleasure-mad age.*

STRENGTH OF TODAY'S CHURCH

Batsell Baxter

Sixty years ago we lost our church houses.

We lost most of our members—practically all of the wealthy ones.

We certainly came out of the organ and society invasion with our "feet on the ground."

We counted noses—the few noses left to be counted.

We picked our stunned selves up and staggered back into the task of rebuilding.

We built small meeting houses on back streets. That was all we could afford.

We paid them out on the installment plan—small instalments.

With little congregational organization left, we came under the domination of "traveling evangelists." They told us when we would have preaching, or a protracted meeting. They also told us they would do the preaching. We were not supposed to have any say in the matter. When two "evangelists" arrived at the same place at the same time, we just let them settle it. We did not know we had any say in the matter.

The Elders

But after years our elders grew in quality and confidence. These elders began to be shepherds of the flock. They learned that they could decide when they needed preaching and could select the man to do the preaching. They learned that they could gauge the length of his stay by his usefulness to the work of the Lord in that congregation.

Today we have good church buildings well located. Congregations have grown strong in numbers and in power.

These congregations for the most part are under the oversight of strong, well qualified, working elders. They have good teaching under the oversight of these elders. The preaching is being done under the oversight of these elders, by men selected by the elders of the local congregation.

We believe that the church is God's missionary society, and not some organization outside and separate and apart from the church. But only in the past few years have we gotten money enough to demonstrate that missionaries can be sent even to foreign fields by the church, and work under the direction of its elders.

This has been very disappointing to the "Free lancers" on the one hand, and to the "society group" on the other hand, and both groups are "hollering" about it.

The "Free lancer" at home and abroad does not like to be under the elders of his home congregation, and the "society" wants to boss the congregations. Neither group has any use for elders.

But the church—God's missionary society—is working, and getting results. It has evangelized a large section of Southern Germany, made great inroads in Japan, and Mexico, and in Italy, the church is making Rome's teeth rattle—something the man-made missionary society has never been able to do. God's organization always works. All it needs is an opportunity, and it is using that opportunity now. The

most practical argument against the organ is good scriptural singing—sing it out of business.

The most practical argument against a man-made society is a good eldership in every congregation—doing so much good work that the society will fail of its own machinery, work it out of business.

Paul admonished the Ephesian elders, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood . . . Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears."

Today, watchful elders are exercising that God-given function.

The work and the growth of a congregation under the oversight of such elders is such that it fills the heart of every true Christian with humble thanksgiving.

The strength of the church today is a qualified, working eldership.

PANEL DISCUSSION:

"Personal Work in the Church"

PERSONAL WORK AS A MEANS OF SAVING SOULS

O. B. Proctor

"He that is wise winneth souls" (Prov. 11:30b). Here we learn that souls *can* be won. We should remember that they can *only* be won.

There are many ways of reaching souls, of teaching the truth which makes men free from the bondage of sin (John 8:32). From the pulpit thousands hear the gospel every year, and multitudes hear the story of the cross in their homes by the way of radio. We have a great number of good tracts available through which many have learned the truth. We have good books written by faithful men of God in which we may learn the truth about the church, true worship, how to become a Christian and live a life well pleasing to the Lord. Also we have a number of good papers published by members of the body of Christ setting forth the gospel of Christ. Many souls are reached every year by these means. But one of the most effective means of saving souls is by personal work. By personal work we mean direct contact by the members of the Lord's body with those who need to be taught. This is a work every member of the church can take part in; in fact, it is included in the great commission. The commission is not addressed just to the evangelists, elders and teachers of the Bible school classes but to every member of the

church of our Lord. The Lord said, "Go teach," and this is the personal responsibility of every member of the church. God holds us responsible to the extent of our ability. You can no more hire someone to do your teaching for you than you can pay someone to observe the Lord's supper for you, or to do your praying.

In Acts 5:14 we learn that "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." Why this marvelous growth? Human nature is the same today as it was then. We have the same gospel. There were as many hindrances of an external nature in the way then as there are today. One major reason for the great growth of the church then was that each member was a worker for the Lord. Andrew was a personal worker; he brought Peter to the Lord (John 1:40-42). Philip was also a personal worker for he brought Nathanael to Jesus. Jesus recognized the value of personal work. He spent most of his time talking to individuals; for example, see John 3 and 4 and many other passages in the gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Suppose you were the only Christian in the world, would you feel a great responsibility for teaching someone the truth before you died? Well, your responsibility is just as great as if you were the only Christian in the world. Suppose there are one hundred in the congregation of which you are a member and each member would teach just one person the truth in a twelve month period, what would be the result? In just one year the congregation would double in size.

I remember seeing this slogan in a church paper, "Each one win one." Brethren, it can be done.

Personal work is one of the most effective means about problems that pertain to the individual. It is possible to preach many years from the pulpit and never touch the problems that bother individuals. Personal work is effective because by it you save your own soul and the souls of others. Remember, there is someone whom you can teach that no one else can teach, or no one else may have the opportunity. There is no joy equal to the joy of teaching someone the truth that will save the soul than seeing them believe, love and obey the truth and then watching them grow in grace and knowledge.

THE VALUE OF ORGANIZED PERSONAL WORK

Leroy Brownlow

I have five minutes in which to discuss "The Value of Organized Personal Work." My subject is not "The Value of Personal Work," but the value of its being organized. In the time allotted to me, I can do very little more than merely mention these values.

Through years of experience with organized personal work, I have learned that it presents some problems and dangers; of course, that is true of everything in church work that is good. But such threatening problems can be watched and guarded against. However, that is not my subject. I shall discuss the values of it.

1. Its value is found in that it makes for a more systematic program of personal work. It takes this phase of the Lord's work off the hit-and-miss basis and gives it system, order, and coordination. It takes the performance of some of our personal labors off the basis of chance and puts them on a planned, purposeful program.

2. Another value of organized personal work is that it assures action. When there is no planning behind our personal work and it is left to the self-initiated activity of each member, the chances are that much that should be done will not be done. This is true because "what's everybody's business is nobody's business." But on the other hand, when the personal work is organized, you may rest assured that

some of the things you want done will be accomplished, for instance: weekly visits to the sick and shut-ins, contacting the visitors who attend the services, calling on newcomers to town, distributing literature, taking census, encouraging the faint-hearted and calling on new members.

3. Another value of organized personal work is that it enables us to better cultivate the prospects. The visits can be rotated. The prospect can be cultivated just like a farmer cultivates a crop. The records that are kept in such a program will help you to constantly keep the prospect in mind. It may take years to reach the person, but you never lose sight of him. As an example, last Lord's day a man whose name has been in our prospect file for years responded to the invitation. We have had different ones to visit him over a long period of time. We never lost sight of him.

4. The worth of organized personal work is also found in that it makes for supervision. Unorganized personal works have no supervision. Any work in any field which is properly supervised is more profitable than that which is not supervised.

5. Another great value derived from organized personal work is that it helps those who participate. It enables them to have a job and to feel that they are a part of the team and are cooperating in a program of work to reach souls and strengthen the church. It will keep the church from being so dead.

6. Its worth is also seen in the results accomplished. This is the test of every endeavor—what about the

results? "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." The results have been gratifying in every church of which I have any knowledge that has tried organized personal work and worked at the job. As long as the plan is worked, it brings forth fruit. For examples:

In Brother Otis Gatewood's book, "You Can Do Personal Work," he states that in 1944 he spent two months working with the Broadway congregation in Lubbock, and that the class attendance on Sunday morning was 225. They planned a program of personal work and hoped to double that attendance in one year. The result: they doubled it in two months. Now, according to a recent bulletin of theirs, they are aiming at 1500.

A little over two years ago we began a new congregation in which nearly two hundred members were taken from the Polytechnic church. Most of them attended Bible classes; so we lost them, together with many children who were not members, from the Bible classes. We put on a special drive of organized personal work to take up the slack that would be caused by the loss of those who would go to the new congregation. The classes averaged 636 per Sunday for the month before the new congregation was started. The Sunday the new congregation began, our class attendance was 760. Instead of a 200 decrease, we had a 124 increase; and the average for the month was 712.

I am inclined to think that the gospel meetings in recent years in which we have had the largest number of additions are the ones where churches had organized personal work.

Yes, the results have been wonderful.

HOW TO ORGANIZE A PERSONAL WORK PROGRAM

J. D. Thomas

What we hope to present here is a basic system that can be used anywhere. Actually we are going to show you how we do it here, and you can decide what features will fit your local situation.

The first need is a leader or "spark plug" for the program, who has untold initiative, who can plan and organize, who can rise above discouragements, and who appreciates the value of a soul. Preferably, he should be the preacher or an elder, but can be anyone, provided he can win their support.

Next you need a committee—who appreciate soul winning, know the congregation, know how to deal with people, and are willing to work hard at this. The size of the committee should not be less than three nor more than fifteen, but consecration counts more than the number.

Find out first who will work in the program and make calls. For this we use a "church worker" card—No. 3—that every member is asked to fill out. There is a place for him to check showing that he will work.

Next you need a basic information or "case history" card—No. 2—on every person, man, woman and child, under the influence of the congregation. This should include members and non-members, anyone that you might be reasonably considered to have some responsibility for. These cards make up your master-file, of permanent information, and are constantly worked

with. They should be properly "flagged," with little metal flags of various colors—No. 3—which make it easy to work with certain groups, such as baptism prospects just before a revival meeting. Every card should be gone through and the spiritual needs of the person discussed at regular intervals by the committee—Nos. 4 and 5.

For assigning calls, use a call card—No. 6. Complete information should be given to the one making the call, so that he may know the special reason for the call, and be able to do it intelligently. Before mailing out to the one to make the call, the card is listed on the call register—No. 7, which is simply a list of all cards sent out, and has a place for them to be checked back in. As long as there is a vacant space in column four, you know that the call has not been made. When the card is returned, it will be filled out on the back side, showing a report of the visit and what the reaction was. The card is checked back in on the call register, and the pertinent information is recorded on the prospect's permanent information card. Here is how a card actually looks in use—No. 8. It is a real card from our files with the information fictitious on the top of the front side—No. 9. The back side is real—says, "Do not go to church anywhere. She seems to have a lot of faith in her church of Christ neighbors. Mother and grandmother are members of church of Christ. She does not know why she is a Baptist."

No. 10—Here is how the master file of information cards look, with their flags. Blue—call has been requested; Red—Baptism prospects; Green—Names ob-

tained from census here on the hill (some are good prospects); Black—Needs encouragement; Pink—Needs to place membership; Brown—New in the congregation; Yellow—Our information is incomplete.

Next we want to show the forms we use in making a census or survey—No. 11. Normally we discard names of people who are not interested in our plea, and concentrate our efforts on those who are interested. There are questions on this card that ask if they are acquainted with the New Testament church; if they are interested in New Testament teachings; or if they have any relatives who are members of the New Testament church. We take a local map—No. 12—and divide it into equal divisions of about the right size for a project for one person. We make an area card—No. 13—for the survey-maker's use that definitely defines the area he is to work in. He is responsible for an adequate survey of that territory. All cards are carefully analyzed for any new prospects.

What we have discussed so far is simply the mechanics, but they are important in soul winning, just as they are in any other form of salesmanship! To have an organized system means that your work is not hit or miss. It means that you do not leave any stones unturned. It means that you can find out who your good prospects are and concentrate on them without wasting a lot of time on others. It means that you will have a lot of people making calls and doing personal work who would otherwise never get around to it, although they would always be planning to get started some day.

Our system is not perfect. No doubt you could figure out a better one for your community. But any good system, worked at, will save souls, that otherwise could not be reached. The souls saved might even be our own, because we worked in the harvest fields rather than just "planned to"!

A Training class is needed to discuss the system and all phases of the actual interview with those who are going to participate. We conduct such a class here. Brother Gatewood's and Brother Hailey's books are excellent works to be studied in such classes. I happen to be teaching a college class in this subject, and through it hope to inspire and train hundreds of young people through the years in systematic personal work and teach them how to organize a program, so that they may go out and get a program going in whatever community they live in.

Your program will not work well unless you can enlist the aid of your preacher and have personal work preached from the pulpit. People are slow to take on to something that is new and that requires work. They have to be inspired and be taught. It is a constant process, but if you will keep at it you can finally get them aroused and active. A systematic program is a lot of trouble and a lot of work, but it *pays well*, both in souls saved and in personal satisfaction gained.

Copies of these forms shown here can be had at our booth in the exhibit building at 1660 Campus courts, and included there is a list of "Key Scriptures" which show how to mark your Bible to Key passages on points that you will most frequently meet in talking the Bible to people.

TRAINING PERSONAL WORKERS

Thomas Nelson Page

Condensing into a five-minute speech a series of rules for training personal workers is almost as prodigious a task as undertaking to review the Bible in the same limited time. Nevertheless, I had the temerity to accept this challenge, feeling sure that my auditors would fully sympathize with my plight.

There is no point in talking about training personal workers unless there is first a spontaneous desire to save the souls of others. Indeed, the chosen disciples of Christ did not wait until they were "properly" trained to begin their personal evangelism. The very first day of their contact with Jesus found them irresistibly seeking others and bringing them to Christ. After all, men do not have to attend training classes to learn how to propose marriage to the girl of their dreams. Perhaps a little training might help, but love overcomes all obstacles, as many of you can testify. This is, or should be, characteristic of every soul that is saved. His contact with the Savior has been so gracious he will not be content until he has found someone with whom he can share this new life. His passion for the souls of men will be so great it will overcome any lack of training in the art of saving souls. Personal work cannot be reduced to a series of mechanical rules which, if followed, will guarantee success to the worker. Love for lost souls is a primary requisite.

There are, however, certain practical procedures that one would do well to consider in converting others to Christ. Jesus himself suggests some of these in one of his typical interviews. In the account of Jesus' contact with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well (John 4:1-42), there are several noteworthy considerations. He shows us how to begin an interview. First, gain a point of contact, something you hold in common with the prospect. The one thing that Jesus had in common with this woman was the water they both needed (verse 8). He next sought to link this natural want to her spiritual needs. He lifts her thoughts from the water in the well to the "water of life" (verse 10). Further, Jesus also found this woman's real hindrance or besetting sin (verse 18). He was not too polite to discuss and diagnose her condition. As in the lives of most, her problem was moral and not of the intellect. And when she sought to divert his attention from the real issue to a discussion of less personal matters, that is, over the relative merits of worship in Samaria and Jerusalem (verse 20), he never permitted her to lose sight of the essential point of their interview. The climax, of course, was reached when she was brought face to face with the knowledge that she had been speaking to the Christ (verse 26). Unless the one we are trying to convert is caused to see Jesus, in our discussion, all our efforts will be in vain. He should be brought face to face with Christ. Then, perhaps, as with the Samaritan woman (verse 28), all resistance will vanish and another soul will have been won.

I have a little parable on "fishing" that was suggested to me by one of the elders of the church back

home. Jesus said, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." It's wonderful to go fishing with Jesus. I am told that all true fishermen never cease to pursue their hobby. "Once a fisherman, always a fisherman." And because of his keen interest he never allows himself to become impatient with the results, though he might fish for a week before any will bite. In fishing for men patience is one of the prime essentials. It is never wise to become impatient with the results, thus prematurely deciding that your efforts have been wasted. Some of the biggest "fish" are caught only after infinite and patient endeavor.

Good fishermen soon learn that fish cannot be caught in every stream. Some are polluted and kill off the fish, while others may be covered with moss and leave no place for the fish to breathe. There are such streams in the lives of man. A saloon or beer parlor, night club or dance hall, are polluted streams that have poisoned and destroyed the souls of millions. Habitats of these places would hardly be considered as prospects for conversion. Then there are those who are wise and wealthy in this world's affairs. These are usually well insulated against the life-giving appeal of the gospel. Paul declares, "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called" (1 Cor. 1:26). The wise will spend precious little time in "fishing" such "streams."

There are certain seasons when fishing is better than others. There are periods in the year when certain fish will not bite at all. This is true in the lives of people. There are times when they are more susceptible to the gospel than others. This is often true

in the time of serious illness, sorrow, or death. It is just such seasons in our lives that cause us to think reflectively and to realize how utterly helpless we are without God. This is a Christian's open door to a person's heart. This is the time for him to "cast his line," for no better opportunity will come his way.

I am told that fish strike at a baited line for one or two reasons. They are either hungry or angry. To get a person angry just for the sake of seeing him stew in his own religious dilemma is never justifiable. But sometimes a person will become angry with himself when he finds that he is out on a theological limb without any Bible support. If he has any respect for the Word of God, his anger might open his eyes and cause him to see how he was duped into believing religious error.

Fishermen know that all fish are not alike. Some are found near the surface, while others swim at greater depths. It becomes necessary, therefore, to know your fish; their habits, interests and their nature. The simplest approach and most rudimentary gospel teaching will reach the majority of prospects. For these it is a waste of time to delve into the philosophical ramifications of certain Biblical doctrines, such as the atonement, the trinity, etc. But others are like fish that swim at great depths. It will require a wider knowledge of the Scripture and an ability to think in their realm. Paul at Athens is a good example of this. He possessed a thorough knowledge of Grecian religions and philosophies, and so could discuss intelligently their point of view (Acts 17).

Sometimes a fisherman can have too many lines in the water at one time. He cannot concentrate on them all, and thus he runs the risk of losing those that need his attention. A personal worker would do well to limit his efforts to a few at a time. They will require all the attention and skill he possesses. It is better to concentrate than to broadcast.

The most crucial periods for a fisherman are when setting the hook and when lifting the fish out of the water. It is at this time that many become impatient, and in their haste do not land but lose their catch. A thoughtless word or undue pressure brought to bear on the prospect may cause him to reject your efforts to convert him. He may be all but converted but due to your over-anxiousness may never be baptized.

Sometimes fish are caught by leaving hooks set where fish may find them later. This can be translated into the personal workers' program through the distribution of appropriate tracts and other religious literature. These will be fishing for you while you're fishing elsewhere.

The last point in this little parable has to do with the care of the fish after they are caught. While fishing for still others it is possible to lose those already brought in. The joy of catching more and more might result in the neglect of the fish already caught. Too many times newly won converts are lost after their baptism because of personal neglect. This is the most crucial period in their entire spiritual life. And unless they are coddled and kept in proper spiritual environment they may die soon after their spiritual

birth. The mortality rate of "babes in Christ" is much too high. Is this not a serious indictment of our efforts to preserve those that are saved?

CARING FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN

M. Norvel Young

It is a great privilege to stand before this wonderful assembly of Christian people and to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves, the homeless, needy children of our land. Out of the *fifty million children* under 17 in our nation, there are approximately *two million children who do not have the privilege* of having their natural parents. For one reason or another, these children must be cared for by someone else because of the death of their parents or because of mental break-downs, or sickness or moral or spiritual failure on the part of their parents. As far as the children are concerned it does not matter what the cause, they are fatherless.

This is a matter of special concern to members of the church of our Lord, because it was the church of Christ and Christians in the first century who had compassion upon orphans and widows in their affliction. This was *long before the state* received enough of the influence of Christ to be interested and long before pagans were concerned with caring for those who did not have fathers and mothers. Even the highly educated Romans thought nothing of disposing of their unwanted children to wild beasts, leaving them to die.

Into a world like this came Jesus Christ saying: "*Suffer the little children to come* unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Except you become as a little child you cannot enter into

the kingdom." He went on to teach that the spirit of his disciples should be one of compassion upon the poor and the needy. Perhaps the most striking example of this is in Matthew 25 where he told us about the judgment scene and indicated that one of the principle questions that will be asked at that time will be in regard to our attitude toward the poor and needy. He said, "I was hungry and you gave me no meat, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you took me not in, naked and you clothed me not, sick and in prison and you visited me not. Then shall they also answer him saying, 'Lord, when saw we thee hungry and thirsty or stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not minister unto thee?' Then shall he answer unto them saying, 'Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.' And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:42-46).

Jesus himself set us an example of being concerned with the poor and the needy. He himself was the object of charity by women who ministered out of their means unto his needs. He sympathized with the poor. His most vehement criticism was of the Pharisees, who taught the right doctrine but who did not practice it. He said unto them, "Woe unto you hypocrites, you have neglected mercy." He brought to a climax the teaching of God concerning benevolence. David said in Psalms 41, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor. The Lord will deliver him up in time of trouble." Again we read in Proverbs 21,

"Who so stoppeth his ears to the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself which will not be heard." Job said in chapter 29, "When the ear heard me, it blessed me, when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me, because I delivered the poor that cried, the fatherless also, that had none to help him." God is described in the Old Testament as the Father of the fatherless and he that upholdeth the fatherless.

Jesus taught the selfish Pharisees, who did not have compassion upon the poor, the story of the Good Samaritan and told them to go and do likewise. The golden thread of compassion for the poor, the hungry, the helpless, the needy runs throughout the Bible, but is woven into a most beautiful garment by the Lord Jesus Christ. No wonder then that the Holy Spirit teaches in James 1:27, "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." This one scripture is enough to make us vitally concerned with those in need. But even if this scripture were not in the Bible, there would be enough taught to make Christians and the church concerned to help the poor and especially the fatherless who are not responsible for their need.

We are taught as Christians to do good unto all men, especially those of the household of faith, and yet what do we find today in the churches of Christ? In a recent survey by Mont Whitson of a number of churches that plan their giving a year ahead, it was found that the average contribution for each Christian was only \$94.00 per year! Out of this amount,

only \$4.70 was being spent for all kinds of benevolent work, including the care of the homeless, the widows, and taking care of those who need food and clothing otherwise. If this is typical, then less than 5% of our giving to the church, which is pitifully small, goes to help those that are in physical need. Does this meet the pattern of New Testament Christianity? Is this what we find in reading the New Testament?

The church was only a few days old when the problem of caring for those who had physical needs came up. There were many new converts who had come to Jerusalem prepared to remain only a short time. When they were converted to Christ they naturally wanted to stay and learn more of the way of life. To meet this great need the church of Christ in Jerusalem set the world an example of cheerful, voluntary sharing of goods. "And all that believed were together, and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need" (Acts 2:45).

It is true that this verse has been abused by those who would teach Marxian Communism. It is a far cry from the ruthless robbing of those who have private property in Communist countries. The Bible teaches in the very next chapter that the property which belonged to individual members remained theirs and even after they sold it they had the disposition of the money it brought (Acts 5:4). But the spirit of Christ creates a desire on the part of men and women who recognize God as the giver of every good gift to share their goods with others. The greatest force which can be arrayed against Communism

is real New Testament Christianity. This practical Christianity will solve the problems of the needy by voluntary sharing on the part of those who have goods and money to share.

Justin Martyr, around 150 A.D., describes the practice of the early churches of Christ in these words, "Those who are well-to-do and willing give, every one giving what he will, according to his own judgment, and the collection is deposited with the president, and he assists orphans and widows, and those who through sickness or other cases are in want, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers that are sojourning, and in short, he has the care of all that are in need" (Ayer, *A Source Book for Ancient Church History*, p. 35).

Another major example of giving, and of churches cooperating in giving, is the case of the churches of Christ sending funds to help the poor saints in Judea. The church of God in Corinth purposed a year in advance to give a certain amount to this need and gave each Lord's day so they would be ready with the purposed amount when the time came for it to be forwarded to Judea (2 Cor. 8 and 9). From 1 Cor. 16, and other passages, it seems obvious that the major portion of the giving of New Testament churches went into what we usually call benevolence. Let us restore New Testament Christianity by giving more to help those in need, the widows and fatherless in their affliction, the poor saints in another state or in Korea, or Japan or Africa. He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6). Let us get back to the Bible in this practice. Let us

go back to the teachings of Christ and take the lead in showing compassion for those in need, just as the early churches of Christ demonstrated their love for their fellow man to the whole world in their charity. It is not right for us to use so much of the prosperity God gives us for our own pleasure, our own homes, our own church buildings even, and neglect the cry of the needy in our own community and around the world. We cannot shift the church's responsibility to the state or to some denomination such as the Roman Catholic Church. Let Christ's church, the Kingdom of God, the undenominational body of Christ restore the Bible emphasis upon helping the needy in the name of our Saviour. It will do more than anything else to show men the reality of our faith and love for God and man. It will break down barriers of prejudice and open the way for good and honest men to receive the Word of God, the seed of the Kingdom.

There are three principal ways in which we may help homeless children. I believe that any one of these three is good and that it is not a question of "either-or", it is a question of doing them all to the best of our ability. *The first* one is to take these children into our homes on a foster home basis. This can be arranged with the state. Under this plan the state places children for a period of time into homes who will care for them, but *who cannot adopt them*, due to legal restrictions. *Secondly*, we can adopt children. I would like to encourage all who are able to do so and who are willing, to adopt children. Due to the stringent laws of the state and the scarcity of very young

beautiful babies, there are not as many children to be adopted as there are people who want to adopt them. We need, however, more people who are willing to adopt two, three, and four children of varying ages, not simply because they want them, but because of the service they can render the children. *Then there is the third way* of caring for children in children's homes such as we have recently established in Lubbock because there are many thousands of children that cannot be adopted due to their situation and the laws of the state and who have not found adequate care in being moved from home to home but who need the permanence and security of a Christian home. There are those who are able by their means to help these children who are not able to take them into their own homes. So we have arranged this home. Two units are already being built. It is being built on the cottage plan because we have studied such child care and believe this is best. It is being done as the church at work. The elders of the Broadway Church, fifteen of them, are serving as the supervisors. There is no separate organization or charter and it is operated by the church. A number of other congregations are helping to take care of these children. We hope eventually to have on this beautiful 200 acre plot of land 20 cottages to take care of approximately 300 children. The cottages will be built to take care of approximately 15 to 18 children with house parents in each one to make it as nearly a normal home as possible. There are thousands of children needing this type of care. Over one hundred thousand children are being cared for in such homes and only about one percent

of these are being cared for in homes supported by churches of Christ. The state welfare department assures us that if we were ready now to take care of three hundred children, they could be placed in this home within thirty days. We have already had forty applications for the first unit. I wish you could see some of these children and hear the story of their predicament.

We definitely are interested in encouraging Christians to adopt children. The state controls this. We are interested in seeing children placed in foster homes, but there is still a need for a child-caring home that can take children that cannot be cared for elsewhere. It is not a question of one method or the other, but a question of using all of them. Even then we shall fall short of taking care of many children that need care.

Let us recall that the average member of the church is giving only \$4.00 per year for all kinds of benevolent work through the church. A survey of Protestant denominations showed that the average member of such groups is giving \$8.57 a year for benevolent work. Too many congregations think they are meeting their obligations to care for homeless children when they put into their budgets \$10 or \$20 or \$40 per month. Yet it usually costs at least \$60 per month to care for one such child. Is it right for a church of 200 members to care for only one-third or one-half of one child? Shall we say to those who are hungry and naked: "Be ye warmed and filled," and give them only a third or half enough to do the job? Remember that Jesus said: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto the

least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me." The whole spirit of Christianity revolved around the spirit of love for God and for man. If your children were left homeless would you want them to depend upon haphazard support or upon the state or some human denomination? Let us do unto others as we would have them do unto us.

Of course, there have been mistakes in caring for the needy. No doubt there will be some mistakes made in the future. Let us constantly strive to correct these mistakes, and to improve our methods of carrying out the command to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction. But the greatest mistake we can make is the mistake of doing nothing at all. It is the mistake of talking and refusing to do. Remember the man who hid his talent in a napkin. If we march under the banner of the folded napkin we will be disowned by our Lord. Let us march forward under the banner of Prince Immanuel practicing pure and undefiled religion before our God and Father.

Let me close by relating an incident which took place during World War II. A preacher was visiting in a poor neighborhood in one of the large cities of Texas. He stopped his new car in front of a humble home. A little boy about eight years old watched him get out. The boy's eyes caressed every curve on the shiny new car. Then he spoke, "Where did you get that car?" The preacher replied that he had a brother who was very successful in business and that his brother had given it to him. Then the boy exclaimed with youthful enthusiasm: "Boy, I wish I could be a brother like that." It turned out that his little broth-

er was a victim of polio and that this small lad had learned that it is more blessed to give to your brother than to receive from him. Needless to say, that little brother had a long ride in that beautiful new car before the day was over.

Let us catch the spirit of that boy and be a brother "like that" to countless hundreds of homeless boys and girls who need a big brother. God will bless us in so doing.

If you would like to receive a booklet describing the work of the Children's Home of Lubbock, just address a card or letter to John B. White, Superintendent, Children's Home of Lubbock, Lubbock, Texas. It will encourage you to see what is being done.