

1955

## 1955: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text

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**ABILENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE**  
**BIBLE LECTURES**  
**1955**

Delivered in the Auditorium of  
Abilene Christian College,  
February, 1955

ABILENE, TEXAS

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PRICE, \$3.00

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## PREFACE

The 1955 Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectureship is history, and we had the largest crowds this year that we have ever had—probably a total of 7,500 people on the campus, and more than 5,000 to attend the Tuesday evening service.

We at Abilene Christian College appreciate our privilege in being able to be of some degree of service in organizing this program each year, and to bring whatever instruction and inspiration and pleasure that it affords to those who are privileged to attend. We ourselves enjoy the fine Lectures and the fellowship and helpful information, just as much as those who come from afar.

We appreciate the support of all the friends of the College, and we are especially glad to have a wide circulation of the book of Lectures, as we believe the things contained in the book will help to build the Cause of the Lord.

We quote from a letter that was written from Christian friend to Christian friend about the 1955 Lectureship: "I could not keep the tears from falling as we left Friday. I felt that God had been so good to us in blessing us with so many wonderful associations, such inspirational classes and teachers, and the informational lectures. To me it was a very important experience—it came about only because of God's love; it made us feel that nothing on this earth was worth our time and effort except the teaching and preaching of His Word. . . ."

J. D. THOMAS, Director

## INTRODUCTION

It is a pleasure indeed to present another volume of the Abilene Christian College Lectures. February, 1955, marks the thirty-sixth year since these annual lectureships began. They have been held each year with the exception of the "war years," when by request of the government they were suspended.

Each series of lectures has been published. The Firm Foundation, with very few exceptions, has been entrusted with this task. We have on hand a very few copies of recent years. All other issues are now classified among the "rare books." It is our prediction that in generations to come volumes of these lectures will be treasured "collector's items."

The Abilene Christian College Lectures represent the very best of brotherhood thinking, carefully prepared, and worthy of preservation. The series for 1955 is in many ways the very best. It is with pride that we send this volume forth.

REUEL LEMMONS

April 13, 1955

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## "OBSERVE ALL THINGS"

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George W. Bailey

No one accidentally becomes a Christian; nor can one stumble into Christ unawares. Man must be taught before he can become a disciple, for the very word "disciple" means "a learner." There can be no coming unto God without teaching (John 6:44, 45). In describing the Christian era, and referring only to those in Christ, the Holy Spirit said, "They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest" (Heb. 8:11). Hence, it is knowledge first, then membership later. Under the Mosaic regime it was different; it was membership and then knowledge. Theirs was a fleshly birth; ours a spiritual. They came into the family of God whether they wanted to or not, but today no person is in Christ as a victim of circumstance. Rather, people are in Christ through a knowledge of and a love for him who died for them.

In his final message to his disciples Jesus commissioned them to (1) teach; (2) baptize; and (3) teach those whom they baptized. If one part of this commission is binding, all of it is binding. Teaching, therefore, plays a very important role in man's salvation. The church has a great responsibility in this respect. If it is the church's duty to see that people are taught BEFORE they are baptized, it likewise is the church's duty to see that people are taught AFTER they are baptized! It is not enough merely to MAKE new converts, but we must make sure that those new converts are taught "to observe all things" commanded of Christ.

If it were impossible for a child of God to fall, there

would be no need for the second part of the commission. But such is not the case. A child of God can fall (1 Cor. 10:12); he can fall away (Heb. 6:4-6); he can fall from grace (Gal. 5:4); he can be cast out (Matt. 25:30); he can be cast away or rejected (1 Cor. 9:23-27); he can fail to inherit (Gal. 5:19-21); he can perish (1 Cor. 8:11); he can be burned (John 15:5, 6). In 2 Peter 2:20-22 we are told just how serious it is for one to fall or turn back, but we must keep in mind that the newborn babe is weak and needs our help. It is our business to strengthen and fortify him that he may be kept from falling. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak" (Rom. 15:1). Our interest in a man's soul must not be short-lived. We should manifest as much interest in him after he obeys the gospel as before. In fact, he needs us more after becoming a Christian than ever before.

May the church never become one-sided in her teaching, but, in declaring the whole counsel of God, may she maintain a well-balanced program—not only seeing that people learn the way of righteousness, but also seeing that they are continually strengthened in the way of righteousness. In 1 Corinthians 3:6 Paul said, "I planted"; in other words, "I took care of the first part of the great commission"—and then, "Apollos watered"; he took care of the second part. Then he said, "God gave the increase." Both works were necessary; we cannot take the second step until we have taken the first. Paul helped the people to take the first, and Apollos helped them to take the second. The Apostle makes further reference to both steps by speaking of his laying a foundation and another's building thereon (1 Cor. 3:10). If we neglect or minimize the teaching after baptism, we have foundations without buildings, plants without water and babes without food. "Teaching them to observe." Why didn't he say, "Teach-

ing them to obey?" Simply because some of his teaching was to inform, some to warn, and some to request. While they couldn't obey informative teaching, nor teachings of warning, yet he gave it for a purpose! What was to be their reaction to such? The original word for "observe" meant "to watch; to attend to carefully; to take care of." Jesus meant for the disciples to teach people "to watch" when the teaching was in the form of a warning; he intended that they be instructed "to attend to carefully" informative teaching; he was asking that they "take care of" teachings of a mandatory nature.

One may be forced to obey, or frightened into obedience, or he may obey mechanically, but to "observe" as is here given means attention and obedience from the heart. Christianity is a religion with a heart in it, and when that is taken out there is nothing left but a hull or shell. The religion of Christ must not be reduced to mere ritualism.

**"Teaching them to observe all things."** We are not at liberty to screen or cull the religion of the Lord and take only that which fits our taste, but it is either all or nothing at all! We should be eager to obey Jesus in everything. So much of his teaching has either been overlooked completely, or greatly understressed. Take for instance his teaching on love. He taught a new depth to love (John 13:34, 35). Never before had man been taught to love "As I (Christ) have loved you." This kind of love includes enemies and causes one to do good deeds for them (Matt. 5:38-39). This kind of love is deep enough to keep one from retaliating. It is the kind of love that is eager to forgive, that bears and forbears, that is unselfish and unprejudiced, the kind of love that "never fails." With this kind of love one would never judge his brethren (Matt. 7:1-5). Jesus furthermore taught that "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). He also taught

humility (Matt. 23:12), and emphasized the fact that without humility one could not even enter the kingdom (Matt. 18:1-3). Another teaching that must be observed is a faith strong enough to keep us from worry (Matt. 6:25-34). He insisted that before we go further with activities that seem so important that we make things right with those with whom we are at variance (Matt. 5:21-26). Time would not permit a coverage of everything, but these are some of the neglected teachings of Christ.

**"Whatsoever I have commanded you."** By observing the teachings of Christ people become Christ-like. The only purpose of the gospel is to reproduce in men and women the beauty and glory of the personality of Jesus, that they may have the mind of Christ, to think as he thought, to see as he saw, to act as he acted. Christ is our LORD, but not unless we do what he says (Lk. 6:46). He is our SHEPHERD, but not unless we follow him (John 10:27, 28). He is the OBJECT OF OUR LOVE, but not unless we keep his commandments (John 14:15). We are his, but not unless we actually belong to him (Mark 9:41).

We can't observe all the teachings of the Master without making him supreme in our lives. The disciples were taught (1) to put him above parents (Matt. 10:20-30); (2) to put him above business (Matt. 6:33); (3) to put him above duty (Lk. 9:57-62); (4) to put him above self (Lk. 9:23). Christ can never occupy second place in man's life, for he is not valued at all unless he is valued above all!

May you and I learn to "observe all things whatsoever Christ commanded." In this way he will live in and through us (Gal. 2:20). Let us make it our aim to become carbon copies of Jesus!

## THE WORD OF GOD WHICH LIVES AND ABIDES

George W. DeHoff

It is a pleasure to be out here in the great and energetic southwest where the church of our Lord is growing so rapidly and doing so much. It is an honor to have a part on this lectureship sponsored by Abilene Christian College. I bring you greetings from the beautiful bluegrass region of middle Tennessee.

The subject assigned me is "The Word of God Which Lives and Abides"—a sermon on "Why We Believe the Bible." How do we know there is a God? How do we know the Bible is his word? How do we know that a group of men did not get together and write this book? How do we know that the great Creator of the Universe had anything to do with writing the Bible? These are some of the questions about which we want to study.

### Why We Want to Believe

Many years ago I asked a college friend of mine, "Do you believe the Bible?" He replied, "No, I do not believe the Bible. Why should one want to believe the Bible? What difference does it make anyway?" I took from my pocket a small card and wrote down then the reason why I would like to believe that the Bible is the truth—not why I do believe it but why I would like to believe it; why I am not openminded on the subject but am just naturally looking around for some reason to cause me to believe that it is the word of God.

(1) I would like to believe the Bible because it teaches that I will live after death. With other books death is the end of man. With the Bible it is a glorious beginning. No sane and normal individual wants to go down into the dark-

ness of the tomb knowing that he is coming up no more. Yet out of the multiplied millions of books which have been written and which gather dust on the shelves of the great libraries of the world no other advances the idea that man as the same conscious personality—the same individual lives again. Our Lord has declared that “All that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth” (John 5:28-29).

(2) **I want to believe the Bible because it teaches I will go to a better home than this one.** Many books have told of imaginary utopias. Only the Bible seriously tells man that he may dwell at last in an ideal abode.

We live in a wonderful world. Blind indeed must be that man who cannot see any good. Yet there is sin and sickness, sorrow and sighing, war and cruelty all about us. Orphan children cry for bread and a great part of the world is “ill-housed, ill-fed, and ill-clad.” Death and decay and passing away have been written on the wings of time and timely things. “The tyrant of kings and the king of tyrants” at last enters every home.

We have all wished that we might dwell where there is no sickness, sorrow or pain and where funerals are unknown. The Bible tells us that in that very fairest of summerlands across which the shadows never fall, these things will all be banished. We would like to believe that is true!

(3) **I want to believe the Bible because it teaches that I can meet again the loved ones who have gone before.** Meeting them again is no more unreasonable than meeting them the first time. During the short time that I have lived on earth I have had some of the finest friends any one could ever possibly have. It has been my lot to bid goodbye to some of them and see them pass into the other

world. I would like to see again the friendly smile and clasp again the friendly hand of those whom I have loved and lost a little while. The Bible teaches that I may actually do this.

Ah, yes, I want to believe the Bible. It does make a difference.

(4) I want to believe the Bible because I have always been taught that it is the truth. I am well aware that we are taught many things and later have to give them up but whenever one has been taught something so long and so earnestly that it has become a part of his very soul, he ought not to give it up without good and sufficient reason. I have always been taught that the Bible is God's word. I have never found any reason either good or sufficient to cause me to give up that faith. (After all it is my faith and I am going to be the judge of what a good reason for giving it up may be.)

(5) I want to believe the Bible because the greatest scientists, most outstanding philosophers and leading benefactors of mankind in all ages past have believed in the inspiration of this book. To list the great men who have depended upon this blessed old book for guidance and comfort in life and in death would be to call the roll of the heroes of all ages. Just two crowds greet us as we look into history—those who have believed the Bible and those who have rejected it. I have already picked out my crowd.

Now there are five reasons why we want to believe the Bible. But when your son asks, "Daddy, how do we know there is a God?" You dare not say, "We believe in God because we want to believe in God" for that actually amounts to no reason at all. When your daughter says, "Mother, how do we know the Bible is the truth?" You dare not say, "We believe the Bible because we want to

believe the Bible." Every parent should be able to give reasons for believing in God and his word.

### We Believe in God

Naturally, one who did not believe in the existence of God could not believe the Bible is his word so, first of all, I believe the Bible because I believe in God.

The vast majority of all people who have ever lived on earth have believed that God is the eternal, self-existent, vitalizing force of the universe—a personality who has created and who intelligently directs all things. Here and there have always been a noisy few who claimed that God does not exist, that man is merely a fly-speck on the window pane of time taking a dizzy whirl through space and that one day the glass will break and man will be gone. These people contend that man did not come from anywhere and it not going anywhere—that he is purely an accident.

(1) Christians believe in God because there is no other explanation of this vast universe of which we compose so tiny a part. Something is, therefore something always was. "From nothing comes nothing." Had there been no eternal existence, then nothing could ever have happened and nothing could ever have come into existence. Something has existed from all eternity.

Christians believe that this eternal existence is God and that from him have come all the life, energy and everything else in the universe. Every atheist must believe three things that no sensible person can believe. He must believe that matter is eternal, that life came from dead matter without any outside force (which would be a greater miracle than the resurrection of the dead), and that all things exist as a result of a series of happy accidents without any planning whatsoever.

(2) Paul has told us "Every house is builded by some man." When we see the house we know it had a builder. When we observe a watch, we know that such a person as a watchmaker lives. In the same way, we look through a microscope into a single drop of water and see it teeming with many forms of animal life. We look through a telescope out into the blue infinite sky and see millions of stars and planets flaming like arch angels on the frontiers of stellar space. They continually operate with mathematical precision. Millennium after millennium man is able to predict an eclipse of the sun or moon. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork." "The stars are continually singing as they shine, the hand that made us is divine."

If the universe exhibits design, there must be a great designer; if it shows thought, there must be back of it a Great Thinker; if it is run by the laws of nature, there must be a Great Lawgiver; if it operates with mathematical precision, there must be a Great Mathematician; if the universe gives us important chemical combinations, there must be a Great Chemist. From these conclusions there is no escape, God exists.

(3) The abundance of evidence for the existence of God causes every thinking person to marvel. The moral government of the universe implies a great Moral Governor. Time would fail us to develop the following lines of evidence: The Institutional, the Ontological, the Cosmological, the Geological, the Astronomical, the Physo-Theological, the Psychological, the Historical, the Providential and the Ethical!

That God exists is so well established that only rarely does one meet a true Atheist.

#### **The Bible and Scientific Foreknowledge**

Most men believe that God exists but how do we know

that he had anything to do with writing the Bible? How do we know that men did not produce the book without divine aid? We know this for many reasons but chiefly because there are things in the Bible which men could not have written at the time the Bible was written. No one could have put these things into the Book except God.

Take the field of scientific foreknowledge. Science has done much for the world—some of it good and some of it bad. The Bible is not a textbook on science. It is older than science and is a textbook on religion—the science of correct living.

(1) Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) declared that there are only five things in existence—five manifestations of the unknowable—time, force, action, space and matter. All over the world, men hailed this as a great discovery. Then someone opened the Bible and found that Moses had put all five of these scientific fundamentals into the first verse of the Bible. Here is how that happened, God said, "Moses, 3,400 years from now men are going to think they know everything. Let us put all of that into the first verse of the Bible and then begin from there." Moses wrote, "In the beginning," there is the time; "God," there is the force; "created," there is the action; "the heavens," there is the space; "and the earth," there is the matter. And, incidentally, Moses got them in the same order as Herbert Spencer! This could happen only under divine direction.

(2) Linnaeus announced in 1735 that there are only three kinds of things in existence—mineral, vegetable, and animal. This made it possible for men to classify all things. Someone again turned to Genesis 1 and found that Moses used the first ten verses of the Bible telling of the mineral kingdom, the next nine verses telling of the vegetable kingdom and the last part of the chapter telling of the animal

kingdom. Moses had his three scientific divisions right there!

(3) Men formerly argued about the shape of the earth. During the middle ages the leading university professors taught that the earth is flat and had four corners "like a box!" (Of course, a box has eight corners and not four but you try to tell that to some person who thinks the earth is flat and see how far you get with it!) Later Columbus, Magellan and others believed the earth was round and demonstrated its rotundity.

But of the shape of the earth, the author of the Bible was not in ignorance. In Isaiah 40:22 we read, "It is God that setteth upon the circle upon the face of the earth" and in Proverbs 8:27, "He set a circle upon the face of the deep." The Bible teaches that Christ is coming again in the daytime and also in the nighttime—a condition brought about by the fact that earth is round and rotates upon its axis (Luke 17). Job taught that the planets move (Job 38). No man could have written these things into the Bible at the time they were written into it unless God had guided him.

(4) Men also formerly argued about what holds the earth up but having demonstrated its rotundity, they found that nothing tangible is holding it up. This truth was announced by Job in Job 26:7, "He . . . hangeth the earth upon nothing."

(5) Geography is a comparatively recent science and maps of the world must be continually revised. The Bible makes hundreds of references to lakes, hills, valleys, rivers and mountains. It tells of town, temples and villages. One can go to the places mentioned in the Bible and today find them exactly as the Bible describes them. There are no

mistakes! This is possible only because God himself guided the men who wrote the Bible.

The Bible is not a textbook on science but it is scientifically accurate. When it speaks in any field, it is correct. Men have never proved the Bible to be wrong about any matter but they have proved it to be correct in hundreds of instances such as these just described.

### Unity of the Bible

Christians also believe the Bible because of its unity. The Bible is composed of sixty-six different books written by more than forty different men over a period of 1,600 years. It was written in several different languages. Some of it was written in kings' palaces and some in shepherds' tents beside still waters. When all the books were brought together they blended into a perfect whole with no contradictions and no discord. I spent more than twelve years examining nearly three thousand contradictions of the Bible and failed to find one which I could not explain (at least to my own satisfaction) not to mention what a really wise man could do with them! "Sixty-six singers singing sweet and true and setting all the world to singing, too."

Writers of the Bible did not write their own viewpoint or what they thought about different matters. They wrote what the Holy Spirit of God guided them to write. Every word of the Bible is inspired. If God had wanted another "i" dotted or another "t" crossed, he would have had it done. When one thinks he has found a contradiction in the Bible, he has only reached the limit of his own knowledge. It is a might sorry excuse for a man to make his own ignorance an excuse for criticising the God of the Universe! Many critics of the Bible admit they have never read it through even once!

### **Influence of the Bible**

We believe the Bible because of its influence. Did you ever hear a man say, "I used to lie, steal, drink, gamble, swindle, abuse my family, beat my wife, beat my debts and was a drunken immoral reprobate but I got hold of some good books that proved there is no God, that my granddaddy was a monkey and that when I die that will be the end of me. As soon as I learned this I straightened up, cleaned up and became a good citizen. Now I treat my family right and am a changed man?" Did you ever hear of that? Of course, you did not but every one of you has heard of characters such as that just described who were changed by the word of God. As long as the Bible has such an influence in the personal lives of men and women, we will continue to believe that it is what it claims to be—God's verbally inspired, immovable, perfect word.

### **Indestructibility of the Bible**

The Bible has been attacked in every age of the world. Its enemies have carried on a relentless warfare against it. Yet in every generation it continues to live and bless mankind. It has been gloriously triumphant over Judaism, Heathenism, Philosophy, heresy, barbarism, Mohammedanism, the Papacy, apostate sects and modern infidelity.

The modern infidels who sought to destroy the Blessed Old Book have themselves gone the way of all the earth. Thomas Paine, Robert Ingersoll and similar characters had their little day and passed on. Modernism today is modern and can not destroy God's word. It is the same old foe with a new dress!

Every page in the Bible has been stained with blood. Any purely human product would long ago have lost its influence but the Bible lives and has a greater hold on humanity today than ever before. More than forty mil-

lion copies are printed annually. It is the world's best seller—last year, this year, next year and every year. Over a million Bibles were sold one day—May 1, 1881.

Every few years somebody demolishes the Bible and proves it "false." Yet the pieces come together and are stronger than before. Christians are indebted to the skeptics. Their attacks have provoked study and have called forth an ever increasing series of books defending the Bible.

The Bible is the old anvil over which skeptics have worn out their hammers.

"Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door,  
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;  
When looking in, I saw upon the floor,  
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.  
'How many anvils have you had?' said I,  
'To wear and batter all these hammers so?'  
'Just one,' said he, then said with twinkling eye,  
'The anvil wears the hammers out you know.'  
'And so, I thought, the anvil of God's word,  
For ages skeptics' blows have beat upon;  
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,  
The anvil is unharmed—the hammers gone."

Into every country of the world believers are going with the word of God. Just before I left home, I removed from the shelf a book entitled **The Book of a Thousand Tongues** giving a page of the Bible in more than a thousand different languages and telling who speaks that language and when the Bible—or some part of it—was translated into that tongue. As I turned its pages tears filled my eyes and I thought, "They can never destroy it now. God is with that book and in that book." Its blessed influence is gaining strength and power. When the last battle has been fought

and the last victory has been won, when the last drop of martyr's blood has been shed; when the last prayer has been prayed and the last sermon preached, the earth will melt with fervent heat and the skies will be rolled up as a scroll but Christians will stand before the Lord, the Righteous Judge and see opened the book which guided their weary feet and brought them at last safely home. "Even so, come Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

## THE WORD BECAME FLESH

---

Le Moine Lewis

All of us regret that Brother Frank Dunn is unable to be with us tonight to speak on this great subject. When Brother J. D. Thomas called me quite late at night a week ago and asked me if I would fill in I felt I could not say "No." I told him that this past week would be one of the busiest of weeks and one of the worst possible to prepare for this lecture. The week was even busier than I anticipated. But everyone else around here is just as busy or a little busier. And besides, I had promised Brother Thomas two years ago that if one of the lecturers failed to show up I would be the "spare tire."

Brother Thomas offered to allow me to change the subject but I have chosen not to do so. What subject could do more to prepare our hearts and minds for this great lecture week? When we talk about the Word becoming flesh, we are talking about what God did for us. My humble prayer is that thinking on this subject will prepare us to listen to the calls from many fields. May thinking about what God has done for us prepare us to consider what we may do for God!

As I worked on this lecture last night I could not help wishing that I had had more than a week to get ready for this lecture. A week just is not enough time to prepare a lecture on the nature of the Christ. But as I was feeling sorry for myself the thought came rushing to me that even a year would not have been time enough to do justice to this great subject. And then another thought came. This is a subject on which every gospel preacher should always be ready to speak. The fact that "the Word be-

came flesh" is the very center of our faith and the foundation of our hopes.

When we go back today and examine the records of the preaching of the apostles, we find that Christ was the subject of every sermon. And when the apostles preached about Jesus they were preaching on a subject of which they had personal and intimate knowledge. As John says it was bearing witness of "That which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you . . ." (1 John 1:1-3).

He came to those first disciples as a stranger on Galilee's shore and said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men," and they left everything to follow him. There was something about him that made them give up everything for him. Three years they were with him night and day as he went about doing good, healing and teaching. They were with him when he was thronged by the crowds who wanted to make him king. They saw the crowd turn against him and leave him, but when he asked if they, too, would go away, they had answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." They were with him when he was arrested. Then he was crucified and buried. Those first preachers of the gospel had seen the empty tomb and the risen Christ. They saw him ascend until the clouds received him out of their sight.

When those men preached about Jesus they were talking of one they had intimately known. How wonderful it would have been to hear them preach! He was so real to

them and they missed him so much. I am sure there were times when they felt they could almost hear his voice and his footsteps again. Only his Comforter and his promise of being with them always could fill the empty place.

At first they preached to people who had also seen and heard him. And then they preached Jesus to those who had never seen him. How they must have hung on to every word! Finally there came a time when the painful thought came to them that these men who had seen him would not always be with them.

Eusebius who is sometimes called the father of church history, about 325 A.D. attempted to give a history of the church and of our Bible. He tells us that Matthew preached in Judea for about fifteen years after the ascension and then decided to go away to preach in other lands. But before he left Palestine he wrote down his gospel that his disciples might read about Jesus when he was gone. Eusebius tells us how Mark in Rome wrote down the gospel that Peter preached, and that Luke recorded the gospel preached by Paul. Last of all John in Ephesus wrote down his record to fill in gaps left by the others and to give us the spiritual meaning of Jesus. I believe the record of Eusebius is trustworthy.

The day soon came in the early history when all men could know of Jesus was what they could find in our Gospels. And today all we know about Jesus comes from those Gospels. When the last of the apostles were gone then the preachers had to search the written word to be able to speak on the nature of the Christ. At the opening of John's gospel they found the words, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us."

To explain the nature of Christ to people who had not

known him was no easy task. Matthew shows who the Christ was by showing how he fulfilled many prophecies and by telling of his wonderful teachings and his great miracles. Proofs such as these especially appealed to the Jews. To explain Jesus to Greeks was even harder. To the Greeks with their background in philosophy the idea of the Son of God becoming flesh and then dying on a cross and being resurrected was foolishness. The first readers of John's gospel were probably Greeks of Ephesus. To explain to them the nature of Christ he began with "the word" or the "Logos" in Greek. The "Logos" or the Word became flesh.

"Logos" was a word with a long history behind it in John's day. It was a word that Plato and other Greek philosophers had used to try to explain the universe. The absolute God of the philosophers was so totally "other" that he could not come into contact with the world. They used "Logos" to bridge between the infinite God and the finite world. At first there was God. God thought and planned. The Logos was more than just "word" in our sense. It was first of all the reason of God. It existed in the mind of God as thought or reason. Then God spoke, Logos was also the spoken word. The Logos was the plan in the mind of God. Then God spoke and the world came into existence. The Logos was the creator of the world. It was God's agent in the creation. The Logos did the work. The Stoics made even more of the Logos as the reasonable power responsible for the universe.

Down in Alexandria, Philo, the Jewish philosopher, tried to harmonize the Scriptures and Greek Philosophy. He tried to identify to Logos of the Greeks with the Wisdom of God pictured in Proverbs. Wisdom was the master-workman of God.

It remained for the Spirit to guide John to show that

the Logos was Jesus the Christ. And so John opened his Gospel with these words:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not. There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came that he might bear witness of the light. There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth. John beareth witness of him, and crieth, saying, This was he of whom I said, He that cometh after me is become before me: for he was before me. For of his fulness all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

By using the word "Logos" John was not launching out into a philosophical treatise. "Logos" was a sort of magical word in the minds of the people. It had seeped down

from the philosophers and was tossed about somewhat like the word "relativity" a few years ago. Many used the word "relativity" who had very little understanding of Einstein's theories. And many used the word "Logos" who had no training in philosophy.

John tells them that this "Logos" that they thought explained the universe was Jesus of Nazareth. He was the "Word become flesh."

But John does not dwell on this idea. Having stated the idea in his prologue he leaves it and scarcely returns to it. His gospel was not to be a book of philosophy. The Logos was just one of many figures that John uses to explain the nature of the Christ. He was the Bread of Life, the Water of Life, the Way, The Good Shepherd, the Door, the Resurrection, the Light of the World. All these figures were to help men see what Jesus could mean to the human soul.

By the middle of the second century the break between the church and the synagogue had become clear. The church was becoming more and more Gentile in character. More and more people came into the church who had a background of Greek philosophy. Jesus was the theme and center of the gospel. To understand the nature of Jesus was one of the most challenging problems of Christian thought. The problem was twofold; on one hand men needed to understand the relation of Jesus to God the Father and on the other hand they wanted to understand his relationship to men. As the Apologists sought to prove that Christianity was the highest and truest philosophy and worthy of the respect and allegiance of the educated, they found the key in John's Gospel, "The Word became flesh." The Logos came to play a very important part in Christian thought. More and more men read into it elaborate philosophical content. They were anxious to show that there

was a harmony between the best of Greek philosophy and the Gospel of Jesus. Many felt that just as God prepared the Jews for the coming of Christ by means of the Law, so likewise he prepared the Greeks for the acceptance of the Gospel by means of philosophy. Their Logos could be identified with Jesus.

But restless minds had many questions to ask. Were there two gods? This was a charge that the Jews made against the Christians for preaching that Jesus was the Son of God. To many Greeks this seemed a just charge. How could there be Father and Son without there being two gods? Such a charge filled Jewish Christians with horror because of their monotheistic background. Their deep seated horror of polytheism would never permit them to admit there were two gods.

And just as difficult for the Greek mind was the idea of the divine becoming human. From Plato on the flesh had been regarded as the prison house of the spirit. Fallen spirits were imprisoned in fleshly bodies. The idea of the son of God taking a material body was almost revolting to a Greek mind.

The Apologists and early theologians tried to express the gospel truths in terms acceptable to Hellenistic philosophy. Some feel that they were forcing Christianity into an alien mold and thereby corrupting it. But the problem of the relationship of Christ to God was a most insistent problem. As they sought to win people of a philosophical background they had to face it.

Very early in the church there appeared what we call the Ebionite sect. The records of them are hazy and dim. Some call them Jewish Christians and others call them Christian Jews. It seems that in this sect the predominating influence was Jewish. In order to save monotheism they asserted that Jesus was just a good man.

The Docetists went to the other extreme in trying to solve the problem. They denied the real humanity of Jesus. He just appeared to be a man. They taught that he was not really born of the Virgin. He did not really suffer and die. It was all just an appearance.

The Gnostics made Jesus one of an almost endless succession of aeons. In their hierarchy of divinity or Pleroma God was at the top. Jesus came forth from the Father and occupied a second but subordinate position. Below him were successions of archangels and angels.

The church's answer to all of these was the Logos. The Word became flesh, and in him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead.

Irenaeus, the most prominent bishop of Gaul in the late second century set forth what is called the Recapitulation Theory. His idea was that Jesus passed through every stage of human existence in order to sanctify it. First he was an infant, then a child, then a youth; he passed through middle age and then through old age. Thus each stage of life was sanctified, and salvation was made possible.

Of course such an idea could not be squared with the Gospels. They contained nothing of Jesus becoming an old man. But the church did keep Irenaeus' idea of salvation; namely, that the divine became human, in order that the human might become divine.

But the restless mind of that age came up with other solutions to the problem of the relation of Jesus to the Father. There were two schools that were called Monarchians. One school was called "The Adoptionist Monarchians." They held that Jesus was just a man who was adopted to be the Son of God. Some of them held that Jesus so perfectly kept the Law of Moses that God rewarded him by making him or adopting him to be his

Son. Some of them held that up until his baptism that he was human. At his baptism the Holy Spirit descended on him in the form of a dove making him divine. Just before his crucifixion the divine part left him so that only the human part suffered on the cross. The Greek mind was very reluctant to admit that divinity had been crucified.

The other school of Monarchians were known as the Modalists. Their answer to the charge that Christians had more than one God was that Father, Son and Spirit were different manifestations of one and the same God. Like an actor on the stage he had different masks or roles. Sometimes he appeared as Father. At other times he manifested himself as Son. At still other times he appeared in the role of the Spirit. But all there were one and the same. A man name Praxaes was one of the principal advocates of this theory at Rome. In Rome and the West their doctrine was called Patripassianism because their opponents claimed that they crucified God the Father. In the East this doctrine was known as Sabellianism because Sabellius was one of its main advocates.

One of the most brilliant minds in the church at the end of the second and beginning of the third centuries was Tertullian in North Africa. He was first of all a lawyer. He thought he found in Roman law an answer to the problem of how three could be one and one could be three, and how Jesus could be both human and divine. He used terms from Roman law that would become theological terms. The word "substance" suggested the idea of property. The term "person" suggested one who could own property. Divinity was a substance, or piece of property. In Roman Law three persons could own the same piece of property. Divinity was a piece of property owned by Father, Son, and Spirit. But also, the same person could own two

pieces of property. Jesus as a person could own both divinity and humanity. Tertullian's terminology became the language of theology.

In Alexandria Origen, one of the ablest minds in the early centuries of church history came up with a more philosophical explanation. As the head of the Catechetical School he was one of the chief exponents of the allegorical method of explaining the scriptures so characteristic of Alexandria. He found explanations or illustrations of the Trinity in Nature. The sun, its rays, and light are three and yet one. The tree with its roots, trunk and branches are three and yet one. The spring, the stream, and the river are three and yet one. In the school at Alexandria with its allegorical interpretation Christ was in danger of becoming a philosophical abstraction.

The problems of the relation of Jesus to God and of the human and divine in Jesus were also the most urgent problems of the other great Christian school, the school at Antioch. This school was characterized by its literal and grammatical interpretation of scriptures. Naturally it placed greater emphasis on the humanity of Jesus.

It is easy to see how a clash would come when Arius who had been trained at Antioch became a presbyter under Alexander the bishop at Alexandria. Arius preached that the Son was totally and essentially distinct from the Father. He was the first and noblest of creatures, but he was a created being. As such he was mutable or subject to change. God had created Christ out of nothing and hence the Son was inferior to the Father. God had not always been Father. The Son had a beginning. There was a time when he was not and then he came into existence.

Such ideas very soon aroused Alexander the Bishop. He could not tolerate the idea that the Son was in any sense

subordinate. God had always been Father and Jesus had always been Son. To say that there was a time when he was not and that he was created seemed a denial of his full divinity.

Alexander condemned Arius but Arius was very popular and two strong parties arose in Alexandria. The discussion was over the heads of most of the common people, yet many of them were rallied to one party or the other. Each side had its party slogans and songs. Dock workers sang theological songs and threw rocks at each other. Shop keepers argued with customers. The trouble spread over the empire.

The new emperor, Constantine, became deeply concerned over the trouble. It threatened the peace and unity of the empire. Finally, in A.D. 325 he called a general council of the bishops of the church to settle the question. The emperor furnished travel expenses to Nicea, the site of the council. As the bishops arrived they addressed crowds wherever they gathered and argued the question. It is reported that one layman got up and reminded the bishops that neither Christ nor the apostles taught rules of logic and philosophy, but the simple Christian faith. For a time his words had a quietening effect on the arguments. But in the end the council found the solution to the problem of the relation of Father and Son in the word, "homo-ousios," meaning, "of the same substance." The Father and the Son shared the same divine substance. Arius was condemned. All but two in the council signed the creed, and subscribed to the solution.

But it seems the bishops had yielded to pressure from the emperor and the bishops who had his ear. There was deep dissatisfaction with the solution because the word "homo-ousios" could not be found in the Scriptures. It belonged to philosophy. The Arian sympathizers held that

since the term was not in the Scriptures it could not be bound on the church. Immediately the Arians began plotting a comeback and won the son of the emperor. Five times Athanasius of Alexandria, who became the champion of "homo-ousios" was exiled and recalled.

Various schools of thought arose trying to find a better solution. Marcellus of Ancyra set forth a sort of refined Sebellianism. The Logos was silent in God or was an impersonal force in God before the incarnation. Christ was Son on earth. He became the Son of God at the incarnation.

Photinius of Sirmium taught that Jesus started as a man and that divinity was a thing of gradual growth.

A semi-Arian party arose that tried to substitute the term "homoiousios" for the term "homo-ousios." Christ was of "like substance" rather than of "the same substance." Gibbon in great scorn pictures the Christian world split over a single "i." But many in the church in that era saw in that "i" the full divinity of Christ surrendered. It made a great difference whether Jesus was of the same substance or of like substance. It is the difference between an orator arising of the Fourth of July or some other patriotic occasion and speaking of the last war and saying "We lost one of our boys" and a father arising and saying "I lost my only Son." If Jesus was only of like substance then there was no real sacrifice on the part of the father.

Interest was beginning to shift to the problem of the relation of the human and the divine in Jesus. Apollinaris in an effort to guarantee the unchangeableness of Christ held that in Christ there were three parts; namely, body, soul and Spirit. In body and soul Christ was human. But the place of the human spirit was taken by the divine Logos. Sufferings were limited to the human, but divinity

and humanity were so closely merged that it could be said that the Logos suffered.

Many felt that the explanation of Apollinaris denied the humanity of Jesus and thus destroyed the basis of salvation. At the council of Constantinople in 381 the solution of Nicea was reaffirmed and Apollinaris was condemned. Jesus was of the same substance as the Father as regards his divinity, and he was both fully divine and fully human.

The school at Antioch stressed the idea of two distinct natures that were neither confused nor commingled. The school at Alexandria held that there was a miraculous commingling. The Logos transformed the human into divine. Nestorius from Antioch became bishop at Constantinople. He preached that Mary was the mother of only the human part of Jesus. This offended the monks who held that Mary was the mother of God. Cyril, bishop of Alexandria was an ardent exponent of the watchword "Theotokos" or "God-bearer." A great fight arose over whether Mary should be called "Mother of God." Cyril plotted with Rome and with the imperial court. He wrote letters to the emperor and his sister. At the council of Ephesus in 431 Nestorius was condemned. Later John of Antioch suggested a formula to which Cyril subscribed: in Jesus two natures united in one person, without confusion. Mary could be called the mother of God because Jesus took the temple of flesh from her. It is said that Nestorius in exile rejoiced when he heard the solution. He could have subscribed to the doctrine with better conscience than Cyril, but Cyril seemed more intent on personal victory over Nestorius than on the statement of doctrine.

But in order to combat Nestorianism his opponents went to the other extreme and so emphasized unity that the humanity of Jesus was absorbed in divinity. They asserted that Christ had one personality and one nature. After the

incarnation there was no distinction between divine and human. The Monophysite Controversy arose. Dioscurus of Alexandria and Eutyches a monk of Constantinople were the champions of unity. The school of Antioch and Flavian, bishop of Constantinople accused them of denying that Christ was consubstantial with men.

In 449 a council was called at Ephesus. Dioscurus seized control before all the bishops arrived and quickly approved of Eutyches and condemned their opponents unheard. This council gained the title, "Robber Council," because of the violence of the monks and the tactics of Dioscurus and Eutyches. The council was so unpopular that another council was called at Chalcedon in 451. Eutyches was condemned with his monophysite doctrine that Christ had only one nature, the divine one. The council of Chalcedon asserted that Christ was of two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation. The distinction of natures was in no way annulled by union. The characteristics of each nature were preserved in forming one person.

The Monophysites refused to submit to the decision of the council. Pope Honorius of Rome between A.D. 625 and 638 led an effort to win back the Monophysites by substituting the words "energy" or "will" for the word "nature." Pope Honorius stated that Christ had one will. It was an unhappy solution for soon the church was involved in the Monothelite controversy. Some vigorously asserted that Christ had two complete wills, one human and the other divine. The controversy was so bitter that the Emperor Heraclius in 638 forbade even discussing the question and as emperor declared that Christ had one will. Pope John IV in 641 condemned the Monothelite heresy. His successor, Pope Martin I at a synod in Rome in A.D. 649 asserted Christ had two wills. The emperor had Pope Martin ar-

rested and carried to Constantinople. He was condemned and exiled to Crimea.

In A.D. 680 the sixth general council met in Constantinople to affirm that Christ had two natural wills, not contrary one to the other, but that the human will follows, not as resisting or reluctant, but rather as subject to the divine and omnipotent will.

Sections of the Eastern church refused to accept the council and the break between East and West was widening. The seeds of discord were becoming hopeless. But for the Western Church the controversy was over. The church of the Middle Ages followed the decisions of the great councils.

As we look back on this troubled era we can see some things we should never forget. Maintaining orthodoxy in the age of the Trinitarian and Christological controversies was almost like watching a tight rope walker. It is always interesting to watch a tight rope walker but to walk the rope is dangerous. It was almost impossible to walk the line of orthodoxy. It was so easy to fall into subordinationism or Patripassionism, or in trying to stay out of Apollinarianism or Eutychianism to fall into Nestorianism. It seemed that many tried to see just how fine they could draw the lines and how many they could cut off. Many earnest souls who loved Jesus were cut off from the church. These controversies played a big part in the rise of the hierarchy that characterizes the medieval church. In order to carry their point many stooped to political tricks utterly foreign to Christianity. The church in controversy sunk to a very low moral level. In trying to define the nature of Christ they lost the spirit of Christ.

No lesson stands out clearer than the fact that any idea that could not be expressed in the languages of the Scriptures could not be bound on the church. Nicea was doomed

to fail from the first because "homo-ousian" was a philosophical rather than a Scripture term.

In this age of controversy the energy of the church was put into endless controversy and the missionary spirit of the early church was lost. In trying to be wise beyond what is written they split the church asunder and let its moral level become a disgrace. In Arabia a new religion was arising. If the energies that had gone into the futile debates had gone into missionary efforts to convert the Arabs there might have been no Mohammed. But the councils and the low moral level prepared the way for the spread of Mohammedanism. It would be a mistake to think that it spread just because of the sword. The church had sunk so low that in becoming Mohammedans many thought they were joining a superior religion.

When the Protestant Reformation came the Reformers went along with the councils—especially the first four. The creeds of the councils remained tests of orthodoxy.

But when the Restoration Movement came the great men of the Restoration refused to be bound by anything but the Scriptures. In one gesture they swept away the councils and held up the word of God as the only rule of faith and practice. By so doing they carried us back to the church of the first century. And as we go back the same questions arise for us. What is the nature of Jesus? What is his relation to the Father and what is his relation to us? Let us not forget the lessons of the past. May we not lose ourselves in vain philosophical speculations that squander the missionary energies of the church and split it asunder. Let us be content with the simple faith, "The word became flesh and dwelt among us." God gave us minds to search for truth and to understand his ways. But all truth is one. God is the author of all truth. When our minds lead us away from God, his Christ, his church, and his Scrip-

tures, our minds have lost the way. All truth is for the the glory of God.

Throughout the long controversies and even in the Dark Ages there were simple souls that could not follow the subtleties of theological speculation but who loved Jesus tenderly and devoutly. Bernard of Clairveux so beautifully expressed the sentiments of such hearts:

“Jesus, the very tho’t of Thee  
With sweetness fills my breast;  
But Sweeter far Thy face to see,  
And in Thy presence rest.

Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,  
Nor can the mem’ry find  
A sweeter sound than Thy blest name,  
O Saviour of mankind!

O Hope of ev’ry contrite heart!  
O Joy of all the meek!  
To those who fall, how kind Thou art!  
How good to those who seek!

Jesus, our only joy be Thou,  
As Thou our prize wilt be;  
Jesus, be Thou our glory now,  
And thro’ eternity.”

And in another of his beautiful hymns he wrote:

“Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts,  
Thou fount of life, Thou light of men,  
From all the bliss that earth imparts  
We turn unfilled to Thee again.”

More books have been written about Jesus than about any other who ever walked this earth. Men go on writing books because the earlier ones fail to satisfy. Men have a hard time grasping, "the word became flesh and dwelt among us." To the human mind there remains great mystery in the nature of Christ. Most books about Jesus that are over ten years old are of little value and have lost their charm. My old teacher, Dean Sperry, said to us many times that the most significant books of the first half of the twentieth century were William James' **Varieties of Religious Experience** and Albert Schweitzer's **The Quest of Historical Jesus**. Schweitzer closes his book with these words:

"We can find no designation which expressed what he is for us.

"He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lake-side, he came to those men who knew him not. He speaks to us the same word: 'Follow thou me'! and sets us to the tasks which he has to fulfill for our time. He commands. And to those who obey him, whether they be wise or simple, he will reveal himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in his fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who he is."<sup>1</sup>

It was not intended that the gospel story should be the subject of philosophy. When we begin to philosophize about Christ we bring on controversy and cut off men who love him. It is very difficult to discuss the subject of the nature of Christ on a philosophical plane very long without falling off the knife edge of orthodoxy. And yet we must go on discussing the nature of Christ because the whole

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<sup>1</sup>Albert Schweitzer: **The Quest of the Historical Jesus**. A. and C. Black. 1936. p 401.

church rests on it. The church is built on the great truth of his nature; namely, that he is the Son of God. The nature of Christ is the very heart of the truth. To know him is to have eternal life (John 17:3).

The real truths of his nature will not be understood by the wise of this world. These truths will be grasped only by those who trust and love him. We should never forget the truth so beautifully expressed by Bernard of Clairvaux:

“But what to those who find! Ah! this  
Nor tongue nor pen can show;  
The love of Jesus! what it is  
None but His loved ones know.”

As preachers of the gospel let us earnestly pray that we can bring home to the hearts of men the great truth that “The word became flesh.” As Sir George McLeod put it in his recent Peyton lectures, “God came to earth” and “A man is in heaven.”

What we want to do is to catch ourselves and make men feel the thrill that Joseph felt when the angel announced, “Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.” We need to see what the angels saw as they sang to the shepherds. We need to see what the blind men saw when he opened their eyes, and to understand what Lazarus understood about the Christ when he came from the grave bound in the grave clothes. To understand him we must grasp the joy that was in the hearts of Mary and Martha. When we understand his nature it will be as John saw him in the Book of Revelation, in chapter 5. Brother Hugo McCord gave us a stirring interpretation of this passage in his Harding lecture last fall. John saw the vision of the Father on his throne. John wept when no one was found worthy to open the little book in the Father’s hand. One of the elders told him not to

weep because the Lion of the tribe of Judah would overcome and open the book. Anxiously John looked for the Lion of Judah but what he saw coming was a Lamb that had been slain. John learned that the Lion of Judah was the Lamb slain for the sins of the world and all heaven burst into his praises,

“Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests: and they reign upon the earth.”

The things that his Spirit brought back to the memories of his apostles were the stories of the sick he healed, the eyes he opened, the lame he made to walk, the lepers he cleansed, the sinners he forgave. It was as one tender and merciful, patient and forgiving, and loving to the end, that he wanted to be remembered, for this was and is his nature.

## **"IN NOTHING BE ANXIOUS"**

**Alonzo D. Welch**

One of the chief functions of a healthful civilization is to provide a sense of security and well-being for its people. When measured by this criterion, our mid-century culture is pronounced a miserable failure. The diverse influences and events impinging upon the life of modern man from the external world are the breeders of doubt, fear and a sense of futility. Although one of the paramount drives of human personality has always been the desire for security, the inescapable dilemma, as evidenced by centuries of human striving, is that the more we seek for security in the realm of matter the less we have it. Thus, what appears, while we seek it, to be security becomes the cause of our insecurity. So uniform has been our experience in the verification of this formula that it has become a truism to label our time the age of anxiety.

### **Sources of Anxiety**

Anxiety factors in this age, as perhaps in every other, stem from at least three sources, namely, the external world, our inherent human restlessness, and the tension caused by the dual nature of man. The first of these is equivalent to the impact of environment. Modern man is extremely sensitive and quite responsive to all that goes on about him. Through advanced means of communication and universal education, provincialism is fast receding and more and more the events of one part of the world become the experiences of every other part. Anxiety-laden elements in present day environment are numerous. The atomic and hydrogen bombs, which could afford a high degree of physical security for the masses of the world, threaten to destroy the last vestige of civilization.

Thus man stands trembling before the child of his own genius. Mechanization poses a threat, whether real or apparent, to the security of the laborer. The tempo of modern life keeps man in a state of sustained exertion and robs him of the time and capacity to relax. Man has become so accustomed to a push button pace that, as one writer expressed it, he complains when he is compelled to wait for the next section of a revolving door. Competition, the key word of our culture, has become engagingly ruthless. Selfish nationalism continues to vie with its antagonist and to thwart the efforts of honorable men to establish the "federation of the world" and thus fulfill the vision of the poet.

But all anxiety is not induced by the outer world; some of it comes from within. There is an innate restlessness, a deep sense of dissatisfaction growing out of the consciousness that this earth is not our home. The Christian in relation to this world, as described by inspired men, is a runner engaged in a race, a pilgrim on a journey, and an alien whose citizenship is in heaven. (1 Cor. 9:24-27; 1 Pet. 2:11; Phil. 3:20). Knowing of the transience of life and convinced by faith that God would prepare "a better country," a "city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God," the great men of faith "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth."

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own. . . . But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. 11:13, 14, 16).

The apostle Paul sensed the limitations and burdens imposed by the fleshly body and longed to be clothed upon with the habitation which is from heaven. The strong desire "to be at home with the Lord" made personal contentment a major achievement, rather than a natural condition. Dr. Rufus B. Jones, a noted Quaker philosopher, said that while on a voyage in the South Pacific some flying fish were swept upon the deck by a passing wave. He picked up one of the fish and as it lay uneasily in his hand it seemed to say: "This is not my home. My greatest desire is to return to my native habitat." The same may be said in regard to the spirit of man.

Without God, this restlessness of the human spirit is given to ill-defined, insatiable longing and purposeless wandering. It can become the incubator of anxiety. In "The History of Rasselas," Samuel Johnson, the eighteenth century English prose writer, placed the prince of Abyssinia in the Happy Valley in which the blessings of nature were collected and the evils extracted. In this Utopia it was believed that the desire for happiness would be fulfilled. The experiment proved a failure, for the prince discovered that, unlike the goat, he was not satisfied with fulness. Then he concluded: "Man has surely some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification, or he has some desires distinct from sense, which must be satisfied before he can be happy." In Christianity this desire becomes specific and the restless soul anchored to the eternal.

The third source of anxiety is the tension rising out of the dual nature of man. The human creature lives in contact with two worlds—the material and the spiritual. Although one is tangible and the other intangible, each is as real as the other. These worlds are inherently antagonistic; the raging battle between good and evil, the spirit and the flesh, spells out desperation for man. Paul de-

scribes this human conflict and the hopelessness of every man without God as follows:

“For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:22-24).

This conflict, as Paul analyzed it, is as a war in which evil prevails. Thus the cry for deliverance is spontaneous and comprehensible. It is in this strife between matter and spirit that the undue fear of death and the guilt complex arise. The thought of a drug that would separate the two natures of man and thus end the discord was advanced by Henry Jekyll in Stevenson's "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" but it will not work. The solution to this problem is found only in God.

### Effects of Anxiety

With these sources of fear and anxiety converging upon us, what, we ask, are their proven effects? By the help of psychologists, psychiatrists, and medical experts we are gradually learning of the detrimental effects of worry upon both the mind and body of man. The human body, mind and emotions, we are told, react as a whole and cannot be completely separated. Thus, anxiety in its advanced stages is one of the most crushing, debilitating diseases known to man. It impairs receptivity, efficiency and the quality of performance. When by the process of conversion it is transferred to the organs of the body, it can produce physical disorders, such as headache, ulcers, heart disease, arthritis, allergies, colitis and high blood pressure. Indeed, fear can destroy man as in the legend of the Pilgrim and the Plague.

When he met the plague, the pilgrim asked, "Where are you going?"

"I'm going to Bagdad to kill 5,000 people," replied the Plague.

At their second meeting a few days later, the pilgrim said to the plague accusingly, "You killed 50,000 people instead of 5,000."

"No," said the Plague. "I killed only 5,000. The others died of fear."

It is now a well established fact that emotional difficulties lead to physical illness. Realizing this, more and more medical schools are adding the mental approach to the organic in their search for the cause of disease. Psychosomatic medicine is now a relevant and widely recognized field of study. Knowing the sources, effects and prevalence of fear and anxiety, counselors and preachers, such as Peale, Fox, Liebman, Jones, Fosdick, Carnegie and others, are addressing their messages to a nervous, distracted, disillusioned, fear-ridden people. Their widespread reception reveals the magnitude of the need.

### Definition of Anxiety

So numerous the sources, so devastating the disease, it is no wonder that Paul wrote: "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6, 7).

It will be noted that this is a negative command—a prohibition—as comprehensive as mind and rhetoric can make it. "In nothing," that is, in not even one thing, are we to be anxious. If, then, it is unlawful or unjustifiable in every circumstance of life to possess the mental state

depreciated by Paul, it behooves us to describe and define it. Approaching the problem of definition from the negative viewpoint, we know that Paul was not inculcating indolence, carelessness or a lack of productive interest in our work or profession. Members of the body are admonished to "have the same care one for another" (1 Cor. 12:25); Paul recommended Timothy to the Philippians as surpassing all other associates in his care for the condition of the church (Phil. 2:20); and those who will not work at honorable vocations are reprehended as being unworthy of food and worse than an unbeliever (2 Thess. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:8). The Greek verb *merimnao*, translated to be **anxious**, is from *meris* (part), *merizo* (to separate into parts) because undue care or anxiety distracts and divides. Hence, the word *merimnao* means to be **troubled with cares** (Thayer), to be **worried** (Wuest), or to be **distracted** (Berrry). This derogatory meaning predominates in New Testament usage, exceptions having been noted above in 1 Cor. 12:25 and Phil. 2:20. Thus, it is obvious that Paul was striking at the proneness to worry that is common to all men. He would have us to be interested but not anxious, diligent but not distracted, persistent but not perturbed.

### The Futility of Worry

Having commanded the multitude to avoid anxiety, Jesus challenged them to admit its futility. "And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life?" (Matt. 6:27). Because of its destructive nature, worry never produces salutary results and there is no one of its by-products which might appear to be good which could not be acquired by righteous effort. Anxiety never restored a life, never retrieved lost health, never paid a debt and never solved a problem. Being negative and self-defeating, undue care is adverse to the strong purpose

which it is devised to serve and promote. It accomplishes nothing in the world of things beyond human control. It impairs our power to deal with those conditions of life which are under human management. It is an ineffective method of soliciting the attention and helpfulness of God for it is a denial, rather than an affirmation, of his presence and power. Seeing, therefore, the utter uselessness of anxiety, we know that only the foolish, weak and spiritually immature become the victims of this debilitating mental disease. The argument of Jesus having been confirmed by human experience, who could be so unwise as to choose an apparent escape from the predicament of life which serves only to tighten the grip of its shackles upon him?

### **Antidote for Anxiety**

The antidote for anxiety is faith in God. "O ye of little faith" is the apt declaration of a divine insight which recognized worry as a secondary malady or the mere symptom of the primary disease which is weakness of faith. Faith is a many-sided term, deriving certain modifications of meaning from the particular context in which it is found. Thayer defines the verb form appearing in Matt. 8:13 as follows: "To trust in Jesus or in God as able to aid either in obtaining or in doing something." The noun found in Matt. 8:10, according to the same authority, means "Trust (or confidence) whether in God or Christ, springing from faith in the same." Thus it appears that one of the primary meanings of faith is trust in or dependence on God. Trust in the power of God eliminates dependence on ourselves alone. The man who depends primarily upon God rather than himself does not estimate the possibility of accomplishment nor evaluate the present human situation exclusively in terms of man's resources. Paul was

weak physically and poor financially, but no one counts it boasting when he says, "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). The strength of Paul was a **derived** power which afforded him contentment and peace of mind. Believing that "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6), he expressed one of the greatest achievements of his life as follows: "I have learned in whatsoever state I am therein to be content" (Phil. 4:11). Contentment or peace of mind is the product of trust and trust is a constituent element of faith. Paul trusted God and in that faith he found the secret of a happy life, the source of a well adjusted integrated personality. The apostle was not a visionary, but a realist of the highest order who discovered the greater reality, God the Father, and there anchored his restless soul by faith. Having found anchorage in the eternal, the dire effects of persecution and adverse experiences, in the form of imprisonment, beatings, disloyalty of brethren and even the threat of death, could not disturb the serenity of his spirit.

A consideration of some of the techniques of faith will provide insight into the method of the cure for anxiety. One of the foremost techniques of faith is consistency of practice. By this is meant that faith is made the guiding rule of life. Paul said: "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). One who does not walk by sight turns himself over to someone else who becomes his guide to show the way. The limitations of man necessitate such a guide and faith gives us access to the Father who proposes to show the way. Our inability to see our way through the maze of life's problems and tasks provides the kind of situation in which God has chosen often in history to demonstrate his wisdom and power. Abraham had never visited Canaan, but by faith he followed the leading of God.

Gideon could not reason that three hundred poorly equipped soldiers could put the Midianites to rout without help. God himself knew that they alone could not prevail. But the reaction of faith in time of stress and imminent failure is that the more difficult the situation, the more vivid the power of God becomes in human experience. The faith, then, that can cure our minds of worry is one which is applied every day to every problem whether large or small. Henry Drummond says: "Most of the difficulties of trying to live the Christian life arise from attempting to half-live it." God must think man to be puerile and foolish when he thrusts his only guide from him and endeavors to walk his blind way alone. No wonder the human race stumbles in darkness and suffers the agony of its own withdrawal. No marvel that the kingdom of God belongs to the "poor in spirit" who make faith the guiding principle of life.

The second technique of faith is transference, the shifting of the cares of life from man to God. The Holy Spirit invites man to "cast thy burden upon Jehovah and he will sustain thee" (Ps. 55:22). Urging the early Christians to rid themselves of worry, Peter said: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:6, 7). The offer of God is not merely to share but to assume the full measure of anxious care. When one considers that he suffered for our sins and paid the price of our redemption, the assumption of our worry and grief is merely an ordinary token of his love for us. If while in a state of alienation we were not beyond the reach of his love, certainly there is no morbidity of mind out of touch with his care. Let therefore these words be inscribed on the lintel of every home and in the fiber of every heart—"He careth for you."

The third and last technique of faith is **optimism**. The spiritually minded person entertains and cultivates an attitude which anticipates the best possible outcome in all the crises of life. In the letter to the Romans Paul declared an astounding truth. "And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). Here is certitude that defies question, but how did Paul know it? Did he discover it by logical demonstration? The only adequate answer is that he knew it by faith. From this passage we learn that Paul was not a fatalist but that he believed the world order is under the providential supervision of a benevolent father. Faith enables us to look for victory in all worthy temporal strivings, but even when apparent defeat comes and tragedy befalls us, optimism that is born of faith can look beyond the broken pieces of our effort to the higher good ultimately to be wrought by the providence of God. With this philosophy and faith there is no cloud without a silver lining, no real cause for despair.

"Faith," it has been said, "is man's way of meeting a situation so that God may enter into it with his own power and design." It was this kind of self-abandonment in favor of God's power that Jesus was advocating and defending in the Sermon on the Mount. (Matt. 6:25-34). The specific anxiety against which he argued is caused by concern for physical necessities. His arguments against anxiety and in favor of God's provision are sevenfold.

1. The God who gives the greater gifts of life and body can be trusted to provide the lesser blessings to sustain them.
2. If God feeds and clothes the less valuable products of his creation, both animate and inanimate, he surely can be trusted to provide adequately for man.

3. Anxiety is **utterly** unavailing.

4. Permitting material necessities to become the chief object of our striving and the cause of anxiety classes us with those who know not God.

5. The heavenly Father is ever aware of our need.

6. Adequate provision for our physical needs is a special promise extended to those who put the kingdom of God first in their lives.

7. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

The reasoning of Jesus makes anxiety the antithesis of faith, the evidence of unbelief. He sets forth the delicate imbalance between spiritual and material considerations in this exhortation: "But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Jesus does not discount the physical requirement of man but points to the only unfailing source of supply and places it in proper relationship to man's spiritual need. The teaching of Jesus on this point is not a matter of exclusion but a matter of emphasis. If spiritual growth is given priority over physical comfort and satisfaction, he assures us that God will provide adequately for the latter. To do this requires faith and faith is the antidote for anxiety.

### Alternative to Anxiety

In the primary text of this lesson Paul recommends prayer as the alternative to anxiety. "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayers and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." When the cares of life let down their weight do not succumb to worry, says Paul, but resort to prayer. Prayer for the Christian should come as natural and easy as the call of a child upon his father. Jesus uses the inherent disposition

of a normal father to be good to his children as a means of revealing the greater benevolence of God.

“Or what man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone; or if he shall ask a fish, will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him” (Matt. 7:9-11).

The Savior employs the **much-more** argument to convince man of the superior concern of the heavenly Father. He induces us to pray not on the ground of as **much** as but on the basis of **how much more**. If man could be fully convinced that God’s care exceeds that of even a mother’s love, no one would need to urge us to pray and no one could restrain us. The blessings which come through prayer are not to be received without it. Asking is the condition precedent imposed by divine authority. Jesus said: “Ask and ye shall receive” (Matt. 7:7). James wrote: “Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war; ye have not, because ye ask not” (Jas. 4:2). How poor and frail are we because we do not ask! Prayer availeth much; worry debilitates and destroys. Prayer, then, is God’s alternative to anxiety.

The Bible’s comforting admonition and remedy for all those who are heavily encumbered with life’s cares is **HAVE FAITH IN GOD**.

O how praying rests the weary!  
Prayer will change the night to day;  
So when life seems dark and dreary,  
Don’t forget to pray.

## LOVE THE BROTHERHOOD

Ellis McGaughey

The New Testament is filled with beautiful passages admonishing us to love one another. John writes, "And this is the message that we have heard from the beginning, that ye love one another" (1 John 3:11). There are many others that read very similarly. However, there is a statement written by Peter, which has a slightly different shade of meaning. It reads: "Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king" (1 Pet. 2:17). That passage suggests the title of this lecture, "Love the Brotherhood."

The word, "adelphos," translated "brotherhood" stands for the Christian brethren in the aggregate. Christians are not only brethren, but a brotherhood, regarded as one body in Christ. They are knit together by the Spirit into one communion and fellowship. We are all in the same family, with the common parentage, common interests and common aims. John says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are" (1 John 3:1). In view of this relationship we should have a special love for each other and the whole family.

The Greek word for brotherhood is peculiar to Peter and occurs only twice. Its second occurrence is in 1 Pet. 5:9 and is translated "brethren." It reads, "knowing that the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world." Since the word is translated, "brotherhood" one time and "brethren" another it is evident that Peter was not trying to teach that we should have one kind of love for the brotherhood and another type of love for a brother. He was merely putting the emphasis on loving

all of them, the church in its entirety. My brother is my brother whether near by or afar off. I should love those in the local congregation where I worship and also love those in all other congregations, at home or abroad. We are brethren, in the family of God.

How appropriate these words are for our particular time. Too frequently it seems that our obligation to love at a distance is minimized. Often we feel free to criticize those removed from us, even with less knowledge at hand, than we do those with whom we associate day by day. But Peter teaches us that we must learn to exercise the same brotherly love toward those of the church in general as we do those of our own local group. All Christians compose the body of Christ, and are "severally members thereof" (1 Cor. 12:27). Just because he is not where I can see him every day does not lessen my responsibility to love him. Both of us are in the same great body, the church of the Lord, over which Christ is the head (Col. 1:18). A proper understanding of the teaching of the word of God will allow us to have all our brethren in mind when we sing the lovely words of John Fawcett:

"Blest be the tie that binds  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
our hearts in Christian love;  
is like to that above."  
"Before our Father's throne,  
we pour our ardent prayers;  
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,  
our comforts and our cares."  
"We share our mutual woes;  
our mutual burdens bear;  
And often for each other flows  
The sympathizing tear."

### The Extent of Our Love For Each Other

Under the law the command to love was: "Love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev. 19:18). Self love was assumed and was made the standard for the love of neighbor. But when Christ came he gave a "new commandment," far superior to that under the law. He said, "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34). In this he gave a new standard or measure of love, "so greatly different from all that had preceded it as to become almost a new kind of love."<sup>1</sup> "As I have loved," Jesus said. What a high and holy example we have. The Lord repeated this "new commandment" in John 15:12 saying, "This is my commandment that you love one another, even as I have loved you." "This was a new expression of love; and it showed the strength of attachment which we ought to have for Christians, and how ready we should be to endure hardships, to encounter dangers, and to practice self-denial, to benefit those for whom the Son of God laid down his life."<sup>2</sup> Years later, John gives us his understanding of the new commandment as he wrote by inspiration, "Hereby know we love, because he laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16).

No greater expression of love can be given than that to which Christ refers in the "new commandment." He explained, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Seldom are there instances where this love has been found. A few cases, such as Damon and Pythias, have been re-

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<sup>1</sup>Maclaren, Alexander, *Expositions of Holy Scripture*, Vol. 10, Part 2, p. 226

<sup>2</sup>Barnes, Albert, *Barnes on the New Test. Luke-John*, p. 323, 324

corded where a man was willing to give his life to save a friend. But Christ's love even exceeds this. He was willing to lay down his life for his enemies. So if my love is to be like that of our Lord, it must include those who do not love me, even those of my brethren who might mistreat me. What a lofty goal of love to strive for, to love my brothers, both the good and the bad, that I would be willing to lay down my life for them. How difficult it would be to ever have any trouble in the brotherhood if this principle were adhered to.

That the early Christians understood the "new commandment" as John did may be learned from what the world is reported to have said of them, "Behold, how they love one another; they are ready to die for one another."<sup>3</sup>

John does not enumerate the circumstances under which Christians are to die for one another but it is reasonable to conclude that it must be under circumstances where death would advance the truth more than life. At any rate, the teaching is that where a brother's welfare depends on such a sacrifice, love would prompt it to be made regardless of the cost. Since the greater would include the lesser, that means, we will fulfill any other obligation toward him that is necessary.

The extent of this love of the "new commandment" is further described in 1 John 3:18, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth." "It was not his purpose to condemn affectionate speeches, nor did he forbid us to express our love for others in word. The meaning is, 'Let us not love in word only, neither with the tongue alone, but let us also love in deed and in truth.' It is an admonition to exhibit our love in such a fashion as to demonstrate its reality. As the

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<sup>3</sup>Tertullian, Barnes on the New Test. James-Jude, p. 332

Lord forbade words of hypocrisy in the sermon on the mount (Matt. 6:5), so here John forbids mere babble of brotherly love, when neither the word nor the tongue is attended by the fruits of brotherly love.”<sup>4</sup>

Peter had the same thing in mind when he wrote, “seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another fervently” (1 Pet. 1:22). This means that our love for each other should be genuine, proceeding from a heart wherein is no guile or hypocrisy; and that our affection should be ardent and strong and not cold or formal.

#### Our Love to Each Other Analyzed By Paul

In 1 Cor. 13 Paul shows how love works in our lives as we deal with each other. He could have discussed the nature of love in our attitude toward God but the Holy Spirit prompted him to tell of its nature in living with our fellow men. Probably it was more timely in writing to Corinth because of its internal disorders. Contention and strife were in their midst. Among them were suspicions and jealousies. They were misjudging each other, impugning each other's motives and giving way to envy and pride. To correct these evils, Paul showed that a different state of affairs could be brought about if they would only let love have its way. Let us observe his analysis of love.

“Love suffers long.” It is long suffering, patient, forbearing. It is the very opposite of being hasty or giving way to passionate thoughts and expressions. It is not irritable. It reveals itself in the gracious bearing of injuries. It signifies that disposition that can bear long when others speak evil of you and mistreat you.

As “Love suffers long” it “is kind.” It returns good for

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<sup>4</sup>Woods, Guy N., *A Commentary On The New Testament*, p. 283.

evil. Instead of being vexed by slights and wrongs, it earnestly endeavors to spend itself in kindness. It is good-natured, gentle, affectionate. It is never ill-natured and harsh. Under all provocations and ill-usage it is still gentle and mild.

“Love envieth not.” Envy has been defined, ‘one shape of many names’—includes malice, grudge, jealousy, pique, an evil eye, etc., with all their base and numerous manifestations.”<sup>5</sup> Love is neither envious nor jealous. This means that love does not envy others their happiness, their endowments, their reputation, their wealth or their success.

If I love my brother I will delight in his good fortune and accomplishments. If my brother seems to accomplish more than I can do I will not be envious. Love will cause me to be glad in it rather than be jealous or envious. It will prevent my looking for something to criticize so as to minimize his accomplishments. When some church is led by men of vision and begins to take advantage of its opportunities, if the sister churches around love, they will be happy and not through envy begin to say ugly things and charge without any ground that the church is unsound.

Love is not in competition with others. As Christians we are engaged in the same work. One remarkable thing about envy is that most of the time it is confined to those in the same line of work. One physician envies another more successful, the lawyer another lawyer considered more eminent, and even preachers must be careful or they will be envious of another preacher with superior ability. Love corrects this feeling and enables us to be happy and

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<sup>5</sup>Farrar, F. W., *The Pulpit Commentary*, Vol. 44, p. 424

be glad that others have more ability and are more capable and successful.

“Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.” The idea is that love does not show itself off. In the words of Henry Drummond, “After you have been kind, after love has stolen forth into the world and done its beautiful work, go back into the shade again and say nothing about it.”<sup>6</sup>

Love produces a condition of heart just the opposite of a disposition to boast. It receives all of its gifts and abilities with gratitude and regards them as coming from God. It is disposed to use them for him rather than to vainly boast about possessing them. Love does not boast because it is more considerate of others. It strives to make people at ease and comfortable in our presence. Love does not create a superiority complex within us but instead produces humility.

Love “doth not behave itself unseemly.” Love is decent and never acts improperly or disgracefully. Love seeks that which is proper or becoming in the circumstances and relations of life. It is courteous. It makes a man a gentleman.

Love “seeketh not its own.” Love is unselfish. In Phil. 2:4, Paul said “Not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also the things of others.” When one truly loves, he does not make his own happiness the main thing; he seeks the welfare of others, even at great personal sacrifice and self-denial. Love forgets self in service of others.

Love “is not provoked.” Love does not lose its temper. It is not irritated, is not made sour or bitter. It is not fired with resentment at every slight. As long as we are

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<sup>6</sup>Drummond, Henry, *The Greatest Thing In The World*, p. 29, 30

under the influence of love we shall not give way to sudden bursts of feeling.

On this point, Henry Drummond well says, "No form of vice, nor worldliness, nor greed of gold, nor drunkenness itself, does more to un-Christianise society, than evil temper. For embittering life, for breaking up communities," and we might add, local churches and the brotherhood itself, "for devastating homes, for withering up men and women, for taking the bloom off childhood; in short, for sheer gratuitous misery-producing power, this influence stands alone."

Love "taketh not account of evil." "The phrase is a very comprehensive one, implying that love is neither suspicious, nor implacable, nor retentive in her memory of evil done. Love writes our personal wrongs in ashes or in water."<sup>8</sup> Love does not "count up, to take account of as in a ledger or note-book, 'the evil' done to love with a view to settling the account."<sup>9</sup> "It never harbors evil thoughts."<sup>10</sup>

Love "rejoiceth not in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth." Love does not rejoice when others do wrong. It does not delight in the reports of their sin and is grieved in having proof of their guilt. While it does not rejoice in the vices of men, it rejoices in their virtues. It is happy when good is done and truth is advanced whether it be in our congregation, by a sister congregation near by or in some distant place in the brotherhood. It is not sectarian and does not refuse to delight to the success of truth at the hands of brethren who may have some differ-

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<sup>7</sup>Ob. Cit., Drummond, p. 33, 34

<sup>8</sup>Farrar, Ob. Cit., p. 424

<sup>9</sup>Robertson, A. T., Word Pictures In the New Testament p. 178, Vol. 4

<sup>10</sup>Williams, C. B., Williams' Translation of the New Testament

ences with us in matters of judgment and opinion. It is for truth and its success everywhere.

“Love beareth all things.” It patiently bears wrongs it has to suffer without complaint and does not murmur at the troubles and vexations of life. With reference to the faults and errors of others, is slow to notice them and never seeks to revenge them. Since “Love covereth a multitude of sins” (1 Pet. 4:8), it is slow to publicize the injury others have done us but is willing to bear them patiently.

“Love believeth all things.” In the light of the context it is evident that this has to do with the conduct of others. It does not mean that love is gullible and that one who loves is one of universal credulity. The Christian must distinguish between right and wrong. He must discern between truth and error. But in dealing with others, love would prompt him to put the best construction on their conduct. It does not judge their motives but as far as it can will believe in men and will not have its faith shaken until there is indisputable evidence that the faith is misplaced. It is the opposite of that common spirit found in so many that paints everything in its darkest colors. “Love is entirely alien from the spirit of the cynic, the pessimist, the ecclesiastical rival, the anonymous slanderer, the secret detractor.”<sup>11</sup>

Love “hopeth all things.” This still deals with the conduct of others. Love does not despair. Even when the clouds are heavy and faith has been shaken in others, Love still hopes that things will turn out right yet. It longs for the repentance of the one who has sinned and for restitution by the wrong doer. It hopes for better things tomorrow.

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<sup>11</sup>Farrar, F. W., *Ob. Cit.*, p. 424

Love "endureth all things." "The word 'hupomenoo,' translated 'endureth' is a military term, and means to sustain an assault; hence it has reference to heavier afflictions than those sustained by the 'beareth' of verse 7. It refers to gross ill-treatment, violence and persecution, and such grievances as provoke resistance, strife, etc. The enduring is not simply dogged persistence which bears up despite adversity, it is an endurance which forgives offense."<sup>12</sup>

### What Love of the Brethren Will Do For Me

When I learn how to treat my brother, then I will know how to treat the brotherhood. The same principles apply wherever my brother is. Let us observe some of the things that love of the brethren will do for me in my dealings with them.

(1) It will cause me to be charitable in my estimate of him, his conduct and his motives. This was pointed out in Paul's analysis of love under the statement that "Love believeth all things." Under the influence of love we shall look kindly on his actions; seek to put the best constructions on his motives; consider it possible that we have mistaken the nature or the reasons of his conduct; seek or desire an explanation; wait until we can see all the particulars in the case and suppose it possible that he may have had good motives and that his conduct can be explained satisfactorily.

(2) Love will cause me to be slow in believing him wrong when unfavorable reports come. It will cause me to look carefully at the evidence, discarding reports without any foundation and not have its faith shaken until facts demand it. This is illustrated in the following story. A bad report was brought to a preacher about one of his

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<sup>12</sup>McGarvey and Pendleton, *Standard Bible Commentary*, p. 130

brethren where he preached. He had so much confidence in his brother and regarded him so highly that he could not give any credence to the report. In checking the evidence he found that the report was false and an evil rumor. If love had not been present, it would have been easy for him to have believed the report and to have helped to circulate it.

(3) Love will cause me to refrain from rejoicing when my brother falls. As we have already noticed in 1 Cor. 13, it "rejoiceth not in unrighteousness."

(4) Love will cause me to hope for the best even when my brother is convicted of sin, that something might be done to restore him. It will keep me from despairing of his recovery until all possible has been done for him. We have observed that Paul says, "Love hopeth all things."

(5) It will cause me to go to him personally when he has wronged me. Jesus said, "And if thy brother sin against thee, go show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Matt. 18:15). Oftentimes an absence of love will cause an individual to report the grievance to everybody else but the offending party. The first step in dealing with a brother who has wronged me is not to tell everybody else, "to write him up" in the papers but to go to him. Even the second step, if he will not hear the first time, is to go to him again, this time, "taking with thee one or two more" (Matt. 18:16). How differently we act when we are under the influence of envy and hate instead of love. Often an absence of love causes an individual to report the grievance to everyone but the offending party.

Love will cause me to make overtures for reconciliation when I have been wronged. We are admonished to forgive "even as God also in Christ forgave us" (Eph. 4:32). God, innocent of any wrong, made the first move in bringing

about a reconciliation with man. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). So when my brother wrongs me, if he does not come to me first, let me initiate the move for peace and understanding by going to him.

(6) Love will cause me to seek to restore a brother in a spirit of gentleness and meekness when he is overcome in a trespass. To all Christians this divine instruction is given. "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in a trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

(7) Love will cause me to go to the one I have wronged. "If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matt. 5:23-24).

(8) Love will cause me to try to convert those who err from the truth. "My brethren, if any among you err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he who converts a sinner from the error of his way shall save a sinner from death, and cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20). But even this will be done with gentleness and kindness. "And the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him unto his will" (2 Tim. 2:24-26).

(9) Love will cause us to reprove those who teach error but even this must be done without ugliness of spirit on our part. To Titus, Paul wrote with reference to false

teachers, "reprove them sharply, that they may be sound in faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men who turn away from the truth" (Titus 1:14). Immediately following however, he warns Titus to be very prudent and wise in everything, saying: "In all things showing thyself an ensample of good works; in thy doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of us" (Titus 2:7-9). In Rom. 16:17, it is written, "Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned; and turn away from them." So there are times when men must be marked as false teachers and they must not be considered worthy of fellowship any longer but even when that times comes, we must still remember the words of Paul, "And if any man obeyeth not our word by this epistle, note that man, that ye have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed. And yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (2 Thess. 3:14-15).

Paul resisted Simon Peter "to the face, because he stood condemned" (Gal. 2:11), in dealing with his Gentile brethren. However, there is no evidence that he tried to destroy the man. Nothing is said about his publishing all the faults of Peter's life and trying to make him out as a reprobate. No wonder Peter was corrected and later referred to his benefactor as "our beloved brother Paul" (2 Pet. 2:15).

How different to that which we have seen often in our times. Issues are covered up with personalities, brethren calling each other by names, indicating everything but love, and efforts that seem calculated to destroy men. Concerning such conduct, Paul said to certain ones, "For

ye are not carnal; for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, and do ye not walk after the manner of men" (1 Cor. 3:3)?

Often in our zeal to correct others, we need correcting, even as Paul said, "Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal" (Rom. 2:21)? We should read frequently, "Cast out first the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matt. 7:7).

Before we seek to correct a brother or the brotherhood, let us be sure that he or the brotherhood need correcting from the thing which appears to be dangerous to us. Maybe we need to restudy the question in mind. When we have done that very thing, if we are still convinced of something wrong, then cry out against the error, loving our brethren, manifesting the right spirit, staying with the issue and hoping for good to be done and for unity among brethren everywhere.

Some thought that the church needed to be saved from Bible classes and women teachers and were mistaken. Others believed it needed to be saved from communion sets, missing the teaching of the Scriptures. They were mistaken and instead of saving it, divided the brotherhood over their opinions. Some think it needs to be saved today from many different things. It would be well for all of us who are eager to see the church orthodox that we do not contribute to further needless division. Loving the brotherhood we will yearn for its unity as well as its orthodoxy. In matters of opinion we must exercise liberty. To divide the church over opinions is not the working of love. Love will help us to arrive with clear heads and warm hearts. When individuals and churches and the brotherhood need correcting, the right way, the way of love, will come much nearer bringing about the needed reforms than

resorting to methods unbecoming to Christians. When men know that we love them, that we are truly interested in them and their work, then we can come much nearer correcting their mistakes and unscriptural practices.

We ought to be able to discuss issues without clouding them with personalities. If we cannot defend our practices without destroying reputations, challenging one's character and impugning another's motives, then our own practices might really need looking into. Often, however, the issue is so obscured by writings, speeches, and conduct, unbecoming of one who loves his brethren that souls earnestly looking for the truth have great difficulty in finding it. Love opposes error but it also opposes that spirit unbecoming of a Christian in seeking to correct it. When brethren fight and devour one another, it must be great satisfaction to the enemies of the Lord's church.

(10) Love will cause me to be swift to forgive my brother when he does repent. We are admonished to forgive as God forgives (Eph. 4:32), and as God forgives readily and freely, without putting men on probation, so must we.

(11) As to a final thing that love for my brother will do for me, it must not be overlooked that it will cause me to take him back into my fellowship when he does turn from the error of his way, his false teaching or his mis-conduct. By no means does this exhaust all that love will do for me in dealing with my brother but these are some principles that could save congregations and the brotherhood from much of the troubles that confront us in every generation.

### **The Necessity of Loving My Brethren**

That loving my brethren is a matter of major importance may be seen from the plain teaching of many passages of scripture. Let us observe a few of them so that

with greater diligence we can give ourselves to this noble and helpful command.

1. First of all, I need to love my brethren that I may have the assurance that I have "passed out of death into life." Loving the brethren is one of the tests as to whether or not I am a Christian. "We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brethren" (1 John 3:14). Thus, this distinguishing characteristic is a mark of the new birth. We frequently quote Acts 2:38 and state that we know we have been saved from our past sins because we have obeyed this divine instruction. But not often do men say they are Christians because they love the brethren. Both Acts 2:38 and 1 John 3:14 are in the same Bible and never let us be guilty of minimizing the importance of any of God's statements. The last part of 1 John 3:14 says, "He that loveth not, abideth in death."

2. I cannot love God without loving my brethren. I may consider myself as one who loves God and a faithful member of his church but such is not the case unless I love the brethren. It is written: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen" (1 John 4:20). Loving God and loving the brethren go hand in hand. May God help us to see that we cannot love him and not love the brethren.

3. Unless I love God I do not even know God. "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love" (1 John 4:7-8). How tragic to think that one who considers himself a disciple of Christ can miss the mark so far that it is possible for him not even to know God.

4. Without love for my brethren I am unlike God. Paul wrote, "Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved chil-

dren; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell" (Eph. 5:1-2). No wonder that John wrote, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 John 4:11).

5. Unless I love my brethren God will not abide in me. On this point John states, "If we love one another, God abideth in us, and his love is perfected in us" (1 John 4:12). So God will not take up his abode in the heart that does not have love for the brethren.

6. Love is a badge indicating that I am a disciple of Christ. Men frequently wear some sort of badge showing that they belong to some civic club or some order, and one of the ways a Christian indicates that he is a disciple of Christ is by loving the brethren. Jesus said, "By this shall men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). When this great power prevailed, in the first century and in the years that followed, the church made astounding progress; but when the so-called disciples of Christ began to hate and devour one another, the church had her progress arrested. If we will allow brotherly love to assert itself again, there is nothing that will help the church more in reaching the lost. When men are convinced that we are disciples indeed, then we will influence their lives.

7. Without love for the brethren I can never possess the Christian graces so necessary to making my "calling and election sure." At the very end of the list of these graces which must be found in the child of God, Peter puts brotherly love. "In your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control patience; and in your patience godliness; and in your godliness brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness love" (2 Pet. 1:5-7).

The margin gives the meaning of "brotherly kindness" as "love of the brethren."

8. Without love of God and the brethren, and they go hand in hand, my Christianity is an empty shell. It profits me nothing. Love is indispensable. As to how necessary love is, let us conclude with the beautiful words of the first three verses of 1 Cor. 13. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

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## NOT FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLY

Dan F. Fogarty

The possibilities before me this evening for good, causes great humility and rejoicing in my heart. To Abilene Christian College, the directors of this lectureship and to the hundreds gathered here this evening I express my deepest appreciation.

My subject, "Not forsaking the Assembly," further brings soberness upon me. I am guided in what I am to say, not by men, but by the God of heavens. "If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God . . ." 1 Pet. 4:11. God chastens his people through loyal gospel preachers, and if, therefore you are caused to be conscious of your failings in this matter, then you have been helped by this lectureship and by this address. God knows what we need, he is our maker.

Did you ever hear that the Bible taught, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord?", or, "The Lord shall judge his people?" or, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses?", or, "if we sin wilfully after that we have received a knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins?" Yes, you have both heard and read these truths. Did it occur to you that these great statements deal with "Forsaking the assembly?" As we know, the New Testament is not a book of "Thou shalt nots," yet this is one of them! Among the few "thou shalt nots," one of them refers to the assembly, the forsaking of it. I would like to read you from Hebrews chapter ten, verses twenty-one through thirty-one. Hear them carefully. "And having a high priest over the house of God: Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an

evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for he is faithful that promised) and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is: but exhorting one another and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people."

Now, how many times have you read that? What does it mean to you? This, of course from the same book that teaches repentance, baptism, and the Lord's supper. Let me show you some parallels.

1. To sin wilfully, for which there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, is connected with forsaking the assembly.
2. This certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation devouring the adversaries, is connected with forsaking the assembly.
3. His mentioning the fact that men who despised Moses' law died without mercy is connected to our forsaking the assembly, since we would be despising the law of Christ, and that law forbids us from forsaking the assembly.

4. Trodding Christ under our feet is connected with our forsaking the assembly.

5. Counting the blood of the covenant wherewith we were sanctified refers to our forsaking the assembly.

6. Doing despite unto the Spirit of Grace is not referring to baptism, but our forsaking the assembly.

7. The Lord judging his people is still speaking of forsaking the assembly.

8. To fall into the hands of the living God is an impression of the result of forsaking the assembly.

9. Vengeance is mine; saith the Lord, vengeance for what brethren? All sin of course, but he is dealing with the forsaking of the assembly . . . which is sin.

Pretty strong language, isn't it? Would you expect God to use any other type language when he is doing his best to save our souls? If you had the burden of saving the souls of men, preparing them for that celestial city, what type language would you use?

To all who listen and read this address, I ask you this question. Have you and are you wilfully forsaking the assembly? If so, and if I were you, I would appear before that assembly the next time it assembled and I would apologize to them and pray the God of heavens to forgive me for having trodden the Son of God under my feet, for counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing and for doing despite unto the Spirit of Grace. Many of you who listen to me this evening will not live to see the end of the year. Will you not think seriously about this all important obligation?

I would like now to tell you why the assembly is of such great importance, and why many people forsake it, what the assembly is, and which one you should attend. I do not intend to leave a single stone unturned here, for we are to declare the "whole" counsel of God.

What is the assembly? The assembly is the "coming together of the church." Christ loved the church, and still does, he died for it (Eph. 5:25). Now he loves the church wherever its members may be, at home, on the job, on the vacation; but there are times when the church assembles, and this is the thing we are forbidden from forsaking. The local congregation is under the oversight of the elders, and when the elders of a local congregation designate a time for assembly, each member is obligated to be there, and those who do not attend are not 'obeying them that have the rule over you' (Heb. 13:17). The congregation should be well taught enough that when an assembly is coming up in the near future, it should not be necessary for some elder to stand up and beg for the members to 'please come out,' or, 'we'll be expecting you.' The assembly is the church. It is still the church whether in its assembled or dis-assembled form: but when it assembles, all should be there, or prepare to answer to God for it. Listen to me carefully. "If a person is sick, can he not miss it?" I do not know! "If a person is working, can he not miss it?" I do not know. I could tell you what I thought and what people have said. I am here to preach the word, and the word says, "Do not forsake it." Naturally we believe that when a person does the best he can in such matters, then it will be acceptable with God, but I for one will not be responsible for contributing to people's thinking that they can miss the assembly. We have enough self-made excuses as it is. The safe rule is to be there. Here is the old dodge. "Which assembly?" People like to ask a preacher saying, "Scholars do not agree, you know?" Yes, and thank God for a simple book that people can understand, scholars notwithstanding! We know what the assembly is, and we know when it will assemble, and if we know the Bible teaching and if we love

the church we will be there. "Preachers have to go," says another. Well sir, if it takes that to cause you to be there, then you'd better become a preacher. It is a wide open field, come on in, we need you.

In most quarters the church assembles twice on the first day of the week and on Wednesday nights. Somewhere down the line someone has handed us the idea that the assembly is on Sunday morning. It is a pleasing morsel, and our brethren have fastened themselves to it. To shake this idea from them is most difficult; but it can be done. Any church can double its number in attendance any time it wishes to do so. With this we shall deal shortly. You elders rest now, for when we deal with the attendance, I'll be coming right at you.

Now when the church assembles at these different times, who has the right to be absent? As it stands now, about one-half of the membership does not attend. Let the question impress you now, just who has the right to be absent? If anyone has the right to be absent, just where is the authority? Is it not the assembly? . . . the church? There can be but one true answer. When one fails to attend, that one is forsaking the assembly. There is no escape. If the church is meeting for worship, or for edification, or work, then it is important enough for all to be there, and if it is not that important, then it is going beyond its instructions, and no one should attend. I am happy that this lectureship is calling attention to these things. It has been neglected long enough.

**Why do people forsake the Assembly?** Since people who do so are to be lost, it is worthy of our consideration. If it is partly our fault, then it is time we did something about it. Following are some reasons and the remedy for them:

1. We have simply failed to teach our people what the Bible teaches concerning this important subject. We beg and plead with the membership so much about their attending that we possibly leave with them the impression that they have the right (scripturally) to either attend or not attend. God's word says, "**Do Not Fail To Attend,**" and we have changed it to, "Please come," or, "We hope all of you will be here." This is what we do all right, and many times people come to please us, and not God. Just whom do we serve anyway? Think now, who do negligent members apologize to after they have neglected the services? Folks, you should attend the services, to be pleasing to God, not because you are afraid that some of the members will tease you about it.

2. Secondly, we have failed, many times, to teach God's people what the assembly is and what it is for. Here, the elders are completely in charge. It is up to them to decide just when and where the church is to assemble, and for what purpose it is to assemble. It should be clearly announced so that all may know. If a person is going to mumble out an announcement, he is speaking in an unknown tongue, and since we are fresh out of interpreters, he is out of place. If all can hear him then it should be explained that it is for the church . . . all the church, and, that each one is obligated and expected to be there. I am not speaking of funerals, weddings, ladies' Bible Class, etc., I am speaking of the occasions when the whole church is coming together for the purposes specified in the New Testament. Nothing wrong with a funeral or a wedding or some of the women doing some sewing, but this is not the purpose of an assembly. I repeat that the distinction should be pointed out and explained in detail the difference between a funeral and a gospel meeting for instance. There is a vast difference, even though sometimes the two of

them might resemble. What I have in mind is that some members cannot see why if they are not commanded to attend a funeral then why should they attend all the assemblies. Brethren, let's make these things clear to our people.

3. Third, we make little or no attempt of a follow-up to determine why members are forsaking the assembly. Here, once again the elders will give answer to the Almighty God. When people forsake the assembly, someone who is spiritual should visit these people and find out why. This should be done in a serious tone, there is no joking about it . . . it is not funny. If they are hindered from attending, perhaps we could help them to remove this hindrance, and if they are wilfully neglecting the assembly, they should be taught the consequences.

4. Fourth and finally, no program for the people. Many are forsaking the assembly because they feel that it is a waste of time, and in some quarters it is a waste of time. Here, as in everything, the elders are completely in charge, and are, therefore, completely responsible. Take the Mid-week assembly for instance. This activity should be well organized and well oiled. It should function smoothly with a well planned and well developed system. So many times nothing is prepared, no one is in charge, and therefore nothing happens. A few songs, someone reads a chapter, just snatched hurriedly from any part of the Bible, someone spends twenty minutes telling everyone that he is not a speaker does not claim to be, and has lost his notes anyway, then everyone goes home. What is accomplished? Nothing? Oh, yes, we have accomplished something all right, we have driven several into dis-interest, and they will not come back. The most effective method I have seen for Mid-week activities is to allow the youngsters to have their classes for their capacity, and then preach in the audi-

torium for the adults. This, of course, after the congregation has been taught that the Mid-week service is a part of the program of the elders feeding the flock, and that the members are expected to be there. When they come have something prepared for them. If a child will not eat that child will starve; but, it is the mother who does not prepare the food that is accountable for the death. If the church is starving in certain quarters, the elders are not feeding it! Animals will quit coming to the feed trough if there is no feed there, and so will people. If your preacher is too tired to preach on Wednesday nights, let him rest, and preach yourselves. Maybe after he has listened to you a few times he will get rested up.

### What An Assembly Does for The Church

It is true that the commands of God in this dispensation are for the good of the people. Any time you obey a command of God you either help yourself or your fellowman. Hence the command to assemble is for our own good. We are the recipients . . . not God. How does it help us? Much is said about fellowship these days.

I doubt whether this is the real charge we derive from the assembly. Ask the average member about this fellowship thing . . . if he can even define "fellowship" I'd be surprised. Not that there is anything wrong with fellowship. The early New Testament church continued in "fellowship," but I fear that we have lost a lot of it along the way. Ask some of our young about the fellowship of a service. See if they were conscious of any fellowship. Let us then discuss something we can get our teeth into.

A. **There is the factor of growth.** One can fairly well measure the growth of a congregation by its numbers in attendance. A small mustard seed will grow into a large plant, taught the master, and so can a church . . . in fact

he was speaking of the church. Mark it well, a church that is not growing is having "assembly" trouble, and the trouble is that people are forsaking the assembly. The more people forsake the assembly, the more that congregation is drying up. One does not see a congregation of people who support the assembly that does not grow. It proves that the people are putting the kingdom first, and when people do that the kingdom will grow in that area. Go ahead and poke fun at the assembly, tell the people that we do not know which day he was speaking of in Heb. 10 and watch it wither on the vine. It is in the assembly that God's people see one another, they see one another's faith manifested, and they become conscious of their responsibilities.

#### **B. Then there is the matter of Inspiration.**

How would you like your company to attempt to charge an enemy embattlement and upon looking around you discover that half the company is absent. How much heart would you have left? Would you feel like charging? I know that you wouldn't. When people come together there is an air of inspiration present. It is true that if only two or three came, the Lord would still be there; however, it is also true that it is most discouraging when people forsake the assembly. God knew this, and therefore commands that we do not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. When people are together, their zeal can be fired, either up or not, depending upon who is doing the firing. We are assuming of course that those in charge of the service are people who will inspire the people. People who have assembled, should, when they leave feel closer to God. They should be fired up, or inspired to their duties as a Christian. If the assembly falls upon the first day of the week, then those who have assembled have obtained

help and courage, and inspiration for the week. If that person attends Sunday night then that one receives further inspiration. The Mid-week should further inspire him.

**C. Finally, there is the matter of incentive!**

Incentive, of course, to be a better Christian. Incentive to see that the kingdom expands and that the will of the Lord be done. The assembly, and the things done in the assembly can either kill or fire the incentive. Good songs, sung with the spirit and the understanding, prayers led by godly men, a sermon designed to encourage, stimulate, and announcements well worded concerning future work of the church will increase the incentive to further God's work. Members have been known to have missed an entire gospel meeting, not knowing that the church was having one. The reason they did not know . . . they missed the assembly and thereby missed the announcements. Announcements should be clearly spoken and due emphasis given to the announcements.

**Why Do Christians Assemble?**

Great emphasis has been placed on the necessity of assembly due to the fact that it is commanded, as our text stated. Would God the Father be pleased with a congregation of people who assembled before him because they were commanded to do so? Is this the reason we observe the communion? Is this the reason we do not steal? Do we rear our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord because he commands that we do so? If the answer to these questions is yes, then we are missing the true purpose of Christianity. Yes, we are! Actually we are not converted. If all we can say about "Not forsaking the assembly" is that we are commanded to attend, then we are missing the heart of Christ's teaching. Do you really refrain from stealing because the Master commands

that you do not steal? Or do you who stole, steal no more because now you realize that stealing is wrong, unfair, and unjust? And do we not now realize that our failing to do these things actually help us, make us stronger and better? Actually then, Christians do not forsake the assembly because;

**A. They understand their duties.**

They know of the most precious thing in the world . . . the church. They know, that in order to really support the church of which they are a member, they must be in attendance at the gatherings of that church. They realize that their absence hurts. They are cognizant of the fact that the best way to kill the efforts of the church is to fail to attend the efforts of the church. What does an empty pew say? Nothing! And that is just exactly what that one who should be sitting there is saying and doing. Nothing! The Christian attends the services of the church, and he does it because he knows his duties.

**B. They love the church.** A Christian attends the services because he loves the church. We do not neglect that which we love. The song, "You always hurt the one you love" is pure heathenism. You do not hurt the one you love. When a person loves the church, that one does not hurt the church by his neglect. He does not "wilfully" absent himself from the services of the church. Not if he loves it. Christ died for it . . . and the Christian knows that . . . and will not forsake it. I know a man who has not missed the Lord's supper in nearly forty years. This brother does not miss on Wednesday nights either. He loves the church. Let me tell you someone that you love. Yes, you are in love all right, and I can tell you exactly who you love, and I've never met several hundred of you. Now this particular person that you love, you do not neglect. You

feed him, you keep him warm, you take him with you everywhere you go, and you never forget him. You love him, and that person is yourself. That is what the apostle said, "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh! but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church" (Eph. 5: 29). Sometimes people say, "I hate myself," but it cannot be so.

Yes, Christians do not forsake the assembly because they love the church, and they know that the assembly is the church. Those who wilfully and knowingly forsake the assembly are either wilfully sinning, or they are sinning in ignorance. Take your choice brethren, both are guilty.

### What Can Be Done?

For many, very little can be done. From their youth up, they have been led to believe both by example and by teaching, that the church is of very little import. Multitudes feel "churched out," and are fainting by the side of the way. Scores of others are disturbed as to which assembly they should "have" to go to. When God commands, "Thou shalt not steal," do we question just what we should not steal? Well, do not steal anything. "Thou shalt not kill." We do not ask "Who should we not kill?" Just do not kill anyone. Are we not the ones who speak where the Bible speaks? If so, then just do not forsake the assembly. To those, then, whom we may teach, and encourage, we must be up and about it. In closing I would write the following indelibly upon your heart.

"Exhort those who are failing in this duty. Do not joke with them about it, for it is not a joking matter. It is deadly serious, according to our text. If you saw a brother toying with a venomous viper, you wouldn't kid him about it. If a brother is forsaking the assembly, do not walk up

to him with a big smile across your face and say, "Uh huh, you were not at church, were you?" And he will grin back at you and say, "Nope, just couldn't make it, you know?" So, both of you have a good laugh. Do you know just who it is at which you are laughing? Big joke. Do you know who the joke is on? None other, than Jesus Christ, himself . . . for notice;

"And having a high priest over the house of God: let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for he is faithful that promised) and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is: but exhorting one another and so much the more as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. For he that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace? For we know him that saith, vengeance belongeth to me, I will recompense saith the Lord, and again, the Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." I thank you.

Longview, Texas.

## WITHDRAW YOURSELVES FROM THOSE WHO WALK DISORDERLY

Gus Nichols

My friends and fellow citizens of the kingdom of Christ. I appreciate the invitation to appear on this lecture program, and feel keenly the responsibility that is mine. Some two years ago I lectured here a week to the preachers in school and learned to admire Abilene Christian College and the fine work offered. All of us should be deeply interested in Christian education and schools like this. They are worthy of better support.

In the last half of the commission our Saviour authorized his disciples to teach Christians to observe all things which he had commanded (Matt. 28:20). The subject assigned to me is under this general theme of the lecture program. Our subject is in the imperative. The apostle Paul says, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Thess. 3:6). This is not a popular doctrine. However, God's faithful are not prejudiced against the truth on any subject. They love all God says on giving, self-denials, withdrawing fellowship, and all other subjects.

### From Disorderly

Our text demands that we withdraw ourselves from the disorderly among us (2 Thess. 3:6). Of course, there is a sense in which all of us are disorderly. Not one of us is sinlessly perfect. "There is no man that sinneth not" (1 Kings 8:46). "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccl. 7:20). Jesus said, "There is none good but one, that is, God" (Matt. 19:17).

The apostle John said of himself and other Christians, "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). In the light of these plain passages, it would be foolish for us to set out to withdraw ourselves from all those who are in some way imperfect. There would be none of us fit to do the withdrawing. While the divine side of the church is perfect the human side of it is not, but is as weak and imperfect as its members. The church is not like a league ball team—made up of the best players to be found and purchased. The church is more like a hospital to which the weak and frail, the wounded and bleeding, the sick and dying come for health and a more abundant life.

There are various kinds of people in the fellowship of the church. Perhaps there are some in our fellowship who have never been truly converted. Their ideals are worldly and their ambitions unholy. They are a positive hindrance to the progress of the church.

Some are mere babes in Christ and have not had ample time in which to grow very much. These need encouragement and the best that is in us. They must be fed and nourished on the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby (1 Peter 2:2). They hate sin and are happy in the Lord. Naturally they have more imperfections than older and more seasoned members, and should be dealt with gently and tenderly as parents deal with little children.

But there are some in our fellowship who are wilful sinners, and are in known rebellion against God. They have deliberately gone back into sin. Their very purpose of heart is to sin and follow flesh. Their hearts are set to have their own way. Christ said some would, "For a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away" (Luke 8:13). Some even so far fall away that it is impossible to renew them unto repentance (Heb. 6:4-6). Some others do not

thus give up Christianity, and quit the church, but while professing to believe the truth they are wilful sinners, and bring reproach upon the church. They, too, are proud and impenitent. We must not harbor such characters in the fellowship of the church. In some places the only way to get out of the fellowship is to die out.

I heard of a brother who was preaching in a very bad community when two "drunks" came in and demanded that he show them a miracle. The preacher requested them to be quiet, and informed that he made no claim to miraculous power. But they continued to demand that he show them a sign. Finally he lost his temper, and kicked them out at the door, saying, "We do not work miracles here, but we do cast out devils!" (Laughter). Well, in some places we do not even cast out devils! God says, "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5:13).

### God is for System and Order

The God of the Bible is a God of law and order. He punishes those who violate the laws of nature. Retribution is meted out to those who carelessly touch a red hot stove, or a charged wire. The day of reckoning surely comes to all who trifle with God's physical laws governing the universe. In all realms God disciplines the disorderly and disobedient.

### Moral and Spiritual Realm

God is just as anxious for us to strictly obey his moral and spiritual law as he is his laws of nature. He wants man to stand at attention and take orders. True religion is based on the authority of God's word. He says, "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word" (Isa. 66:2). God uses moral and suasive power to induce obedience on

our part. Had it been possible for God to have put more power in the gospel, and to have made it more effective in saving the lost, he would have done it. His great loving heart would not have permitted him to rest without going all out in an effort to save the world (Rom. 1:16).

### How Man is Moved to Obey

Man is moved to obey God through a plurality of motives and incentives. The highest incentive to serve the Lord is that driving force within us called love (1 Cor. 13:13). His love exhibited in the gospel impels us to love him (1 John 4:19). This love induces obedience on our part (1 John 4:3; John 14:21).

The "Exceeding great and precious promises" of God draw us like a magnet toward God. We obey him to receive his blessings. But perhaps none are moved by these incentives alone, great as they are.

The dignity of man and self-respect have to do with obedience. Man is so constituted that he does not want to be ignored, humiliated and put to shame before his fellow travelers. Neither does he want to be in any way punished and made to suffer. God appeals to this part of man's nature in the gospel. Man fears all of these things, and wants to escape them. The threatenings and warnings of the gospel are a part of the power of the gospel to convert men. "By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil" (Prov. 16:6).

### God Wants All To Fear

God wants man to fear him and turn from evil so as to escape the inevitable consequences of sin. God says, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me" (Jer. 32:40). Sin is a deceitful thing—worse than it appears to be—and God wants us to be afraid of sin as we would be of a deadly serpent.

### A God of Discipline

Our loving Father is a God of discipline. He has always punished the disorderly, not so much as a matter of vengeance, as to cause others to fear and obey him. This is one way he has of putting his fear in our hearts so that we will not depart from him. He makes bad people an example unto others for their good.

When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden of Eden, God disciplined them (Gen. 2:17; 3:1-19). He drove them out and excluded them from his fellowship. When Cain murdered his brother God drove him out and off to the land of Nod (Gen. 4; 1 John 3). God purged the world by the deluge in the days of Noah (Gen. 6). He burned Sodom and Gomorrah for their wickedness (Gen. 19). The carcasses of the rebellious Israelites were strewn from one side of the wilderness to the other until the wicked were so excluded that only the faithful entered Canaan (1 Cor. 10). He killed Nadab and Abihu in the very act of their false worship (Levit. 10). God has not changed (Mal. 4:6). He killed Ananias and Sapphira, members of the New Testament church, because of their sins (Acts 5:1-14). Because of this discipline "Great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things . . . and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:11-14). Such cases of discipline are intended to teach us that, "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Psa. 89:7). This is still true under the new covenant. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:28-29). Such direct and miraculous punishment as that suffered by

Ananias is only an example of what other wicked members may expect at the judgment.

### Discipline Not Always Miraculous

God has often had his people punish the disorderly. A son who was a drunkard and rebellious and would not hearken unto his parents was to be stoned to death so all Israel would "Hear and fear" (Deut. 21:18-21). Furthermore the parents were to take the lead in this discipline. The wicked were often punished in the wilderness by the people. They purged out and put away evil doers from among them, and did it by God's authority. Having shown us that he is a God of law and order—a God of discipline—he has required his church to exercise discipline over its members (2 Thess. 3:6, 12-14). Recently a young man came to me for help to get back into the army. He had so misbehaved that he was given a dishonorable discharge. The purity and good name of the church must be preserved, so that the church may have favor with all the people as in the Jerusalem church (Acts 2:47). God has forbidden any one to give any offense unto the church, and says those who defile this spiritual temple shall be destroyed (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 10:32). Wicked men in the church sometimes say it is none of our business what they do. But just suppose your partner in a grocery store were to become a drunkard and drive away the customers by his drunkenness and profanity, would you not consider this some of your business? You would dissolve partnership with him, and put him out, rather than to sit idly by and see the business die. The church is the biggest business in the universe and we cannot afford to let a few lawless characters stop its progress and kill its influence in the community. "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that

walketh disorderly" (2 Thess. 3:6). "Note that man and have no company with him" (v. 12).

### Those Within, Not Outsiders

We cannot discipline those outside the church, but must withdraw from "Every brother" that walketh "Disorderly" (2 Thess. 3:6). We must not try to root up the tares, or "Children of the wicked one" (Matt. 13:30-39). Those who are **without God** judgeth (1 Cor. 5:9-13). He says we are to judge those "Within," and put away from **among ourselves** "That wicked person" (v. 13). He describes them as fornicators, covetous persons, idolaters, railers, drunkards, and extortioners (1 Cor. 5:9-13). Occasionally a church will withdraw from a drunkard, or a fornicator, but what about those who are covetous, or railers or extortioners? The truth is we should put away all "Disorderly" persons from among us (2 Thess. 3:6).

### False Teachers

No false teacher should be permitted to remain in our fellowship. Paul charged Timothy to "Preach the word" and said that the time would come when some would not "Endure sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2-5). The Jerusalem church continued "In the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42). The solemn charge is: "Teach no other doctrine" (1 Tim. 1:3). The apostle John says, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed: for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10:11). Paul says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:17-18). Yes, they may use "Good words

and fair speeches" but they cause divisions and offenses, and they do it "Contrary to the doctrine" of Christ. Such teachers are to be branded and avoided. Again, the apostle says, "A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself" (Titus 3:10). The elders of the church are to so oversee and shepherd the church, as to keep the wolves out. The elders must see to it that hobby riders and sowers of discord, with all other false teachers, are kept out of the pulpit, and from teaching in any way in the church. The peace of the church depends upon this. Don't waste more than a second admonition on such teachers (Titus 3:10).

#### When Withdraw?

But when should we withdraw ourselves from the disorderly? Obviously, there are hopeless cases with which we should deal without great delay. In dealing with weak members and those who may not know they are guilty of sin we should be very patient (1 Thess. 5:14). We should have compassion on those who are ignorant and out of the way (Heb. 5:1-2). We are to reprove and rebuke some who are in error and sin (2 Tim. 4:2-3). In aggravated cases drastic means are to be used. Paul says, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (1 Tim. 5:20). Many years ago one of our members went into adultery with an outsider. The letters passed fell into my hands, showing that there was no doubt as to the facts in the case. I preached on adultery the next Lord's day, but still other letters showed further guilt. I continued preaching on adultery for three Lord's days, then announced that if the matter continued the next Lord's day I would announce the name of our member involved and give the reproof before all as is commanded in 1 Tim. 5:20. This

brought repentance and the good results which God intended should follow. The church can't win when there is sin in the camp. "Sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). All who indorse sin in others are themselves guilty of sin. If we regard iniquity in others we need never pray, for God will not hear us (Psa. 66:18). We must rebuke sin and try to correct those guilty. We must try to restore those overtaken in a fault (Gal. 6:1; James. 5:18-20).

### **If One Has Been Offended**

If one has been offended and mistreated he must go to the offender and tell him of his fault in secret, and if he will not correct and adjust the matter, then the offended one must take one or two others, and finally tell it to the church and let the church use its good graces, if need be. But if he will not hear the church he is then to be treated as an heathen or a publican—be disfellowshipped (Matt. 18:15-18). Furthermore, upon learning that we have offended another we must immediately try to bring about a proper understanding and reconciliation (Matt. 5:23-27).

### **Who Take the Lead?**

Of course the elders are to take the lead in all such matters. They are the God-appointed overseers of the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-6). They are to investigate any case, and when they have quietly gathered all the facts and find the report true, they are to set about to restore the guilty brother, and if they fail, they may ask the church if any one knows any scriptural reason why the fellowship should not be withdrawn from the guilty brother until he repents and confesses his sin. If no scriptural reason is given against it, they should announce that the church must not fellowship the excluded brother any further. This should be done in a public assembly "When ye be gathered together" (1 Cor. 5:1-13). Of

course, all things are to be done in gentleness and according to the golden rule (Matt. 7:12; 2 Cor. 10:1). No good surgeon having to perform an operation to remove a limb from the body would want to be cruel, or as painful as possible. Let us be kind to all men, even the disorderly.

### Responsibility of Whole Church

After the elders make the announcement, the whole church must back them up and actually withdraw fellowship and all partnership. No one is to keep company with the excluded brother, nor eat or associate with him (1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3). Any one fellowshipping him would become guilty with him. God killed a prophet of Judah for eating with those whom God had excluded (1 Kings 13).

### An Awful Mistake

Sometimes when some one is withdraw from by the church some of his kin and friends comfort him in his rebellion and criticize the church, lending encouragement to him in sin. They sometimes say they are quitting the church to be with such disorderly persons. This is an awful mistake, and brands those doing this as walking after the flesh (Rom. 8:13; Gal. 5:24). Once when many of Jesus' disciples decided to go back to walk no more with Jesus, he turned to his disciples and asked them if they also wanted to go away. In other words, Jesus said, "The door is open and you may go with the wicked if you wish—make your choice!" (John 6:66-68). Those who would side with disorderly characters are themselves very wicked. When two hundred and fifty men, including Korah, rebelled against the authority of Moses and Aaron, God destroyed them. Then when fourteen thousand and seven hundred others did not like what God did, God destroyed all of them also (Num. 15).

### Duties of Other Churches

Of course, other congregations are to recognize what the withdrawing church did in the matter. The excluded brother cannot, therefore, place his fellowship with another congregation, until and unless he has corrected his sin. God would not have one church put away a disorderly brother and then have another congregation take him as he is and fellowship him. Even Satan is not divided against himself like that (Matt. 12:25-26). Hence, strangers coming among us claiming to be in full fellowship may need letters of commendation from the elders of the church where they have lived. At least this should be required in doubtful cases (2 Cor. 3:1-3). The Jerusalem church would not receive Paul until Barnabas indorsed him (Acts 9:26-27). Jude 4 speaks of "Certain men crept in un-awares" to do evil.

### Can a Church Be Disfellowshipped?

Churches of Christ are not tied together by any sort of denominational or ecclesiastical organization, but each church is free under Christ the great head of the church to run its own business as though there was not another like it on earth. Yet there is fellowship among the churches. One church is not to treat all the others as though they were Mormon churches. Peter said, "Love the brotherhood" (1 Peter 2:17). The brotherhood is larger than a local congregation. Hence, we are interested in each other's welfare everywhere. There is to be unity among all Christians, and not only in a local congregation (John 17:20-22). We are to be so united that we should be glad to announce each other's meetings, attend them and help in the singing, prayers, etc. We may lend chairs to each other, and fellowship each other as churches in a general sort of way, so long as the autonomy of each church is not violated.

No congregation should try to build itself up by tearing down another. Hence, there should be no proselyting of members from one church to another, as has been done in a few cities. All of this proves that there is a certain amount of fellowship between "churches of Christ." Now, if a congregation should depart from the truth so far as to cease to be a church of the Lord, no other congregation should fellowship it any further, any more than it would a denominational congregation. True churches should not be against each other. Remember that even Satan is not divided against himself (Matt. 12:25-26).

#### What of the Driftwood?

Occasionally there are some who move into the vicinity of the church and instead of coming forward the first opportunity and becoming identified with the church to be under the oversight of the elders, they drift about from one congregation to another, avoiding all responsibility of the local congregation where they live. They treat the local church and its elders as if Satan were running that church. God would not have authorized elders in the church, then be pleased with those who ignore them (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13). God is not divided against himself in any such way (1 Cor. 14:33). All who walk in the light of God's word will assemble with the saints in their community and be in their fellowship (1 John 1:7). All Christians in Jerusalem had fellowship with the church and each other (Acts 2:42). When a little daughter found her mother's church letter in an old trunk up in the attic, she came rushing down saying, "O, mother, mother! I have found your religion in the old trunk up in the attic." Drifting members have nothing but "trunk religion." If they bring reproach on the church, it should

rebuke them, even by name, if need be, and announce that they are not in the fellowship of the church.

### What of Drifting Preachers?

If a preacher comes claiming to be a member of the church, investigate his claim, unless he is known to be a faithful preacher of the word. (Rev. 2:2; 2 Cor. 11:13-15). There is no virtue in accepting and supporting bums and deadbeats who like a leach live on the generosity of kind-hearted people (2 Thess. 3:1-14). Beware of preachers who push themselves upon the church. The fact that a preacher moves into the community does not mean that the church has to use him. Even the fact that he may be in the fellowship of the church does not oblige the church to use and support him. When the church invites a certain preacher it is not obligated to go to all preachers not invited and apologize for not inviting and using them instead of the other. Some preachers need to be given the silent treatment—be ignored. An ungodly preacher is the most dangerous and contemptible person imaginable. He can politic around, sow discord and get up more trouble than can be settled in a generation. Such preachers should be excluded from the fellowship.

### What About An Elder Who Goes Wrong?

If an elder goes wrong he should be dealt with just like any other brother, except that he is not to be rebuked. The other elders should take the lead in excluding him from the fellowship of the church.

One of the sweetest blessings to be had in this life is the blessing of Christian fellowship. There is dignity, grace and beauty in it! There is influence and power in it! God is in it! The truth of God restricts it! The love of God is the source of it, and life eternal in heaven with God

and the redeemed is the goal of it. One cannot have fellowship with God and be out of the fellowship of God's people. This fellowship is entered by faith in Christ, repentance, confession of Christ, and baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:37-42, 47). We appeal to you to obey the gospel tonight. Come and be saved before it might be forever too late. If you have wandered away, come back and confess your wrongs. In this great audience of more than two thousand people surely there are some who need salvation and forgiveness of sins. Come while we stand and sing the song of invitation.

## “THE LETTER AND THE SPIRIT”

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Pat Hardeman

To be invited to have a part in this lectureship is thrilling to me, not only because it affords me my first opportunity to visit the ACC campus, but also because of the privilege of studying so important a theme with you, as that which has been assigned me.

To understand the subject, “The Letter and the Spirit,” it will be helpful if we first understand separately the terms involved. And to understand the use of these two terms in the Bible, it will help if we first know something of their usage outside of the Bible. Let us begin with the term “The Letter.” This term is a translation of the Greek *Gramma*, which is akin to *Grapho* and *Grapha*, words signifying the act of writing and that which is written. *Gramma*, or letter, refers to the lines of a drawing or a picture, to letters of the alphabet, to the “large letters” Paul wrote in Gal. 6:11, to inscriptions, epitaphs, papers, documents, mathematical diagrams, articulate sounds, notes in music, outlines, laws or rules, contracts, catalogues, bonds, a man’s writings, and finally, to any book, treatise or collection of books. (All of these usages and many others in the appropriate forms of the word are documented in the New Liddell and Scott.) Especially in the plural form, the word stands for books, and, with the adjective *hiera* or holy modifying it, it becomes a technical term used by Philo, Josephus and others to designate the Old Testament writings. In the New Testament Paul tells Timothy, “From a child thou hast known the ‘Holy Letters’ or the ‘Sacred Writings’, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 3:15, 16). Notice that the word “letter”

in the plural forms a part of the name given the Old Testament Scriptures, and whereas in other passages (which we shall notice) Paul says "the letter killeth," he says here these "letters" are able to make thee wise unto salvation. In other New Testament passages the word "letter" is placed in opposition to the word "spirit" (See Rom. 2:28, 29; 7:6; 2 Cor. 3:6 and the discussion later in this lecture). It will be a part of our task to inquire as to the meaning of this contrast in these passages.

Now let us consider the word spirit. The Greek word, **pneuma**, referred originally to a wind, blast or breeze. The Greek philosophers used the word to refer to air as one of the four elements. The physical connotation of the word survives in our day when we speak of "pneumatic" tires and the like. But the Stoic philosophers glorified and deified the material **pneuma**, till in the first century A. D. the Latin Stoic Seneca held practically a theistic conception of it. **Pneuma** is God, according to the Stoics. (The Stoics were all materialists, finally.)

The term was also used to mean "breath of life," living beings, the breathing with which a vowel is pronounced, and then to refer to the spirit of man, the spirit of God and angels as ministering spirits (Heb. 1:14). In the New Testament "the spirit" is sometimes put in opposition to "the flesh," as in Rom. 8:2-4; 7:5-23, and sometimes put in opposition to the letter, as we have noticed. The contrasts of "flesh and spirit" fall into two groups, (1) those passages like Gal. 5:19ff, where the contrast is between following the high and holy directions of the Holy Spirit and walking after fleshly lusts or bodily passions, and (2) those passages like Rom. 8 and Heb. 9 where the "fleshly" or "carnal" life is said to be associated with the law of Moses for the reason that man with-

out grace from Christ Jesus cannot overcome the "law of sin and death"

Rom. 2:—

We shall now consider three passages in which "letter and spirit" are contrasted. First, let us turn to Rom. 2:17-29. It is easy to see that from verse 17 to verse 27, the apostle is upbraiding the Jews for their failure to respect the law in which they "rested" (v. 17), and of which they made their boast (v. 23). Yet for various reasons, probably because of the "circumcision made without hands" mentioned in Col. 2:11 in connection with baptism, many have interpreted Rom. 2:28, 29 as a reference to the circumcision of the New Covenant. There is also probably another reason that this has been done. Many folks have believed that there is no such thing as "inward circumcision" taught in the Old Testament. However this is due to ignorance of the Law of Moses itself. For twice, right in the heart of the Law, God speaks of this circumcision of the heart, once as a command to Israel and once as a promise to them. In Deut. 10:12-16, as Moses exhorted the chosen people, he asked, "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee . . . Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked." And again, in a prophecy which Nehemiah tells us was definitely fulfilled in the return from Babylonian Captivity (Neh. 1:9), Moses says, "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live" (Du. 30:6). This sentiment is also found in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

These passages show us unquestionably that God required an inward circumcision of his people, yea, promised

to perform such a circumcision in their hearts. Yet Rom. 2:17-27 and many other passages show beyond any doubt that the Jews had come to regard only the outward circumcision as important. Their trouble was not that they kept the law too strictly, but that they gloried in the keeping of the outward part of the law like fleshly circumcision to the neglect and even willful rejection of the weightier matters, like inward circumcision. Though boasting in the law, they dishonored God through breaking the law. Even though they had made every effort to meet the literal requirement of fleshly circumcision, they had made no effort to attain to that moral transformation, the inward circumcision, which accompanied the outward form. This explains how the Gentiles in their uncircumcision (of flesh or literal conformity to that requirement of the Mosaic law) could "judge" or condemn the Jews "who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law" (Rom. 2:26, 27). For many of these Gentiles in their uncircumcision (of flesh) still kept "the righteousness of the law" in that they did "by nature the things contained in the law" (v. 14), and thus were circumcised in their hearts.

What then is the meaning of Rom. 2:28, 29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." The meaning is that many Jews gloried in the flesh (Cp. Phil. 3:4; Gal. 6:12), keeping only the outward circumcision, and, even according to the Law of Moses, needed to undergo the moral transformation called inward circumcision, or circumcision in the spirit, which God's law should have produced in their lives.

Now suppose someone reasons from this passage that just as the Gentiles, who had no law, nonetheless attained to the inward condition of heart required by the law, and this without their being circumcised, even so people today who don't know the gospel commands can attain to inward righteousness apart from, say, the command of baptism, and therefore still be saved without the obedience required by the New Testament. What of such reasoning? (1) In the first place God knew of the fact that the Gentiles did not have the law of Moses, since he gave it only to the Israelites, and, knowing this, he made provision for the Gentiles' salvation in Old Testament days apart from the Law of Moses (Rom. 2:12-16). But the gospel is of universal application and obligation. "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone" (Rom. 1:16), not just to the Jews. The times of Gentile ignorance in the past God overlooked, but now, (and this is a tremendous difference) he commandeth all men everywhere to repentance (Acts 17:30, 31).

(2) There is a fallacy also in supposing that people today can attain to the righteousness which is found in Christ without their being baptized into Christ. In recent times several preachers, some of whom have now left the church, have spoken glibly of the righteousness of unbaptized people as though they had some private revelation to the effect that there is another way into Christ than by being baptized into him (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:1-6). **There is no fact, passage, or principle, by which you can judge a person to be legalistic or pharisaical simply because he insists that God's conditions of entering Christ Jesus are of permanent and universal necessity.** Not long ago a preacher in the Chicago area gave as an instance of God's accepting people without baptism the fact that

babies do not have to be baptized. Since this is an exception, said he, then there may well be many other exceptions to the command. But surely anyone can see that children constitute no exception since they were never under the scope of the rule. This same preacher gave Cornelius as an exception to the ordinary plan of salvation because of the Holy Spirit's falling on him before he was baptized. But Peter's language in reporting in this case makes it plain that Cornelius was saved the same way the Jews had been saved (Acts 11:1-18; 15:7-11). And it is folly to deny that the baptism Peter commanded in Acts 10:48 is for the same purpose as that commanded for the remission of sins in Acts 2:38.

Rom. 7:—

Let us consider now the contrast of letter and spirit in the seventh chapter of Romans: Keeping in mind Paul's illustration of the change of the covenants by the laws of marriage, we begin reading with the fourth verse, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." It is quite plain here that the "newness of spirit" refers to the New Covenant religion or to what is called a few verses later, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (8:2), and the oldness of letter refers to the Old Covenant or to the first husband who is now dead. The letter is old because it is done away, and the Spirit is new not only because it just

came into force, but also it is perpetually new, ever fresh.

It is clear that the letter was in its divine origin "holy, just and good," but it kept men in a state of condemnation because of their inability to meet its righteous demands by their own righteousness (Phil. 3:9). At best the Jews could not be saved by virtue of keeping the law, and at worst, as we have seen in Rom. 2, they didn't even try to conform to it in their hearts. Paul blames them in Rom. 2, not for being under the law, for that was God's purpose for them till Christ came, but Paul blames them for being so empty and hypocritical about the law they were under. In Romans 7 Paul pictures the condition of a man under a legal system like the Law of Moses, and concludes that there is no hope of victory over the "motions of sin" or "the law of sin and death" except through the work of Jesus Christ. The same argument is made in Gal. 2. It is Christ who through the law of the Spirit of life makes us free from the law of sin and death. It is Christ who frees us from the condemnation resting on those who walked after the flesh. It is Christ who enables man to rise above the fleshly level to a spiritual life.

One of the important questions we face is, what is the precise significance of calling Christianity a religion "of the spirit"? What we need to ask especially is, How is the New Testament a religion of the Spirit in contrast to that of the Old Testament? The way some people talk one would think there is an absolute antithesis involved, with no spirit in the Old Testament and no Letter in the New. In fact when preachers explain the contrast they usually begin by saying, the New Testament was revealed by the Holy Spirit. But this does not make clear the contrast, because the Old Testament also was revealed by the Holy Spirit: "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:19-21). It is readily seen, how-

ever, that the promise of the universal indwelling of God's spirit in believers and also the fulness of the Spirit's revelation in the New Covenant as contrasted with the typical, temporary and shadowy revelation made in Old Testament times, are distinguishing characteristics.

It is also said that religion "of the Spirit" means that in the New Covenant a spiritual transformation is required which was absent in Old Testament doctrine. But this surely overlooks the lofty passages of the Old Testament which demanded just such a transformation. Again, the contrast is one of emphasis, for the New Testament's demand for spiritual transformation and regeneration is indeed more complete and far reaching than that in the Old, and the very basis of the transformation, i.e., the gracious sacrifice of Christ, is different from the Old Covenant.

#### 2 Cor. 3:1-6—

Before further consideration of these questions, let us turn to a study of 2 Cor. 3:1-6, the third passage in which "letter and spirit" are contrasted. In the first three verses of this chapter the apostle describes the Corinthian Christians as epistles of Christ produced by the apostles not with ink, but by the message of influence of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. Paul then asserts that God has "made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." On the surface the contrast between old and new covenants is evident, and runs throughout the chapter. The Old Covenant is variously called "the letter," "ministration of death," "ministration of condemnation," and also "Moses" in the clause "when Moses is read." The New Testament is called "the spirit," the "ministration of the spirit," and "ministration of righteousness."

In what sense does the letter "kill" as contrasted with the way in which the spirit "makes alive"? The letter kills in the same sense it condemns, and it condemns in that man cannot fulfill its righteous demands and is therefore under a curse (Gal. 3:10). The descriptions of the new covenant in John 6, and Heb. 8:6-13 show that the new law works more from within to transform the hearts of men than did that "written and engraven in stones." It is true that attention to the letter in the sense the Jews were guilty of it in Rom. 2:27-29 will also kill or take away spiritual life. In that passage we have seen that the meaning is that the Jews gloried in the outward circumcision neglecting that circumcision of the heart which God also required. But this is not the point, I believe, in 2 Cor. 3. Rather, in 2 Cor. 3, the letter kills just as the law condemns in Rom. 7.

We raise the question now: Is "letter and spirit" an absolute antithesis in these passages? To answer in the negative is equal to saying that there is spirit in the Old Testament and there is letter in the New. And I believe everyone must admit that this is so. The Holy Spirit was surely active in the Old Testament, and also there was spiritual transformation demanded in the Old Testament. Correspondingly, the New Testament is revealed in the preaching of the apostles and prophets which was done in oral words (1 Cor. 2:12, 13) and in written letters (Gal. 6:11; Rom. 16:25, 26). Therefore there is letter in this sense in the New Testament. And there is authority to these letters in the New Testament—so much so that Paul says, "If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed" (2 Thes. 3:14). I hardly see how, therefore,

this antithesis between letter and spirit can be considered as absolute.

I wish now to consider a doctrine, put forth by brethren of known liberal tendencies, which says that to emphasize the exact requirements of New Testament teaching is to return to the letter. This doctrine says that if you tell a sinner he **absolutely** must be baptized to be saved and that this baptism must be "for the remission of sins" as Acts 2:38 says, you are guilty of literalism and legalism. Some of the preachers in the recent liberal movement have said the same thing of verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. They say, that is, that such a doctrine as verbal inspiration is legalistic and literalistic. May I suggest, as kindly and as strongly as I know how: There is no New Testament passage, or principle, which indicates that God is concerned over the possibility of our studying and following too closely the exact meaning of the words of the New Covenant! There is every indication that God would have us study every word, every line, every syllable and try to translate such teachings as are there found into daily godly living. To this extent God wants both letter and spirit. He wants us to "study to show" ourselves approved unto him, and to observe all things whatsoever Jesus hath commanded. There is no way we could possibly observe these things apart from the very words which God chose to reveal them to us. These words are certainly the vehicles by which the Holy Spirit has conveyed the deep things of God to us (1 Cor. 2). The words are important because they are expressions of God's mind, God's will, God's nature, God's purposes, and plans as exemplified in His Son Jesus Christ. These words or letters demand that we live "soberly, righteously and godly in this present world," and though the same words make it plain to us that law-keeping, as such, can never be the ground

of our salvation, they also make it plain that they will be read in the judgment day (Jno. 12:47, 48). Therefore, we cannot afford to neglect the letters or words of Holy Writ, nor dare we glory only in outward observances to the neglect of the inward day by day renewing which these Holy words demand and make possible (Col. 2, 3).

Every act of worship has both an inward and an outward aspect. Let us never be guilty of championing orthodoxy in the outward while trampling under foot the inward. Rather let us be sure that the form of worship is right and that through the correct form is poured the sincerest devotions of which human hearts are capable. In eating the bread and drinking the fruit of the vine, let the inward "memory" of him ever be present. In prayers expressing genuine Christian petitions, let the purpose ever be to be heard of God, and to please him (James 4:3 also). In songs let us never honor him with our mouths while our hearts are far from him. In teaching let us speak the truth in love and not from envy or jealousy or for filthy lucre's sake. In giving let the amount be liberal and the purposing sincere and cheerful. In all things let us have regard to the text of the message, the meaning of the text and above all see that we observe that which is commanded, giving glory to the Lord who purchased us with his blood and sealed us with his spirit!

## FOLLOW AFTER PEACE

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Charles Chumley

Recently a faithful Christian teacher was talking with a young man about his faith. He had a brilliant mind and was at the time serving as assistant to the president of one of America's great universities. He had been reared in a Christian home and had been educated partially in a Christian school. His advance work in college, however, had led him into the quicksands of modernism. Following the popular trend there, he had cut himself adrift from a scriptural foundation. He found that to be without moorings, however, was not to have the peace and tranquility that he desired. In fact, his loss troubled him greatly. He and his wife sat up night after night until the early hours of the morning discussing their spiritual problems. As he talked with this Christian woman and noticed her calm, undisturbed approach by faith to the problems of life, he cried out in exasperation, "How can you be so calm about it all?"

A young man came to a gospel preacher not long ago. His marriage was on the verge of cracking up, and he was desperately in need of help. His first question was, "I want you to tell me what is wrong with me?" He was not a Christian; his wife was. He admitted, however, that from the first day of their marriage neither he nor his wife had been right with God. Their marriage had not been based upon God's will. Consequently, they had known little peace in their domestic life and now had come to a parting of ways.

Members of the congregation had fallen out with one another. Harsh and unkind words had been exchanged. They separated themselves into two contending factions.

Divided in spirit, they were unable to remain united in service. Finally they decided that one group should use the meetinghouse in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Every Lord's Day they proclaimed to the entire community their inability to live and work peaceably with one another, and their division belied their plea that all men should be one in Christ.

The nations of the earth are tense and uneasy. An unguarded word, a careless action, threatens to ignite the powder keg of international politics and plunge the world into another terrible war. Fear and dread seem to be everywhere.

Each of these incidents points up, in its own way, the lack of peace in the hearts of many individuals, the lack of peace in many homes, the lack of peace in many churches, and the lack of peace in the world. Why this great lack? Are we to ask with Jeremiah, "Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there?" (Jer. 8:22) only to hear the echo of our own questions? Is there no way to peace?

### Teach Peace

Before the cloud received him out of their sight, Jesus said to his 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). Prominent among these "things" which the followers of Christ were to be taught to observe was PEACE. The original word for "peace" (eipnun) has the ordinary sense of rest or tranquility and stands in contrast with strife and war. In the New Testament generally, however, the word has a broader meaning, denoting "a

state of wellbeing, safety, and blessedness, of which, however, peace in the common acceptation of the term would be one of the most important conditions."<sup>1</sup>

No teaching could be more appropriate, for the mission of Christ was a mission of peace; he himself was the Prince of Peace; his kingdom was a kingdom of peace; and his gospel was a message of peace.

### A Mission of Peace

Of his mission Isaiah, in prophetic anticipation, declares, "Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:7). The same prophet announces him as "Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). Zacharias heralds a promise of peace as he prophesies at John's birth:

Yea and thou, child, shalt be called  
the prophet of the Most High:  
For thou shalt go before the face of  
the Lord to make ready his ways;  
To give knowledge of salvation unto  
his people  
In the remission of their sins,  
Because of the tender mercy of our  
God,  
Whereby the dayspring from on  
high shall visit us,

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<sup>1</sup>J. C. Lambert, "Peace," Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels (New York, 1909), II: 330.

To shine upon them that sit in  
darkness and the shadow of death;  
To guide our feet into the way of  
peace (Luke 1:76-79).

And the heavenly host sang of "peace among men" at his birth (Luke 2:14).

There is, of course, a sense in which Jesus did not come to bring peace but a sword (Matt. 10:34). He could not tolerate a false peace. There are those who cry, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:14), and with such false peace Jesus had nothing to do. He would not compromise with error; he would not compromise with sin. Since he came into a world in which these things exist, the purpose of his mission was still to bring peace.

As the Prince of Peace, Jesus had the power to bestow peace. "Men have been known to make bequests when they had nothing to leave; but peace was a blessing which Jesus had power to bestow, because it was his own peculiar possession."<sup>2</sup> In spite of all the changing scenes of his life, Jesus was always characterized by a deep, calm strength. When he told his apostles, "My peace I give unto you" (John 14:27), he was just about to go forth to Gethsemane and the judgment-hall and the cross. But the peace he was conscious of lay deeper than all trials and sufferings, for it came from the assurance of a perfect union in thought and heart and will with his Father in heaven."<sup>3</sup>

The message of Christ is a message of peace. In Eph. 6:15, Paul cautions brethren to have their feet shod "with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Peter speaks of "preaching good tidings of peace by Jesus Christ" (Acts

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 331.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

10:36). To his disciples Jesus said, "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace one with another" (Mark 9:50).

### Peace Not Accidental

We must recognize at the very outset that peace—that genuine peace that first enables a man to settle the civil war raging within himself and then to become a peacemaker—is no accident. It does not result from a chance combination of favorable circumstances.

Men have longed for peace of mind only to experience frustration. Husbands and wives have yearned for a harmonious relationship only to be mocked by friction and dissension. Congregations desiring unity have felt the shame of division. Peoples of the earth have prayed for peace only to find themselves up in arms to begin the business of death.

Strangely enough, the way of peace is not found through prayer alone. Men pray that their own turbulent spirits may find rest and peace only to learn that frustration seems destined to be their lot. Men pray for peace in their homes and find contention and strife instead. Many have been led to charge God foolishly because they have sought the way to peace through prayer alone. Men want peace, but they want it on a silver platter. It seems at times as if they say, "Now, Lord, we want peace, but we want you to provide it in some way that won't interfere with what we want to do. Peace is your business, but see that you bring it about without disturbing our business."

### The Way of Submission

Men fail to realize that peace for an individual or peace among nations can come only from a recognition of and submission to divine law. God's laws governing the creation and maintenance of peace are as certain and as inexorable as his laws which govern nature. A man cannot

ignore or reject God's natural laws without suffering. One might defy the law of gravity by jumping from the top of a ten-story building, but he would pay with his life as his body crashed to the pavement below. Neither can one ignore or reject God's laws governing the moral realm without suffering. One may dissipate his body in sinful excesses and scoff at God's laws all the time he is doing it, but sooner or later he will pay the penalty of disease and death. Equally as certain is the fact that we cannot have peace if we ignore or reject God's divine laws which govern peace.

### How Achieve Peace?

How shall we achieve peace? What is the formula for attaining tranquility in the midst of confusion? Is it possible to live peaceably with men today? God's answer is, "Yes!" Not only is it a possibility; for the Christian it is a necessity.

If we ever attain the peace for which our hearts yearn, however, it will be through the exercise of God's wisdom: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy" (James 3:17). The wisdom of God leads us to begin with the only beginning point that exists, the individual human heart.

The apostle Paul says, "for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). What he is saying, in effect, is that man is off-center. In sin he has missed the mark, and his life is unbalanced. Picture yourself clinging to the outer rim of a giant wheel that is off-center and twirling at terrific speed. To say the least your ride would be a turbulent one. A man's life is turbulent, too, when God is not at the center, and that turbulence will not cease until God is at the center again.

### **The Path to Self-Centeredness**

The apostle Paul pictures the tragic process by which men become self-centered instead of God-centered and the misery into which such a process may lead them: "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart; who being past feeling gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph. 4:17-19).

Vain reasoning leads to a denial of God and consequently to a darkened understanding; a darkened understanding leads to ignorance; ignorance leads to a hardened heart; a hardened heart leads to spiritual numbness; and spiritual numbness leads to the pursuit of every form of evil; the pursuit of evil leads to misery and death.

### **The Way Back**

The way of peace is by way of reconciliation. Man must be reconciled to God; when he becomes reconciled to God, he will find that he is at peace with himself. At peace with himself, he will find that he is able to help make peace among his fellowmen. One who is not right with God will find that he is not right with himself, and who is not right with himself will find it difficult, if not impossible, to be right with his fellowmen. God does not offer peace at cut-rate prices or on a silver platter to nations or to congregations or to homes. He will not force men to walk in the ways of peace. He offers it, provides the way whereby we may achieve it, but he leaves the choice of whether we shall have it or not squarely up to us.

### **A Case in Point**

The conversion of Saul of Tarsus provides an instance

in which we may see God's wisdom at work. Breathing threatenings and slaughter against the Lord's people, Saul moves on Damascus to continue his work of persecution. His journey is halted in a miraculous way. Blinded by a light greater than that of the noonday sun he falls to the earth and hears the voice of the Lord. He arises and, unable to see, is led into the city, where for three days he is a picture of abject misery. Refusing to eat, he prays constantly. His whole self-satisfied world has been turned up-side down. His hither all-consuming purpose in life has suddenly, and without warning, been revealed to him as the most consummate folly, and the shock is apparent in his every action. Prayers alone, however, do not bring peace.

Ananias, a certain disciple, outlines the path of reconciliation. Saul is to believe with all of his heart in Christ as God's ransom for sin. Moved by that faith he is to repent of his every sin. He is to confess his faith in Christ, and he is to be buried in baptism in order that his sins may be washed away and that he may become a new creation in Christ Jesus, ready to do the works which God has prepared for him.

Notice the difference after faith has led him to do the Lord's will. The fearful, hesitant, questioning attitude is gone. In its place is one of calm and grateful assurance. The civil war no longer wages within. In reply to his agonized question, "Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" he is now able to say, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7:24, 25).

### The Christian's Role

Basic in the creation and maintenance of peace is a genuine, deep-seated desire for peace, and abiding love

for peace. If we do not sincerely want peace, we will hardly be interested in working to achieve it. If, on the other hand, we have a longing for peace, we will be disposed to follow after peace. We need then to think peace, to love peace, and to work for peace in our own lives and in the lives of our fellowmen.

Once at peace with himself through his obedience to the gospel of Christ, the Christian must accept his role of peacemaker. Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God" (Matt. 5:9). To live in peace is not enough; the Christian must strive to be a peacemaker. Peter writes:

For, he that would love life,  
And see good days  
Let him refrain his tongue from evil,  
And his lips that they speak no  
guile;  
And let him turn away from evil,  
and do good;  
Let him seek peace, and pursue it  
(I Pet. 3:10, 11).

In the Hebrew letter we read, "Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14), and the apostle Paul urges in the Roman letter, "So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another" (14:19).

#### The Head of the List

The "things" which make for peace will apply on any level. There is no separate standard for the home and another for the church and another for the nation. The same principles apply in every instance, for peace has to

do with the individual. When enough individuals want peace and are willing to submit to God's laws governing peace, they can achieve it.

At the head of any list of things that "make for peace" is love. All acceptable service to God must rest upon this foundation. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind . . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:37-39). "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you" (John 15:12). "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). This love of which the Lord speaks will lead a man to revise his standard of values. He will come to subordinate the material to the spiritual in his thinking. He will desire to seek "first his kingdom, and his righteousness" with the firm conviction that "all these things will be added unto him" (Matt. 6:33).

The apostle Paul writes of the peaceful disposition in the Roman letter: "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men" (12:18). He does not give the Christian license to drop his work as a peacemaker if the other party refuses to accept his overtures of peace. We might state the same idea differently by saying, "Inasmuch as it depends on you, be at peace with all men."

It was this principle which prompted Abraham to propose a peaceful settlement in his dealings with Lot. When contention arose between their herdsmen, Abraham could say, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen, for we are brethren" (Gen. 13:8). He proposed a settlement on a basis that required him to take second best. "If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou take the right hand, then I will go to the left" (Gen. 13:9). He could subordi-

nate his own desires in the interest of peace because to maintain the peace was vitally important; to grasp a temporary location in the land was not.

When the herdsman of Gerar strove with Isaac for possession of the wells of his father Abraham, Isaac gave up all claim, moved to another place, and dug another well. When they came to take that one, Isaac moved again. Finally, at Rehoboth, after digging still another well, Isaac dwelt in peace. "When a man's ways please Jehovah, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Prov. 16:7).

The story is told of a man who bought a farm that had changed hands rapidly within a short period of time. The reason each temporary owner gave for wanting to sell was that he could not live peaceably with a widow who owned the adjoining farm. The boundary line separating the two farms was in question, and she would not allow a fence to be put up along the line. The most recent owner had put a fence along what he was positive was the line, and she and her son had deliberately torn it down.

The new owner seemed convinced that he could get along peaceably with her. "I'm afraid you'll find out differently," the late owner remarked as he concluded the transaction and moved away.

A few days later, the new owner went to call on his neighbor. She met him with obvious suspicion. Without mentioning the disputed line, he visited pleasantly for a time and then left. As the days passed, he went out of his way to make her realize that he wanted to be her friend. Finally one day he said to her, "I believe there is some question about the line between our two farms. I have been thinking of fencing in a part of my land along the line, and I am wondering if you will be good enough to

show me where you think it should be." As a result of such an attitude the widow not only insisted that the line was further over on her property than the man thought it should be, but she and her son fell to work and helped him build the fence as well.

It developed later that the previous owners had undertaken to decide the line for themselves and then in a very dictatorial way to tell her where they were going to put it. They had had no regard for her as a person, and, consequently, little peace.

This is another instance of a man who was more interested in peace than he was in asserting his authority, or in standing on what he conceived to be his "rights." It suggests again that those who want to live harmoniously with their neighbors, must first of all sincerely desire to be at peace.

### **Righteousness and Peace**

Peace is inseparably linked with righteousness. No peace can endure that is not founded upon right. Whether we deal with the home, the church, the nation, or the world, unrighteousness will destroy the peace. It cannot be overlooked. To try to ignore the presence of disease in the body is to encourage not peace but disaster. Medicine, even though unpleasant, must be administered. Health must be restored.

Those who follow after the things that make for peace, therefore, cannot tolerate sin and error in an effort to maintain a false peace. The fornicator who will not heed the pleadings of spiritual brethren must be delivered over to Satan. Peter must be withstood to the face at Antioch because he stands condemned. Faithful brethren must "mark them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and

turn away from them" (Rom. 16:17). In all such instances, however, the Christian is to remember that "the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:4).

What power for peace everywhere might God's people exercise if they could but be led to appreciate the need for righteousness. Too few realize that when they work God's righteousness they tie themselves to the power that controls the universe. Abraham was in such close contact with God that he could intercede for the two exceedingly wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and for him—for this man Abraham—God would have withheld destruction could there have been found but ten righteous people. The wise man tells us that "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). Any nation is righteous only to the extent that the people dwelling in that nation are righteous.

The power of righteousness in human hearts is incalculable. The desire to do right at all times and under all circumstances has a tremendous bearing upon whether peace shall exist or not. When channeled through prayer, who knows what tremendous forces may be brought to bear for peace. "I exhort therefore, first of all," writes the apostle Paul, "that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgiving, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high places; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity" (1 Tim. 2:1, 2). Coming as it must from the depths of hearts consecrated to God's righteousness, such a petition will be heard by the Lord, for even today, "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working" (James 5:16).

Too often Christians are content to drift along, neglecting their opportunities and responsibilities in the

matter of peace until, overtaken by circumstances growing out of their own neglect, they often forsake the way of Christ and give in to the way of the world. We ought never to underestimate the power of the righteous man to make for peace everywhere.

### Love, Righteousness, and Humility

A love for God and a determination to live righteously will lead one to walk humbly. Much of the friction in the world springs from haughty spirits. Still, those haughty spirits want peace. A husband told his bride shortly after their marriage that he did not intend for them to have the bickering and quarreling so common in the average home. "We can avoid all such argument," he said, "if you will just remember one thing. Whenever we have an argument or a disagreement, you just keep in mind the fact that **you are wrong!**" On that same basis you can have peace in a dictatorship. Some congregations have that kind of peace. Men rule for no other reason than that their voices have more volume than anyone else's or that they can draw their eyebrows together in a more frightening frown than anyone else can. Peace does not come from noisy pride, however.

Humility will lead to respect for authority. The humble man will respect God; he will respect God's word; he will respect God's appointments. The Christian submits to the powers that be because they are ordained of God (Rom. 13:1, 2). He respects the oversight of bishops in the church for the same reason. "But we beseech you, brethren," the apostle Paul writes, "to know them that labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them exceeding highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves" (1 Thess. 5:12, 13). When members of the congregation have re-

spect for the elders, the church can have peace. Respect for authority will make for peace.

Humility will lead to a bridled tongue. The unbridled tongue is a frequent cause of strife and division. Many statesmen have what one journalist, in speaking of a certain politician, called a remarkable ability for "filling his mouth with feet." Many Christians have the same doubtful ability. They have a peculiar talent for opening their mouths when they ought to be closing them or of saying what at that particular time ought never to be said. We need to "study to be quiet." James warns, "If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridleth not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain" (James 1:26). A bridled tongue will make for peace.

Humility will lead one to be willing to admit his mistakes. It is hard to have an argument with a man who can disarm you completely simply by admitting that he has been wrong. Contrast the attitude of the husband we noticed a moment ago with that of the prodigal son, who said, "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight" (Luke 15: 18) or with that of David, who when confronted by Nathan's accusing "Thou art the man," bowed his head and said, "I have sinned against Jehovah" (2 Sam. 12:13) or with that of the publican who "would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God, be thou merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13). A willingness to admit mistakes will make for peace.

Such action demands the greatness that can come only from poverty of spirit. The small-minded, mean-spirited man will plunge on in his blundering way, creating misunderstanding, strife, and division wherever he goes. The soul that has been reconciled to God can admit his mistakes and build upon more solid ground.

### The Element of Zeal

To love, righteousness, and humility must be added zeal if the Christian is to "seek peace and pursue it." Zeal is an indispensable element if we are to "follow after the things which make for peace."

An enthusiastic zeal for God's cause will solve many otherwise vexing problems. Homes lack peace because some of its members are not busy. Churches lack peace because they are not at work. If "an idle mind is the devil's workshop," then an idle congregation may well be called his factory.

I heard recently of a congregation with a history of bickerings and strife. Members spent their time threshing out foolish questions that succeeded only in rendering strife. One man, in particular, was a disturbing element. He had a contentious disposition, questioned every idea, and opposed every constructive move which the brethren contemplated. Finally, at the end of their patience, the elders came to tell him that if he did not take himself in hand and straighten up the congregation would be forced to withdraw from him.

Soon after, a new preacher came to work with the group. The church began to take on new life. Members grew enthusiastic about the possibilities for good. They bought lots in a good section of the city, built a new building, and undertook an ambitious program of mission work. In the ensuing zeal for the work, members forgot their bickerings, found that they had no time for foolish questions, and swept along on the tide of their enthusiasm the one who might still have been a disturbing element had it not been for a planned program that put every member of the church to work.

Planned programs, taxing members to the limit of their

time, talent, and money will go far toward insuring peace. All other things being equal, a busy man is a happy man, and a happy man is a peaceful man.

### The Need Is Great

Today, two great opposing ways of life offer peace to the world. On the one hand Communism comes with its materialistic philosophy to offer bread alone. What man needs, it says, is **social security**, and he will be at peace. On the other hand Christianity comes with its offer of peace based upon **spiritual security and reconciliation with God**. Edward John Carnell writes, "Someone has remarked that the destiny of our civilization turns on the triumph of one or the other of two Jewish philosophies of life. This is not far from the truth. Christianity stems from Jesus Christ and communism from Karl Marx—two Jews."<sup>4</sup>

The difference between these two ways, of course, is vast. The way of Marx is the wisdom of man, the wisdom from below. The way of Christ is the wisdom of God, the wisdom from above. Not only does the destiny of our civilization hinge upon man's acceptance of one or the other of these ways, but man's eternal destiny as well. The wisdom from below is "earthly, sensual, devilish" and can never bring peace. The wisdom from above alone can.

The church ought, in our day, to be characterized by a militant zeal as it seeks to reach men with the "good tidings of peace by Jesus Christ." What is to be said of those who know the divine laws governing peace in the heart, in the home, in the church, in the nation, and in the world but who selfishly refuse to make them known. Are they to wait passively until they are crushed beneath the rolling weight of man's misguided efforts to achieve

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<sup>4</sup>Edward John Carnell, *A Philosophy of the Christian Religion* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1954), p. 84

peace? Are they to ring the death knell of true peace by their own neglect? Every conflict in the world points up, in a measure at least, our failure to spread the gospel of Christ throughout the world. It is a stupendous task, this work the Lord has given us to do—a task that will require all that we are and all that we have. Let us then, with his help, be up and doing as we “follow after peace.”

## "WINNING OF CATHOLICS AND COMMUNISTS"

G. C. Brewer

The apostle Paul tells us that "God would have all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 4-2). Peter tells us that God is not willing for any to perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3-9). Paul said that his "heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was that they should be saved" (Rom. 10:1). Our Lord Jesus Christ wept over Jerusalem after that city had rejected him and its rulers were waiting to crucify him as a beast of prey waits in the shadows for its victim. He also prayed while hanging on the cross for those who were thus mocking and murdering him. With this example before us and with these expressions from inspired men we cannot be Christians and not desire and work for the salvation of all men, regardless of whether they are our friends or our enemies. Daniel said "and they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever" (Dan. 12:3). Every Christian should want to be a soul winner and everyone who names the name of the Lord should become a campaigner for Christ.

The efforts that we are making as a nation to "contain" Communism and the instruments of destruction that we are creating with the consciousness that the only use we shall ever have for them will be to destroy Communists may make it look as if we do not have the Christian spirit as a nation. The United States is not, in any true sense, a Christian nation, but it must be recognized by all who know our people that this nation does not desire war and it has never claimed indemnity in the wars in which it has participated. It has made sacrifices that cannot be esti-

mated in money to help other nations preserve their lives and their independence and today our nation would not interfere in the affairs of any other nation in the world if that nation shows no intention of being an aggressor and therefore of destroying the freedom and happiness of other peoples. Certainly our intentions in the preparations that we are making for war today are defensive and there would not be a war in the world if the decision were left with the people of the United States. That we are wise in making preparation to defend ourselves must be clear to any thinking person. Our freedom has cost the lives of our fathers and our brothers and if we preserve this freedom for our children and our grandchildren, we are certainly going to have to pay a considerable price. It may be that we shall have to pay with our own lives. In our estimation, however, this price would not be too high. We must either convert the Communists or kill them if we expect to live ourselves. To convert them may seem to be an impossibility, and it may be, if we think only of the rulers of the Communist nations. That there are millions of people who are under the Communists that are subject to the gospel call and would accept the gospel if they had an opportunity to do so does not admit of a doubt. Nothing is impossible with God and if we will put our prayers and our energies and at least a part of our money into an effort to enlighten people and to bring them to a knowledge of the truth, we might do more than all the armed forces of the world toward preserving peace and perpetuating our freedom. If some rulers have to be destroyed before the people can be free, then the Lord may overrule the decisions of these wicked men and remove them from power even if he has to use other nations with their armed forces in order to do this.

### No. 1—Communists and Catholics in the World.

This world has a population of something more than two billion people and according to the best information that we have, about eight hundred million of these people are under the domination of Communism. These are the Iron Curtain countries. The Roman Catholics claim that they have about 425,000,000 people in the world. According to these figures, something more than half of the world's population belongs to these two groups. These groups are antagonistic to each other and therefore the world crisis today is heading up toward a battle between these two isms. Many people are thinking that whichever one wins in this crisis will control the entire world. The feeling, therefore, is that whatever is the outcome of the present world situation, we are going to lose our freedom. Because of this fear, many people think that, to be an anti-communist, you must be a partner with the Catholics. And to be an anti-Catholic, you must be in sympathy with the Communists. These people believe, therefore, that we have no alternative but to be either a Catholic or a Communist. Both these isms are using this idea in their propaganda and if you speak against the Catholics, they will at once charge you with being a Communist. If you make any fight against the Communists, they will at once accuse you of being a Catholic. And this makes it imperative that we deny this idea outright and show people that we have freedom to be Christians and not to have anything to do with either Catholics or Communists so far as sympathizing with their ideology or their religion is concerned. We believe that the freedoms that we enjoy in America can be preserved and we believe that if we see the danger that threatens us today from either source, we will begin to use our efforts and our money to clarify this situation and

to save our people from confusion and from ruin. That is why some of us are devoting our attention to the discussion of these isms and to the dangers that we are facing from both these sources in this age of the world.

### No. 2—The Communists versus the Catholics.

We have stated that the Communists control eight hundred million people in the world today. It should be known to everyone, however, that there is not a single nation on earth that went under the control of the Communists by a vote of the people. Probably there is not a nation on earth today that would vote to allow Communism to continue to control them if they had the right to vote upon the issue and were relieved of fear of being "liquidated" for even a thought of changing the form of government. Communism has been forced upon the people of every nation that it controls and as Communism took over a nation, it destroyed every person who was not willing to submit, to give up his property and surrender himself soul and body to a dictatorship. Many of the countries that have been taken over by Communists were Catholic countries. Therefore, the Catholics have suffered more than any other people at the hands of the Communists. Their property has been confiscated, their priests and bishops have been murdered, their churches turned into granaries or cow barns, and this has caused many people to sympathize with the Catholics and this works to the advantage of the Catholics in countries like the United States and other free nations. As the Catholics take advantage of this and appeal for sympathy, the Communists retaliate by branding all the reports and as Catholic propaganda, and by such prejudicial pleading, they gain the sympathy of all those who are already prejudiced against the Catholics. And thus we have a

battle between two false isms in this country and here we see the need of clarification and of a spread of the truth.

### No. 3—The Communists and the Catholics in the United States of America

That we have Communists in the United States is too well known to need argument. They are organized and they have put out their candidates for office and engaged in political campaigns in our country. These avowed Communists, however, have done far less damage in our country than those who are secretly Communists or who are Fellow Travelers. These people have so infiltrated our country and have found places of power in our government and have occupied places of influence in our educational system, in our communications, our press, radio, television and all other means of publicity, and for so many years our people were blinded to this and even elected men to office who were themselves either Communists or sympathizers with them that we came near losing our freedom. Some of us cannot think of this without trembling and everyone who comes to a realization of what we have escaped should get on his knees and thank God devoutly for his providence in preserving us to this day. Now our people are alerted to Communism and our government is spending billions of dollars for defense against Communism. If we count what we are giving to other friendly nations, as well as what we are expending for our army and navy and air force, as well as the building of instruments of war on sea and land and in the air, we will see that probably more than two-thirds of our national budget goes today for defense against Communism. Communism, therefore, is the cause of the pyramiding of our national debt, of the confusion that is in the minds of the people, of the fear that has taken hold of us like a dire contagion, and practically every

other evil that we know in this age. Surely there is no need to enlarge further, therefore, upon Communism in the United States.

**Catholics in our country**—Probably something like fifty million of our people are Roman Catholics and they are growing very rapidly. They are gaining on us by multiplication, by immigration and by propaganda. They grow by multiplication because the church has a law which it strictly enforces against any manner of birth control. All the Catholics have large families if nature allows this. They are gaining by immigration because the people who come into this country come from Catholic countries and they are loyal to their faith. The Roman Catholic church uses its power, which is great, toward getting more immigrants into our country. Their papers cry out against all of our laws that are intended to limit immigration. The reason for this is very apparent. They are gaining by propaganda because their people are zealous for their cause and they are willing to sacrifice and to serve in order to spread the doctrine. The knights of Columbus appropriated \$750,000.00 last year, simply for the purpose of running advertisements in the papers and magazines. These advertisements are well written and are designed to create interest and curiosity and to cause inquiry. Every advertisement has a note at the bottom announcing that free literature upon this subject will be sent to anyone who sends his address in answer to this ad. They report that one million inquiries were received as a result of these advertisements. Of these one million inquirers, one hundred thousand of them were converted and became members of the Catholic church.

The Catholics are now building a memorial library for Pope Pius XII at St. Louis. This library is to cost \$4,500,-

000. They are building a shrine to the Virgin Mary in Washington, D. C. which is to cost \$12,000,000. They are getting publicity as no other organization on earth is getting it today.

The Catholics have so much power in this country that we are not allowed to expose their false teaching in the press or on the air except in a local way and through very limited facilities. The Catholics use force even in our country now. They will boycott any radio station that speaks out against them. They will prosecute in the courts any man who has a slip of the tongue or makes a careless stroke of the pen in speaking or writing against them. The Jews will join with the Catholics in boycotting papers and radio stations that make attacks upon the Catholics. The only explanation of that that we know of is that there has been a great sentiment created in this country in favor of minorities. These minority groups, therefore, will rush to each others' aid and that is the explanation we have to offer for this cooperation of Catholics and Jews in practicing boycott. The Jews suffered under Hitler, the Catholics have suffered under communism and this has formed a tie between them. Both of these groups fight in defense of the negroes because they feel that the negroes are in the minority and that they have suffered injustices in this country. This is a situation that we are facing today and this is why we should have the support and the encouragement from all fearless men and women who believe that our American freedom should be preserved.

#### No. 4—"Semper Eadem."

There are people today who claim that the Roman Catholics once persecuted heretics and once proscribed the reading of the Bible and burned at the stake those who attempted to give the Bible to the common people. And yet

they say that the Catholics have changed; they think that the Catholics that we know today would not do any such thing. People who think this are ignorant of one of the fundamental principles of the Roman church. That principle is that the Roman church never changes. It is infallible and unchangeable. Even, however, if they do not know this teaching, they should be aware of the present day practice of that church. They should become acquainted with the way the Catholics have treated churches of Christ in Italy. They should see that all Christianity has been ruled out of Spain except the Catholic church, if we look upon it as in some sense Christian. They should be aware of how the Catholics have murdered Baptists in Columbia, South America, burnt down their church buildings and otherwise persecuted and murdered them. Others have suffered at the hands of the Catholics in many countries in this very age of the world.

#### No. 5—The Voice of Freedom.

The Voice of Freedom is a monthly journal that is published for the very purpose of dealing with the problems that have been brought to our attention in this lecture. It is an "Undenominational, Non-Sectarian publication, devoted to telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth about the threat of our freedom from Catholicism and Communism." It is put out by Freedom Press, Inc., whose address is Box 128, Nashville, Tenn. This corporation is composed of five men and it is non-profit. No member of the corporation receives one penny of remuneration from the donations that are sent to Freedom Press, Inc. Your speaker on this occasion has the honor of being the editor of the Voice of Freedom and he hopes as a result of this speech to receive many subscriptions to the paper and possibly some donations. Since the Corporation

is non-profit, any donation to it will be deductible. We furnish free literature and also give away far more copies of each issue of the paper than it takes to supply our subscribers. It is because of this free literature campaign that we solicit donations. We would like to distribute a million pieces of literature every year.

## UNTO THE UTTERMOST PART

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Reuel Lemmons

Back before the beginning, as recorded in Genesis, there was a time when darkness covered the face of the deep, and the spirit moved upon the waters. Out of chaos God brought order, and out of darkness he brought light. In a garden still wet with the dews of time's morning, he gathered together some dust, mixed some of himself with it and made a man. In man alone God placed that spark of immortality called a soul. The soul of man sets him apart from the rest of God's creatures. The soul is immortal. The possession of a soul proclaims the fact that God has some more noble purpose for man than for the rest of his creatures. The soul of man soars out of one vast eternity, and but touches a wing to earth, as it were, in its flight, and continues on into another eternity.

How different life on earth might have been if man had not sinned! In penalty for having transgressed the command of Jehovah, man was forced to give up the paradise his heavenly parent had provided. He wandered with meandering feet down a hopeless trail of tears, edged with thorns and thistles, for four thousand years. In the end of those centuries, because God was not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance, he sent his only begotten son—down from the palisades of glory—that he might present to the world his word in flesh, and that Jesus might die, offering his own body upon the sacrificial cross as an atonement for man's transgressions.

The guilt of sin was the universal heritage of transgressing men. There was not one righteous; all had sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Some retri-

bution was due to violated justice. The law decreed that the soul that sinneth, it shall die. The majesty of the law of God had to be sustained. There must have been wonder in heaven when Adam continued to live after he had sinned! Angels, men and devils must have wondered. What a mystery must have been the promise of God that the seed of woman should bruise the serpent's head. Eve, like Mary, must have kept these things hidden in her heart.

At the end of a third of a century of perfect living, Jesus was crucified. He was heaven's demonstration of God's boundless love for the race. His torn and mangled flesh hung as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. He was the fulfillment of Isaiah 53, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, so opened he not his mouth . . ."

When he died, the mountain shook. The rocks were rent. The dead were raised. The veil in the temple was split from top to bottom, signifying that the way into the most holy place had now been opened. The bars of death were broken in the resurrection and Jesus became the first fruits of them that slept.

From a little hill outside Jerusalem he ascended back to heaven, bearing in his nail-pierced hands the trophies of his conquest. His own precious blood he offered once and for all as an atonement for the sins of the race. Following his ascension, the twenty-four elders surrounding the throne of God were commanded to sing a new song, "Worthy art thou to take the book and open the seals thereof. For thou wast slain, and hath redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people, and nation." And all the rest of heaven's population said "Amen."

It was thus resolved in the councils of heaven to offer surcease for the sin shackled prisoners of earth upon the terms of the gospel. For every sinner the gospel is an emancipation proclamation written in blood. From that day until this it has furnished the light of life to millions of blind souls trying to mould their images of God.

Just before he left the earth, Jesus had a farewell talk with his apostles. He knew that his work on earth was done. He knew that he was on his way back to glory. He knew that upon the shoulders of mortal men would henceforth rest the task of evangelizing the world. He knew that within a few days the Father would send the Holy Spirit to guide the Apostles in the proclamation of the gospel of peace. Soon the crown of King of Kings would rest where the crown of thorns had been, and these Apostles would be left to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

The gospel is the universal heritage of the human race. All nations are to be taught. In its proclamation there are to be observed neither racial nor national lines. Its terms are not restricted to the elect few; its commands are not so intricate that only the learned can obey; its facts are not so profound that they have to be interpreted by the scholarly or the "clergy." It is a simple gospel—couched in simple terms—and is to be preached without alteration until the end of the ages. "In every nation," Peter told the Jerusalem church, "he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him."

The commission to preach the gospel is not only world-wide, it is time-wide. There has never been, neither will there ever be, an age in which the commission does not rest as heavily upon the people as it rested upon the Apostles. It is impossible but the thinking people feel the

weight of that responsibility. Every individual soul can say with the Apostle Paul, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." There are no special "calls"; there are divine appointments by direct designation. Upon every individual alike, to the extent of the ability of each, is the task laid to preach the gospel.

I feel that the subject of this lesson implies a special field of gospel preaching. Ours is the task of discussing it as it applies—not to Jerusalem, nor to Judea, nor Samaria—but "Unto the Uttermost Parts of the Earth." I understand that the apostles were literal "WITNESSES" of all things that Jesus did and taught, and that their testimony as witnesses, was a testimony that we can only repeat. We did not see these things. When guided by the Holy Spirit, their testimony, accurate in every particular became the eternal truth which is to be preached among all nations until the end of the world. This is the way in which their written testimony is a perfect law of liberty.

The apostles were told that they would be the Lord's witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8). Figurately speaking, each congregation has its own "Jerusalem," its own "Judea and Samaria," and its own "Uttermost part of the earth." Herein is constituted an ideal plan for evangelizing the world.

We are concerned, in this discourse, with the preaching of the gospel to the "Uttermost part of the earth." We have coined an expression to fit the field; we call it "Mission Work." The term itself cannot be found in the King James Version, but the practice, described in our modern language by the term, can be found throughout the New Testament. It is a mistake for men who speak a living language to insist on the verbage of a dead one. And thus

we speak of preaching the gospel in remote regions as "mission work."

We have made gigantic strides in the past nine years. Ten years ago Hitler's legions were still marching in Germany, and those of Mussolini in Italy. There were no churches of Christ there. Ten years ago Japan was worshipping its emperor and our only missionary there was in custody. Ten years ago the church scarcely existed on the continent of Africa, and that in the heart of the Rhodesian backwoods. In even the missionaries who dared the dangers and the privations necessary to take the gospel to these peoples, could have seen the present fruits of their labors ten years ago, they would have been surprised.

A few years ago mission work experienced a great upsurge. As a result of congregations co-operating with each other to do what neither of them could have done by itself, we have planted the gospel firmly in many places. We have employed the facilities of the world's greatest networks. We have sent whole groups of missionaries to work together. We have brought the plea of unadulterated New Testament Christianity forcibly to the attention of whole nations. We have even influenced governments. In one country alone (Nigeria) we have baptized tens of thousands.

It was but natural that a reaction set in. After the first great growth of the church in the days immediately after Pentecost, difficulties arose, and problems multiplied, and persecution filtered the church. Its growth was slowed to say the least. Following the first land-slide victories of the early restoration movement brethren experienced the same reaction. At that time there were many good brethren who honestly thought that the whole world was on the verge of conversion, and many of them began to interpret

the Bible in the light of his convictions. Many thought that the millennium was about to be ushered in! Then came the reaction, and the church experienced some bitter opposition and even digression and division.

Now, following our initial successes in mission work, we seem to have entered a period of reaction. Brethren have turned their attention to other things than preaching the gospel. Problems have arisen, both among the missionaries, and the churches that support them, that have cooled our ardor. The "new" has worn off, and part of the glamor is gone. Then, too, we are using the time to consolidate the gains we have already made. Now is the time to encourage brethren everywhere not to grow weary in well-doing. Because I am not a prophet of gloom, I sincerely believe that the slow-down in our missionary conquests is but a retrenchment, and that very soon we will go onward far in advance of anything we have yet done. And as far as that goes, I believe we will advance beyond the fondest dreams of the wildest dreamer among us today.

Every individual Christian is responsible for doing **some** mission work. The great commission is laid upon individual shoulders. This is a responsibility placed upon man by Jehovah, and man is answerable to Jehovah for its discharge. And woe unto the man who buries his talent, laid up in a napkin! Each should go and each should teach and each is answerable directly to God.

Then, there is a sense in which missionaries are, "sent." The church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch. Later, Antioch sent Barnabas and Saul on a missionary journey. Whether either church had any financial part in the sending is hard to determine. Yet they sent. And when the work was completed Paul and Barnabas felt at least a moral

obligation to return and report to the church that had sent them out, all that the Lord had done by them.

On another occasion Paul wrote the church at Philippi that that church alone had supported him in Thessalonica (Phil. 4:15-16). This support was sent to him, he says, through the medium of Epaphroditis, whom Paul recommended to Philippi in Chapter Two that they "receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness."

The very fact that Paul says that "in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had communication with me concerning giving and receiving, but ye only," indicates that later other churches did co-operate in supporting Paul. In his second letter to Corinth, Paul said, "I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service" (2 Cor. 11:8). Thus, by divine precept, if one church is able to "send" a missionary and to support him fully, let that church do so. If the task is greater than that church can by itself care for, let one or more other churches co-operate in supplying the need of the missionary.

Co-operation is a divine principle. And the God who made one star depend upon other stars to hold it in its place in the universe, and the welfare of one member of the body dependent upon the co-operation of other members of the body, would not so isolate congregations of the body of Christ as to forbid their co-operation in the preaching of the gospel.

Every congregation should do something to carry out the responsibility of preaching the gospel to the uttermost part of the earth. It would surely be anti-scriptural to assume that no congregation should attempt to do this until it were sufficiently strong to send the gospel to a far corner by itself. What, then, can it do, other than pool its ability

with that of others until enough is available to "send" a man.

In New Testament days some men went of their own accord, while others were "sent" and supported by some church or churches. Paul seems to have gone both ways. They went "sponsored" and "unsponsored." And so should men today. If a man can support himself in such a work, that is fine. If he must have help, then some church should send him.

When a missionary is sent by a congregation, he should be responsible to the congregation that sent him. He has a moral obligation to it whether it pays his bill or not. Paul felt that obligation to Antioch strongly enough that he made his report to that church upon his return.

"Oversight" is a word loosely used to describe the supervision of the work of one sent out. While it is true that oversight in the same sense in which elders exercise oversight over the local congregation can seldom if ever exist between a church and a missionary, certainly there is need for constant contact and advice. Men should not be sent out in whom the congregation does not have confidence. However, confidence in a man does not mean that he may not need advice. And missionaries should not take counsel and advice as an indication of lack of confidence.

It is no little thing to sell all that one has—even to the children's toys—and to pack his trunks and buy a ticket to a land whose customs are not those of his family and whose very language he may not be able to speak. It is no little thing to face the inconveniences, and even dangers, that the missionary faces. It takes more than salt water in the blood to cause a man to leave this United States and cast his lot with men of another race or another tongue.

I have all the respect in the world for my brethren who will do it, and little for those who belittle them for it.

The very least that those of us who remain at home can do is to support them and support them well. I have no sympathy for the idea so prevalent among church leaders that a man must want to go badly enough to be willing to half starve in order to do it. Some of them will be willing to let him. If he were paid well in cash he would still have to get his compensation for sacrifices made from the satisfaction of having carried the gospel unto the uttermost part.

I have traveled extensively among brethren in the interest of mission work in different places. A few things stand out: First, the average group dreads to see you coming. Second, most have local programs, and are so busy in Jerusalem that they don't even dream that there is an "uttermost part." Third, some are enthusiastic, temporarily, but there is one elder or one deacon who is not. And one is enough. They'll let you know. They always do. And, fourth, thank God, there are some who are zealous to preach the gospel to every creature, and even though they are a very small percentage compared to the whole brotherhood, yet it is they who are holding up the light.

When an army sets out on a mission, it operates from a base. When an explorer enters a wilderness, he operates from a home base. It is good sense for a missionary to have a home base, too. When one is preaching in a far corner of the earth, the fact that he has someone back home behind him, fighting for him, talking for him, and praying for him, has its psychological and practical advantages.

Brethren are prone to forget a man after he has been away so long. Many grow weary and drop their support, leaving him to swim alone. It is certainly all right for him

to insist that it come direct, provided he is capable of keeping it coming, or provided he is not afraid to swim!

On the other hand, it has been proved to have its disadvantages. While in a very few isolated cases, a missionary might have received too much, according to the standards of some brethren, in far more cases they have starved out. Let us be practical about this thing. Experience has shown that it is more practical to have someone at home concerned with whether the missionary is supplied. And, I might add, the congregation at home cannot be content with having "sent" a man to the mission field. It is nothing short of criminal to neglect him after he has gone on faith in our willingness to stand behind him.

The congregation that acts as "home base" or "sponsoring" congregation has a two-fold obligation. It has an obligation to the brother it sends out, and it has a moral obligation to the brotherhood. It actually stands for that missionary to the brotherhood. In many instances many different congregations cooperate in the support of work in a distant place. The congregation responsible for sending out the missionary is responsible to the congregations that co-operate in the work. And missionaries on the field should remember that the home congregation has this two-way responsibility.

Brethren everywhere should remember that as in any long-range operation, there are added stresses and problems. There will be errors of judgment on the part of co-operating congregations; there will be errors of judgment on the part of "sponsoring" congregations; and there will be errors of judgment on the part of missionaries in the field. These errors often dampen the missionary spirit, but they should not. For, to err is human.

However, every precaution should be taken, and every

possible phase of the operation planned and worked out prior to the man's leaving the country. A thorough understanding concerning finances, responsibility, and authority should be had from the beginning, and everything possible should be done to provide things honest in the sight of all men. Reports should be made to those who are concerned by them, and care should be taken in the handling of funds so that the mouth of the gainsayer can be stopped. No church is under obligation to run down and stop every little rumor, for if it were, some would spend all their valuable time that way. But all who handle funds are obligated to keep records and to keep them available to those they concern, which records will by their accuracy belie any criticism.

There is still a lot of thinking to be done on the problem of raising and spending funds. A few years ago brethren anathematized the idea of a man receiving funds from several resources direct, without any accounting for the receiving or spending of them. In recent months some of us have taken the position that that is the only way to do it. Perhaps in another year someone will present an entirely different plan. At this stage our thinking is exceedingly fluid. Maybe someone will come up with a fool-proof plan. It seems to me that brethren ought to think twice before they put huge sums of money in the hands of one individual, without giving him any advice or help in planning the spending of it. And missionaries should think twice before taking such responsibilities. Plans should be worked out between the brethren concerned relative to the raising and the spending of funds before the project is launched.

Other things besides money are necessary to a successful mission. A meeting place, often considered of minor importance by those of us at home who have good meeting

places of our own, is almost invariably considered of prime importance by the man on the field. And why is it that we would not consider hiring a preacher who had no means of transportation here at home, while we consider this item of little or no importance when he reaches the mission field. Sending a man into a region where there is no church without the necessary tools is like sending a carpenter to build a building without hammer or saw.

One cannot in forty minutes cover the field, but mention must be made of the need for patience and understanding on the part of the congregation at home. You have sent a man into a region where the church is unknown. Everyone is a stranger. Even their customs may be strange. At the very best, you have sent him out with little equipment for his task. He has severed every tie. He will become so homesick he will wish he had never begun the work. He will feel like he is trying to sweep back the waves of the sea with a broom, the odds against him are so heavy. He has no immediate counsel. He can't even talk over his problems with anyone. He is alone—one man against a wilderness. And you expect him to build a church—get it to self-sustaining proportions—within three or five years. Why expect one man—single-handed—against such odds, to do what we, here at home, with all our advantages and with all our numbers, very seldom do?

On the other hand, I do not want to sound a single discouraging note. These men we call missionaries have accomplished the impossible. A handful of them have gone right into the heart of Hitler's Ruhr Valley and planted churches and baptized people, and built buildings, and started schools. Another handful of them have walked right up on the Pope's doorstep and planted churches. Though stoned, they have sheltered orphans. Though im-

prisoned, they have preached the gospel. Though intimidated, they have shaken governments. They have become the offscouring of creation—a spectacle to world, men and angels for the gospel's sake.

Another handful have gone into Japan, a nation second only to China in its paganism, and have started congregations and are operating a school where young Japanese men are being trained—several hundred strong—to preach the gospel to their own people.

Another handful have lifted the curtain of darkness that has enshrouded the continent of Africa. They have allowed the radiance of the light of life to infiltrate the jungles where men still eat one another. They have taken the glad story to the teeming millions who for centuries have been steeped in heathenism, and have lifted their eyes from their lifeless idols to behold him who taketh away the sins of the world. They have taken it to the great cities of the Union, the Veld of the Rhodesias and to the steaming jungles of the "White man's Graveyard" and they have baptized men and planted churches.

From the equator to the arctic and in a single decade these pioneers have pushed back the frontiers until now vast sections of the earth have been opened for the preaching of the gospel. It is to be devoutly hoped that the trails these have blazed will be followed by a great migration of men who preach the gospel of Christ.

The multitudes will always be content to remain in the comforts of the established settlements. Only the brave in heart will be willing to brave the dangers of a frontier! Many of us have so established ourselves that we feel that the opportunity of our going to the far corners of earth has passed by. But not so with younger men. May I plead with you young men today that you, while you are young,

adventure into some area where the tracks of gospel preachers are uncommon. Become acquainted while you can with some land and people among whom you can become a modern Moses to lead them out of bondage.

About nineteen hundred years ago the greatest event that ever took place on the continent of Europe transpired. It was not accompanied by the martialled tread of marching feet; no herald blew a trumpet in the streets; no great public campaign was enacted. Two itinerate preachers disembarked from a boat on the shores of Macedonia. They went quietly through the streets attracting no attention whatever. One Saturday morning they went out by the riverside where some women had gathered to pray. They preached the gospel to them and converted Lydia and her household. This was the beginning of the Christian religion on the continent of Europe.

These men did not go to the rulers of the city; they did not seek to overthrow the government, they did not cause a commotion in the streets. They did not even lift their voices. Yet, from this small and insignificant beginning the gospel spread and churches multiplied. The teachings of Jesus had broken the fetters of Palestinian and Asiatic influence.

No other influence has so completely changed the course of human affairs on that continent. No king, no army, no government, no war, no law, no catastrophe, has ever affected the lives of the residents of Europe so much as the message that Paul preached. Down until the end of time the one event that has cast a greater influence over the affairs of all Europe than any other was the arrival of Paul in Philippi with the gospel of Christ.

Occasionally today, a messenger of the Lord will arrive unheralded and unnoticed upon a continent, or an island in

the sea, where the pure and unadulterated gospel of Jesus is unknown, and teeming thousands will go about their daily work never realizing that a stranger has come among them. He will probably begin as Paul begun with a very simple and humble audience—just a handful of people willing to listen with unprejudiced hearts to the presentation of the gospel of Christ. The world will very little note his presence. It will not realize that it is the recipient of an unusual blessing. Yet, a little group of disciples will be formed. They will meet in a rented hall or a private home for a while, but they will worship. One by one others will be added, and the church will grow, and the word of God will be glorified, even as it was in the day when the Apostle first brought it to Europe.

When Paul arrived on the shores of Europe he did not arrive there alone. If he had gone there purely with a human message, the odds would have been too great against him. If he had gone there with the strength of his own wisdom alone, and the power of his own philosophy, he would have been doomed to fail. But an unseen guest arrived with Paul. The re-assuring words of Jesus must have been ringing in his ear: "Fear not, for I am with thee." And this same unseen companion will accompany every preacher of the gospel until the end of the world.

Every gospel preacher ought to do some mission work. Every congregation ought to do some mission work. It certainly is not necessary for every preacher to spend his whole life doing it, but it could certainly be proven apostolic for him to spend some of his life doing it. The same is true of congregations. The excuse, "The church where I preach won't let me" will not suffice. Are you a slave? Are you in bondage to a church? Churches need to send their preachers out. And if churches don't send their preachers

out, then preachers should go "un-sent." There is no need for both to go to hell. Preachers need to declare a "declaration of independence" and begin preaching instead of "pastoring."

For various reasons, the attention of good brethren seems to have turned from the mission field to a consideration of methods of raising money and sending men. We are spending our energies upon each other, wrangling about how to save a generation on its way to hell, while it goes on its way to hell. There are methods certainly sinful and wrong. They have been discussed and branded until all of us know and recognize them. But the effect of a lot of our discussion is that cautious brethren have ceased to do anything for fear they will do wrong. Regardless of how dangerous other trends may be, there is no course more dead certain to send us to hell than the course of "do-nothing." This is one thing upon which we can all agree. The course of "do-nothing" will damn us! Let us not forget that.

Let us, then, martial our strength. Let us put on the whole armor of God. Let us face whatever foes there be, asking no quarter, and giving none, until the battle of Armageddon has been fought and won. With stout hearts and willing hands, let us raise the bloodstained banner upon the heights of every conquered fortress until the throats of thousands in unison sing the songs of redemption from the equator to the poles.

*Missionary Lectures*



## THE WORK IN GERMANY AND EUROPE

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### Otis Gatewood

A few summers ago I stood on Mount Zion in the land of Palestine and looked over toward the Mount of Olives. As I stood there it seemed as if a scene that took place 2000 years ago was being re-enacted before my eyes.

It seemed as if I could see the Lord standing there with his twelve apostles just before he ascended into heaven. It seemed as if I could hear him giving them the Great Commission, charging them to go to all the world, to go teach all nations, and to preach the gospel to every creature. In my mind's eye I visualized him as ascending, and as he ascended it seemed as if I could hear him shout back to them, "Go! Go!! G O !!!"

These apostles did go, and within about 30 short years the apostle Paul wrote in Romans 10:18, "Have they not all heard?" And then he replied, "Yea their sound has gone throughout all the world." In Colossians 1:23 he said, "The gospel has been preached to every creature under heaven."

Today we are charged with the same parting words of our Lord to go to all the world, into all the nations, and to every creature with the gospel message. However, today the gospel as we understand it has been taken to less than 30 of the 130 nations in existence, and there seems to be little indication of a change in this situation. Today there are more than 5000 preachers of the churches of Christ in America preaching in a nation of only 150 million people. Alas, there are less than 100 preachers of the churches of Christ in other nations of the world. Our Lord said, "all of the nations." He didn't say to preach only in America. Just why is this true? Is it necessary to have

5000 preachers here in America with so few in other parts of the world? There are more than 2 billion people in the world to reach, and we certainly must go outside of America if we are going to succeed with taking the gospel to these 2 billion people. It seems to me that it is high time for us to investigate and see why it is impossible for us to send men who are preachers into other parts of the world. I would like for you to investigate with me for a few minutes to see why so many remain in America.

One reason for staying in America is that it is easier, quicker, and cheaper, to preach the gospel here in America. But I know that those of you who are preaching here in America are perhaps ready immediately to object and say that it is not easier. But you must remember that here it is not necessary for you to leave your loved ones and your home. Here you are accustomed to the climate. Here it is not necessary to learn new customs and a new language. Here you have the help of members of the church. So that is what I mean when I say it is easier. It is cheaper because it is not necessary to have a travel fund to cross an ocean. It is quicker because the people here in America already know the church, and it is fairly easy to go into any new community and take some members of a former congregation and soon have a self-supporting congregation. Then, too, here in America a larger percentage of people go to church than in any other land. It is conservatively estimated that 27 million people have become active in church work since the end of the last world war. So, I say that if you can not preach like Peter, if you can not pray like Paul, you can tell the love of Jesus, you can say he died for all. If you can not cross the ocean and a heathen land explore, you can find a heathen closer, you can find him just next door.

Another reason why so many preachers stay in America is that churches are not willing to pay them salaries to preach in foreign lands, but they are willing to pay if they stay here in America and preach to them. It seems to be a conception that a preacher should preach for less in a mission field than he can get if he were to stay at home. For that reason many of the men who are best talented are held in America. I am not accusing the preachers who remain in America of preaching for money, but I am saying that it is unfair to the work of the Lord for the churches to be willing to pay them more to preach in America than they would give them to go to a foreign land. Let me here disabuse your mind of the fact that a preacher can live on less in a foreign land than he can live on in America. The economy of all the nations of the world is about the same or else one nation would undermine the other nation by being able to sell their products on the world market for cheaper prices. I know that many natives in foreign lands have a lower living standard than we here in America, but why must a preacher be forced to such a low living standard just because he goes abroad? Natives in foreign lands do not respect Americans who do not have any more to live on than they do. They naturally expect Americans to have more money than they do and if they do not, they think immediately that something is wrong with the American or the church that supports him. Then too, the natives have socialized medicine, insurance, and retirement plans that make it possible for them to have many advantages that an American does not have. Then too, a native can demand a place to rent from the rent control office with his rent at a very low rate of rent. Whereas an American must buy the right to rent a place. In most instances it costs from \$800 to \$1000 to buy the right to rent a place, and then the rent on such a place is

usually from two to three times higher than the apartments that are under the rent control office. Then too, it is almost impossible for an American to pay as cheaply as a native can. He is not accustomed to buying the bargains that the natives know about, and then too, in many instances there is one price for natives but the markets have another price for Americans. So I would suggest that if you want to interest more preachers in going into other parts of the world that the churches be willing to pay as much or more than they would pay them to stay here in America to preach.

Another reason why many preachers hesitate to go to a foreign country is that they think the language is too hard to learn. Most of us judge by experiences we have had in trying to learn a language in school, but we must remember that here in America we speak English all of the time when we are trying to learn another language. If you go into a foreign country, you will be among those who speak the language all of the time and will be able to hear it daily. It is, therefore, much easier to learn a language under these circumstances. Women are especially adept to learning a language in a foreign country because they do not usually stay around where they do not know what is going on. Brother Palmer and I were reading our sermons in German within six months after we entered Germany. Within a year if a person really applies himself, he can be speaking the language fairly well. One must remember that children learn to speak by the time they are two or three years old. They do not learn their language from books but from hearing others speak. We certainly do not want to concede that we are dumber than a two or three year old child.

Love for America oftentimes keeps us from going into

other parts of the world. I think sometimes we accuse the Nazis of being nationalistic, but we are more nationalistic than they were. We think America is just about the greatest land in the world. We immediately think that it is hard to leave our loved ones and friends, and it may be to begin with. However, as you stay in a foreign land, you learn to get accustomed to them and learn to love them and you find that it is just about as hard to leave them as to leave loved ones in America. Then too, churches who send missionaries away should learn that it is inadvisable to keep the evangelists they send in a foreign land too long. The American army has found out that it is inadvisable to keep single boys in a foreign land more than 18 months at a time, and it is inadvisable to keep families more than 3 years at a time. We should learn something from them. When we first went to Germany, most of us agreed that we would stay there 5 years before returning to America, but we have learned by experience that this is too long. During this period of time a person loses contact with the brotherhood, the brethren here in America forget him, and a person gets greatly discouraged and oftentimes his health is impaired by staying in a climate to which he is not accustomed for such a long period of time. A person need not, therefore, think that he is under obligation to spend the rest of his life away from America if he goes to a foreign land to preach.

Sometimes there is a gross misunderstanding about how long it takes to get a church established in a foreign land and what is necessary in order to get the job accomplished. Many churches are willing only to provide a preacher who goes into a foreign land with a salary. This is a big mistake. He needs a fund from which he can draw to pay rent on buildings in which to meet for worship and to hold meetings. Then too, a preacher should have enough to

buy a permanent building in which the church can meet for worship. Some brethren make the argument that it is not scriptural or wise for churches in America to pay for the erection of buildings in foreign lands. They think in this way they are spoiling the native people by their receiving benefits from America. But many mission fields in America have received help from older and stronger congregations to help them erect their building. We have learned from experience that the mission field is helped rather than hindered by this help. Oftentimes work in America has been held back and definitely handicapped because of a lack of the right kind of building. We have found in Germany that the building we have erected there contributed more to the stability and growth of the church than any other thing that we have done. We have learned that it is not good to give the entire cost of the building to the people. The native people should pay all of the cost on such a building, however most congregations in a mission field are composed of the poor people of the community that are unable to do much. When they are helped with the greater percentage of the cost from America, they are given an example that inspires them to do all that they can to help themselves. If they see that the brethren in America are sacrificing to help them, they are inspired to sacrifice. But if we who are more able financially are not willing to invest in the cause in which we believe, the native people think that we are not really sold on what we are trying to do. It is almost impossible to build up a church if it is necessary to meet in a beer hall, a school house, or a hotel room. When we have a building of our own, we say to the people of the community and the members of the church that we are there to stay. The members of the church know that the building belongs to them and that no one can put them out. They take greater

pride in inviting their friends and in caring for the building.

Another great hindrance to mission work in a foreign country is that we want to accomplish too much too quickly. Here in America when a congregation is established, we most usually take some members of a former congregation to help us establish the new congregation, but in a foreign country it is necessary to build a church entirely from new converts. When I read in Acts 4 of the work of Paul in Asia, I read that he established churches and went back immediately and appointed elders. This discourages many because we have been in Germany 7 years and yet there are no elders, in any congregations so far. But we must remember that Paul had the ability to lay hands on people and give them the spiritual gifts. Today we do not have this power. I read Paul later left Titus in Crete to set things in order and to appoint elders, and it is my understanding that elders were not appointed in the Cretian church for about 20 years. I think that we can have elders appointed in Germany within 20 years. It takes a long time to get error out of people and get the truth firmly established. So we should not expect results too quickly. Then we should be willing to stay behind a particular work long enough to get it established.

One of the greatest hindrances to foreign mission work is the particular case of "swarmitis" we have in America. Perhaps we do not know what we mean by this, but many people have the conception that large numbers of little churches should be established in every town. In the New Testament we do not read about churches in Jerusalem, Antioch, in Galatia, in Colossae, and other places to which Paul wrote. We read of the church in singular number in these places. They did not seem to have the conception that a large number of congregations should be established

in each place. Somehow today we have gotten into the school of thinking that a church can not be scriptural unless it is small. We are afraid that when a church gets big that it will apostacize or that it is unscriptural, but we must remember that the church at Jerusalem had 3000 members the very first day and increased within a very short time to 5000 men. I do not know of any churches today that are that large in our brotherhood. Sometimes people make the argument that we should stay small so that all of the members of the church can get acquainted with one another but brethren, it might be a blessing that the churches are large enough so that all of the members do not know all of the business of one another. Perhaps there would not be so much gossiping, and so many members would not be busy butting in other people's affairs. If you are worrying about fellowship, that can be received in the classes. Each one usually associates with those of his own age anyway, so a good spirit of fellowship can be built in the different classes. Sometimes people think that a church can not work effectively if they are too large, but some of the best working churches that I have seen that keep more of their members busy are the largest ones. Some of the churches with the poorest activity for their members have been some of the smallest ones. It may take more elders and deacons in a larger church and a better organization in order to keep the members busy, but we must not come to the conclusion that the members can not be kept busy in a large church. Some people object to the larger churches because of the expense involved in a large building, but it does not cost any more to build one house that will seat 1000 than it costs to erect 5 buildings that will seat 200 each. The operational expense on one building that will seat 1000 is much less than that on 5 buildings that will seat 200. Then too, one must remember

that it is much easier for a preacher to preach to 1000 than to preach to 200. Why is it that in one town 5 churches in 5 different locations are within ten or fifteen minutes driving distance of one another, whereas the people in another part of the world do not have a chance at all to hear a gospel message? Would it not be better to let one preacher preach to the 1000 and send the other four preachers into another part of the world? I firmly believe the large number of small congregations is responsible for a lack of world-wide evangelism more than any other one factor in our midst. May God give us wisdom and the ability to see that it is sinful to keep so many preachers in America to preach to so many small congregations when we in so doing keep the gospel from other people of the world. I do not want to be misunderstood on this matter. I am not objecting or arguing against the establishing of congregations in places where there is a real need, but I am arguing against the idea that we must stay small in order to stay scriptural. For years we have been preaching unity, and this is right. But we preach more unity and practice more division than any other group that I know of. Our practices at least should be consistent with our preaching.

If there was a real need to establish a new congregation in a new part of town that would not be so bad, but often times the new congregations are started because some of the members of a former congregation cannot agree among themselves. In order to solve the matter the contentious member takes a group of the members of the former congregation and moves to another section of town. God will not bless such efforts. We need not think that we are Christian if we cannot continue to live peaceably with our brethren. How many new congregations have been established in our brotherhood through this spirit of strife?

Then, too, sometimes we find a preacher who does not want to leave a certain town when the elders of a church decide they want to get a new preacher and want the former preacher to move. Sometimes the preacher does not want to move, and so instead of peacefully leaving when he sees that he should, he divides the church. Often times preachers feel that they have converted most of the members of a church and so they have a right to stay in the congregation, but we should remember that we do more harm than good when we feel and act in that way.

You will note that what I have said so far has to do with mission work in general and I have said very little if anything about the work in Germany. Now before closing let me tell you a few things about the work that we have been doing in Germany. When we went to Germany seven years ago we were of the conviction that it would be hard to get the church established there. We had thought that if we could get one good church established within five or ten years that we would have succeeded, but now after seven years we have established 23 German congregations and 14 English speaking churches. The English speaking congregations are composed mostly of service personnel, but those boys in the armed forces have been real missionaries and have been responsible for helping us to establish eight of the twenty-three German speaking congregations. During the past seven years we have baptized approximately 2,500 people and we have succeeded in training thirteen native evangelists who are now giving full time to the preaching and the teaching of the Gospel of Christ in Germany.

The work that has been accomplished in Germany has not been the work of any one individual or any one congregation. From the very beginning of that work, numerous congregations have supported different evangelists

who have worked together in cooperative efforts to get the church established in Germany. Sometimes we hear it stated that no congregation should undertake a work that is bigger than that which they could do with their own resources, but we have felt from the very beginning that the work in Germany was bigger than any one church. We have therefore asked the help and the cooperation of numbers of congregations and gospel preachers.

When I was here four years ago I was asking for money to erect nine different church buildings in Germany. Those nine buildings are now erected and since they have been finished a new challenge is open to us. As long as a church meets in a beer hall, in a cafe, or a hotel room, it is almost impossible to demand the respect of the community. But immediately upon completion of our buildings the members of our church and the people of the community saw that they were there to stay and therefore had greater faith in the stability of our work. The members of our church have taken more pride in inviting their friends and we have been able to reach a better educated class of people and those who are more able to financially support the church. I do not mean by this that we should not try to reach the poor with the gospel of Christ. We should always do this, but our plans should not include only the poor and uneducated. The Lord wants us to preach the Gospel to everyone. In my estimation the buildings that have been erected in Germany have been one of the most stabilizing influences of our work so far. We have had to appeal to our brethren here for help in this matter because so far we have reached the poorer classes of people in Germany. When the war was over in Germany there were three women in Germany for every man. Therefore the churches that we have established have been predominated by widows. It was therefore necessary for us to appeal to you brethren in America

for help. You have responded wonderfully and just as new congregations have been helped in mission fields in America you have also helped the erection of buildings in Germany.

Since these buildings have been completed we have found a new avenue of service to the communities, especially by teaching the children. Since the very beginning of our work in Germany we have been teaching children in Bible classes on Sunday. But we found that about the time these children got to be fourteen or fifteen years of age they went back to the Lutheran or Catholic churches. We began to examine our teaching methods to see what we were doing that was not right. We found that the lessons we were giving were good but we taught the children one hour on Sunday and the other six days a week they sat under Lutheran and Catholic teachers in the public schools. In that way the children learned more error than they did the truth. We sought for an opportunity also to teach in the public schools but the two state religions were powerful enough to keep us from getting such a permit. We prayed for an opportunity to teach children daily. We didn't know how the opportunity would come, but upon the completion of our building in Frankfurt we found there was a need to help the people of that community by caring for the children during the day while the parents worked. At the present time we have approximately 100 children who come to our building daily in Frankfurt for Bible instruction. The pre-school children are with us from eight o'clock in the morning until five in the afternoon, and those who go to school are with us from one o'clock in the afternoon until five. So we have the children under our influence from four to eight hours a day. We therefore can influence the children over a longer period of time each day than the parents can. We are teaching the Bible to these children daily. We give each child twenty-four hours of Bible teach-

ing each month or 188 hours of Bible study per year, so we can give the children as much Bible teaching in one year as they could get in four years by attending Bible classes only on Sunday.

We feel that these children who come to us for daily Bible instruction will not leave us and go back into the state church after they are with us several years, and now even though we cannot get into the public schools to teach them we can bring them to our building each day and give them the Bible lessons that we want them to have. Not only have such classes been started in Frankfurt but also in Berlin. At the present, Ruth Ransohoff has more than forty children who are coming to her daily for Bible instruction. Ruth was here in Abilene Christian College for one year. She is a native of Berlin and is now back among her own people teaching those daily lessons to those children. As educational personnel can be obtained, such classes will be started in the other buildings that have been erected in Germany. It's a shame that we spend large sums on buildings here in America and then use them only two hours on Sunday morning and one hour on Sunday night and Wednesday night and keep them closed the rest of the time. The buildings that have been erected in Germany are being used daily.

I have now told you about some of the things we have accomplished in Germany; now let me talk with you for just a few minutes about the future of the work in Germany. There are 37 congregations in Germany and Austria at the present time, but there are only 27 preachers to serve these 37 congregations. You can immediately see that we need ten more preachers in Germany. Three congregations have been established in Austria but there is not a preacher in that entire nation. Brethren in Salzburg and Vienna have been pleading for months for preachers

to come there to help them, but as yet no one has responded. Brethren, we are not serving the Lord faithfully if we allow such a challenging opportunity to pass. There are two million people in Vienna alone and there we have access to many people who come from behind the Iron Curtain. If we were there at the present time I feel sure we could reach many people behind the Iron Curtain.

Shortly before leaving Germany I went to Berlin and talked to the Russian ambassador there about the possibility of our sending preachers behind the Iron Curtain. He stated that he did not see why it could not be done. I even asked him if it would be possible for us to come to Moscow to preach. He stated that I was the first preacher to ever ask a question like that. But he invited me to go to Moscow to talk with the officials there about the matter. So I now have an official invitation to go to Moscow as soon as arrangements can be completed, unless the recent change in the Communist regime changed their attitude. There are several members of the church already behind the Iron Curtain. The mothers of Gottfried Reichel and Reinard Kallus have already obeyed the Gospel and are meeting for worship every Sunday in a small town behind the Iron Curtain.

In addition to this there is a small congregation meeting regularly in Leipzig. So you can see by preaching the Gospel in Germany we have opportunities of even reaching into the Communist world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We ask your prayers in our behalf that we may have wisdom to take advantage of these challenging opportunities.

## THE AFRICAN FIELD

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Guy V. Caskey

Somewhere on the broad plains of East Africa today a Masai herdsman lifts his eyes from the sunburnt and wind-swept steppes to gaze in wonder at the snowy crown of Kilimanjaro as it shimmers in spectral beauty above the desert haze, and then turns back to his scraggly hump-backed cattle as they browse on the coarse, dry grass of the parched earth which is the only world he has ever known. Free as the eagle that floats on tireless wings above his head, proud as the lion that watches him from a clump of thorn, he acknowledges no man as his master, and his law is the long-bladed spear upon which he leans.

A few hundred miles away, a small Uganda boy follows his goats through the dewey verdure of the Ankole hills that soar in long tiers of green velvet, laced with delicate fingers of darker forest and silver threads of rivers, until the green becomes purple where the distant peaks of the Mountains of the Moon are lost in the azure of the sky itself. From the banana shambas far below him, there floats up the happy laughter of the village children and the tump tump of the mortars as they stamp out the grain for the mid-day meal. His is a simple and carefree world.

Along a game trail in one of Kenya's primieval forests, a little Kikuyu girl slips with nervous haste. In her eyes is the furtive fear of the hunted, and clutched to her thin chest is the parched corn that will keep her father alive for another day as he coughs in the damp chill of his Mau Mau hideout in the Aberdare rainforest. Hers is a world of twilight at mid-day, of rifles stabbing through the morning mists, and, most of all, a world of running and of sickening fear. For Africa is divided into many worlds—

worlds where the golden skein of the brotherhood of man has been drowned in a thousand years of blood. Too many slave caravans have trodden the road to Zanzibar, and the hatreds and distrusts are too ancient, for the wounds of Africa to be healed by new political and economic systems. But the voice that stilled the tempest can still touch the most savage heart, and when the gospel is preached, barriers of centuries "melt like snow in the glance of the Lord."

The racial problem in Africa is not limited to black and white—it's in Technicolor. Among the white groups represented are the English, Dutch, German, Portuguese and French. The brown people are comprised of Hindus, Arabs and Malays, and the black group includes a thousand tribes of Negro and Bantu peoples, from the Berber hawks of the desert to the timid pigmies of the Ituri forest. And even the yellow-skinned Hottentots and bushmen have a place in Africa's spectrum of peoples.

For four years I lived in a city of a million people. When I went there, Johannesburg meant nothing to me except a little dot on the map of Africa and a name that suggested the gold mining industry. I came away with none of its gold but with a richness of experience that wealth could not buy, and I trust that I left with Johannesburg something of greater value than they will ever derive from their fabulous mines. For the church of the Lord was born in Johannesburg just four years ago, and a fine group of brethren are meeting in an attractive and comfortable church building. Those of us who saw the beginning of this congregation will not forget the sweat, tears and prayers out of which it grew. There are five white congregations in the Union of South Africa—five cities in which the New Testament church has taken root—but there are

a hundred more where the gospel has never been preached the first time. There are millions of white people in the Union of South Africa who never even heard the name of the church of our Lord, much less had an opportunity to hear her saving message proclaimed. Yet, they speak your language, and their way of life is not unlike your own.

But the Union of South Africa is only one part of that enormous continent that stretches from the latitude of Argentina on the south to that of New York City on the north. In only five of its forty countries have we preached the life-giving message. There is not even the first blush of the dawn of the Christian age in the other thirty-five. If your heart cannot weep for two hundred million souls who are poised on the brink of eternity without knowing that Christ died to save them, then their last hope is gone.

Most of our work in Africa is very new. The exception is the work among the native peoples of the Rhodesias, where we have perhaps a hundred congregations and several thousand members. But most of it can be limited to the last decade. Others have not been so indifferent to Africa. On the very day that our first preachers landed in Nigeria, the Baptists were celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of the founding of their first church in that country. Although we have never preached the gospel in any East African country, the Baptists recently had seventeen missionary families on a single boat headed for a single East African country. Brethren, I do not know where the exact geographical center of Africa is, but if I went there, I would, with serene confidence, expect to find the Roman Catholics, Seventh-Day Adventists, Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses. In fact, I would expect to find everybody there but the folks that ought to be there. From the Straits of Magellan to the Pillars of Hercules, and from Tijuana to Timbuktu one finds on every hand modern denominations

but not the church of the Lord. This ought not to be, and this condition will not long continue if brethren, upon whom the responsibility of preaching the gospel devolves, will broaden their vision, lose their selfishness, increase their sacrifices, take advantage of their opportunities and set themselves to the task of carrying the message of light to those who sit in darkness.

Once Brother Eldred Echols, Brother Martelle Petty and I were traveling to a remote village in Nyasaland, Central East Africa. The faint trail that we were following with the car ended at the edge of a swamp some two miles from the village. When we met the natives of the village, we asked them, "Has anyone ever preached here?" "Yes," they replied, "the blind man has been here." "How did he come?" we next inquired. "He came alone and on foot," they answered. The story of why this black man, blind and unprotected, traveled eighty miles through the dangers and unknown terrors of the African forest to preach the gospel to the lost of his own tribe is the sequel to a story that began several years ago.

A young native boy, born and reared in the back country of Nyasaland, determined to rise above the primitive ignorance and superstition in which he lived. After getting all the education that was available to him in his own country, he traveled to the Union of South Africa so that he could study further. He had decided that he could best serve his own people by becoming a medical doctor, and the opportunity which comes to only one native in a million was offered to him—that of studying in the famous Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa, over two thousand miles from his homeland. It was here that we found him, an earnest young native man with his wife and baby. His name was Ahazia Apollo, and he was a brilliant

student who knew some fourteen languages. He could look forward to a wonderful future with social prestige and an excellent income. Yet, when he was baptized into Christ, he said: "I must leave this school and return to my own country, because my people, even my own parents, are not Christians; and my duty is there." And so this young man, for whom the future held so much promise, "counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus," his Lord. The last time I saw Apollo, he was living in a little mud and grass hut in the middle of Nyasaland's wilderness. His wife and baby had both been ill with tropical diseases, but he faced the future with faith and confidence. To his great joy, some of his own people had heard the gospel gladly and had joined with him in spreading the good tidings. Among the first to be baptized was Makwakwa, the blind man of our story, and when Makwakwa saw what Apollo had given up in order that the souls of others might be saved, he counted it a small thing to carry the gospel just eighty miles farther. But, of course, you know now that Makwakwa was not really blind. Physically, he groped his stumbling way over hill and swamp, through river and forest, but spiritually, he walked with the strong sure tread of a child of the light, for he had seen in dazzling brilliance a truth that over a million American brethren have seen but in a mirror darkly—that a soul that cost the life of the Son of God is worth the few paltry gifts that the saints can lay on the altar of love. Can you wonder that Apollo stated in a recent letter that they have established seventeen congregations in less than three years and that in one month they had baptized one hundred and thirty-six people?

Africa, I have said, is divided into many worlds. An area four times the size of the United States, it comprises

forty countries. There are plains and plateaus, valleys and mountains, rivers and lakes, deserts—and, I think you would be disappointed if I did not say, jungle. Its people are white, red, brown and black. Its religions are Mohammedan, Hindu, Heathen and Christian. Its climate is varied—from ideal to intolerable. Its resources are incalculable: gold, diamonds, uranium, iron, copper, tin, lead, titanium, chrome, asbestos, coal, and many others, waiting to be tapped by the ambitious geologist or discovered by the hardy adventurer. The agriculture potential is absolutely unlimited. Its cities, particularly of Southern Africa, are large, modern and progressive. But there are New Testament Christians among the white people in only a few of them: Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, East London, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town in the Union, and Bulawayo in Southern Rhodesia. Our concern is not only for the white man, but for the black as well.

From the Valley of a Thousand Hills and the Mountains of the Dragons on the south to the great Serengeti Plains and the Mountains of the Moon on the north lies a rich, fertile plateau, of very productive soil, ranging from two to ten thousand feet in altitude, checkered with the longest, deepest fresh-water lakes in the world, laced with crystal clear rivers which fall suddenly out of the mountains and shuffle across the plains, decorated with mountain peaks which lift their hoary white heads twenty thousand feet into the bending blue, furnishing one of the most delightful climates in the world and holding within its bosom the mineral wealth which lifts nations from poverty and turns the eyes of the world in admiration, and, sometimes, envy, upon it.

In the heart of this plateau, three thousand miles in length, are the countries of British East Africa. The

church of Christ has not been established in them. The governments of these countries do not recognize the church, nor have they entered it in their register, because there are no Christians to represent it. Our preachers, as such, are not permitted to preach in these vast territories, because we have not received government recognition. Aware of this obstruction, we began searching for an alternative so that the gospel might be preached to the people of this section of the world. In the Southern Highlands of Tanganyika, we found two free-hold properties (land which can be owned by white people), and knowing this to be our only chance to plant the church of the Lord there, Brethren Echols and Petty and I negotiated for the purchase of them. One of the farms is situated at a healthful altitude of six thousand and five hundred feet, consists of three hundred acres of fertile soil, several of which are under gravity irrigation, stands of valuable timber and established orchards and four large, solid brick buildings, under tile roofs, suitable for immediate occupation and use. This property has cost us eleven thousand five hundred dollars (\$11,500.00). Near this farm, but just off the plateau, at an altitude of four thousand feet, is another farm—four hundred acres of very fertile soil and subject to irrigation. This property is costing fourteen thousand dollars (\$14,000.00), or thirty-five dollars an acre, five thousand and six hundred dollars of which have already been paid as a down-payment.

Our plans are to establish a purely Bible training school where young African men can come to study the Bible for two or three years, and then return to their people in that area, twice the size of the United States, with the gospel of Christ, designed and destined to enlighten their hearts and free them from bondage. The purchase of this prop-

erty, then, has a two-fold design—to gain entrance to the country, and establish a Bible school that will be completely self-supporting, so that it will not be dependent upon brethren in America for help through the years.

There come to all of us brief moments, or events, that, though insignificant they may seem at the time, later prove to be milestones of our lives. Sometimes simple happenings become bridges to a fuller and greater appreciation of fundamental truths. I crossed such a bridge in August of 1952, sitting in front of a native hut deep in the heart of Central East Africa. An aged native man, who had but lately learned the truth, suddenly turned to me and said with great earnestness: "The goal of my remaining years is that my people may have the Bible." Deep reflection on the vast problem of reaching Africa's millions with the truth has led me to conclude that this is the only way they will ever get it. The role of the white gospel preacher in Africa is to make this goal live in the hearts of a few hundred natives, who, in turn, can reach a few thousand, and so on until salvation's ringing message has resounded in the last dark corner. We know it would be impossible for a few white men to reach two hundred million (200,000,000) people who speak hundreds of languages and dialects and whose customs and ways of life are so different from our own. If we ever save Africa, we must train the African in Bible schools to teach his own people. This is not some auxiliary of the church, or cooperative organization to aid the church in its mission. This is the church—the church at work, doing what God commanded to be done to save the world. The church is a teaching institution where men's souls are educated in the word of God.

In this task, we need some help. Men and money are

needed in this project and in the cities of the south where the fields are white and the laborers are few. In the past five years, I have had occasion to wonder why it has been so difficult to get brethren to go into these challenging, worthy places. I have wondered why they would be hesitant to live in such beautiful, modern cities as those of Southern Africa, where the standards of living are high, the climate ideal and one is left entirely free to preach the gospel where he chooses. I think I know the answer. You may accuse me of being disgruntled, "sour on the church." This is not the case. My brethren have been unusually good to me, and I take great pride in what the church is accomplishing in different parts of the world. But there is something seriously wrong when ten thousand gospel preachers are concentrated in a small area of one country and less than two hundred can be found in new and difficult fields at home and abroad. There is something tragically wrong when we, who are charged with the responsibility of preaching the gospel to every creature, have made it available to less than one percent of the world's population. What is wrong? We are frightened; we are scared. We are afraid we may not have the comforts of a modern American home—electricity, gas and water-borne sewage. That is what we are afraid of—and, that we may be deprived of other comforts and luxuries we so much enjoy here. We are terrified of distances and sickness. We are afraid to be away from loved ones and friends. We are afraid that we may not have large and appreciative audiences to listen to us and friends to pat us on the back and compliment us for fine sermons. There is no doubt that we have been too materialistic in our thinking by attaching undue importance to these physical things and relationships. We have been too ambitious about getting good jobs, drawing big pay, driving fine

automobiles, holding meetings for large churches and preaching to big audiences, and have almost forgotten that once you get out of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Tennessee, the church of our Lord is virtually unknown.

And we have lost practical sight of the operation of the church. The very purpose and function of the church is what it is not doing—preaching the gospel around the world. It was established to perform this task. Any piece of machinery or equipment which fails to perform the work it was built to do is discarded. An oil-well pump, for instance, that delivers only enough oil to keep itself greased is worthless. The church, established to “sound out the word of the Lord” to the lost in every generation, that is delivering the oil of light and healing and gladness only to a few in one locality has forgotten its proper and appointed function.

In 1870, Henry M. Stanley wrote of East Africa: “I looked at this land and people with desiring eyes. I saw in it a field worth some effort to reclaim.” If the saints of God had had this same vision fifty—or even twenty years ago, today this part of Africa I have discussed would be a bastion of Christianity from which a gospel campaign could be launched against the Moslem north and the pagan heart of the continent. Since Stanley spoke these simple, but profound, words that “East Africa is a field worth some effort to reclaim,” three generations have been lost to the church. O, God, grant that our generation may make some effort to redeem the time.

## THE CHALLENGE OF THE NORTHEAST

J. Harold Thomas

The Northeast is a Samaria of our day as we translate the commission of our Lord into the terms of the 20th century. "Ye shall be witnesses of me in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth."

In John 4:4 we read that Jesus, as he went to Galilee, had to pass through Samaria; and it was in relation to Samaria that Jesus said, "Lift up your eyes and see how the fields are already white for harvest." His disciples did not see the opportunity. But he saw it—saw it and felt it to a degree that he forgot physical weariness and physical hunger in order to meet it.

Well, we have to pass through Samaria, too, as we go to the ends of the earth with the gospel of Christ; and if we have the vision of the Master we can see the opportunity that is there for the church of our day.

I am not saying this to indicate any primacy that attaches to the Northeast. I'm not insisting on the Northeast first. But I am insisting that it is not to be overlooked.

There is a glamour that attaches to "foreign" missions with which "home" missions cannot compete. We have people who were reared in Maine doing mission work in Germany. We have a worker presently in Maine who is leaving Maine to go to Germany. We have a native resident of Massachusetts who plans to return to Germany for mission work. I do not protest their going, but I know that they are not going to a more needy field! There is no lack of opportunity in the Northeast.

As for me, though the opportunity to visit the foreign nations has its appeal and though I know I would enjoy the

opportunity to work there, I am committed to the needs I feel in the Northeast corner of our United States, and it is for this area that I am making this appeal.

I am speaking on the behalf of approximately one-fiftieth of the world's population, living in a little larger than a 1/250 part of the earth's area. If the whole world were populated with the Northeastern part of the USA we would have more than 10 billions of people rather than the two billion plus we have today.

I am talking for 46 million people—one-fourth of the population of the United States, comprising the citizenship of one-fourth of the states of the nation and living within one-fourteenth of its land area. In this same area there are living one-seventy-fifth of the membership of the churches of Christ.

I am speaking on behalf of 16 or more cities of more than 100,000 in which there is no congregation of the churches of Christ; 10 such cities between 75,000 and 100,000; 20 cities of between 50,000 and 75,000; 60 cities of between 25,000 and 50,000; 240 cities of between 10,000 and 25,000; 360 cities of from 5,000 to 10,000—700 cities without a program of evangelism conducted by the churches of Christ.

The Northeast has been called many times a hard field. The truth is, there are no hard fields in that people will not respond to the gospel. There may be political problems and economic problems that make it difficult to get to people with the gospel, but wherever you can get through the economic and political barriers to people with the gospel there are many who will respond to it. The Northeast is an **uncultivated** field. It is an **unsown** field. And I believe, in proportion to the years of preparation and sowing, that the harvest in the Northeast has been as large as it has been in the south and that it will be.

A preacher to whom I wrote asking that he come and preach in meetings in the Northeast wrote back that the elders of the church where he preached had concluded that they had received smaller returns for the money expended in the Northeast than in any other area. I don't believe it.

It's not that all of the money that has been spent in the Northeast has been wisely invested. Some mistakes have been made. A few preachers have been supported for whom the evangelization of the Northeast has been a sideline. They were there to get an education and they got an education. They rendered some very valuable help in their preaching. But they preached sermons that were not prepared as they ought to have been and they made only the calls that were possible in relation to an arduous schedule of courses in school. And then, when they were educated, and could have served the area well, they were called back to Jerusalem to serve in the apostolic college. There are notable exceptions to this among those who have gone to school while preaching in that area.

Others have gone into the field and served an apprenticeship. They actually learned to preach there and learned something about the needs there, and then they have gone back into areas where the church was stronger and able to support them better and to gratify them with those external things that feed their vanity and pride.

Many of the workers who have come from the south have a southern accent, a southern loyalty, and a set of southern sermons. They have worked on the assumption that all of the northerners that were not Catholics were Southern Baptists with Premillennial leanings or members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. It made all of

the sermons they had preached for years very appropriate and there was no necessity for study.

One of the most damaging failings of many of our workers was their emphasis of the fact that they were doing mission work. Some of our two-week, sight-seeing evangelists were the worst in this respect. Every night, after they had spent the day looking at the monuments or scenic attractions or shopping for antiques, these men would get up and use the first five minutes of their sermon time telling a northern audience what a privilege it was to have a part in our "mission work" in the Northeast. A northerner who hears a southerner talking about mission work in the north will laugh out loud at what he thinks is a bit of corny humor. And when he finds out that the "joker" is serious he is disgusted.

It is mission work. But let's not boast of it. "Let not your left hand know what your right hand doeth." Let's be crafty and catch them with guile. We will build prejudice soon enough. Let's not stir it up unnecessarily at the very beginning. Let's take a lesson from Paul's approach at Athens.

There are characteristic problems relating to the Northeast in a way that they do not appear elsewhere in our nation. These may affect the comparative fruitfulness of our work, but not necessarily.

Catholicism looms as one of the big factors to be considered in the Northeast. More than 14,000,000 of the Catholics of the nation, almost half of them, live in the Northeast. Particularly are they concentrated in the big cities which increases their influence through the publicity of the big city dailies and the opportunities of radio and TV. They also exercise to the utmost their power to influence the policies of these centers.

This does not mean, however, that 14,000,000 of the Northeast's population cannot be reached by the pure gospel. The East side work in New York City has impressed us with the fact that many Catholics can be won. There are some racial groups among them, the Spanish-speaking groups especially—large segments of which are Catholics only in name. They may be readily approached with the simple gospel.

Particularly has the program of summer camps been effective as an instrument for teaching children of Catholic parents and for an ingress into Catholic homes.

The winning of Brother Aniceto Sparagna and Brother Mattucci and others by Brother Ralph Graham and his associates defies the pessimism with which we have viewed the possibility of winning Catholics.

Another group, very influential in the Northeast, are the Jews. Three million and five hundred thousand out of five million Jews in our nation live in the Northeast. Our tendency has been to say that these also are impervious to the gospel. The truth is we haven't tried to win them in our generation. We have not gone where they are, even in our work in the Northeast. We have made our appeal principally to those of Protestant backgrounds who already have a type of faith in Jesus and in the authority of the Bible. A substantial number of Jews have allied themselves with Unitarianism, which is a step, if a very short one, toward a re-evaluation of Jesus.

The problem we face with the people of every sort is the problem of Indifferentism. The industrialism, the secularism make thoughts of the spiritual very occasional in the lives of many. The individual is almost completely lost in the tremendous masses of people in the big cities. But even this is more superficial than real.

Our brethren, a year or more ago, conducted a special service in Central Park in New York City and more than two thousand were in attendance. It is not impossible to be heard. During the last eight months of work I did in Boston I had the opportunity to preach to eight different groups of non-Christian people in various circumstances. They ranged in size from 30 up to 150 persons. In the very heart and within the bustle and hurry of any great city are many islands of warm-hearted, zealous, God-loving, Bible-loving people who can be brought together "in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto the perfect man—unto the fulness of the measure of the stature of Christ."

If the dictum were true that the Northeast is a hard field, we could hardly justify thereby the setting aside of the Great Commission. If such an area is to be designated as a hard field today, what evaluation might the apostle Paul have made of Corinth, or Ephesus, or Rome? Think of the additional barriers that were in his way. Think of the political situation. Think of the entrenched idolatry. Think of the moral levels of the time. But he said, "I am eager to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." Of Ephesus he said, "A wide door of effective work has opened to me and there are many adversaries."

A loyal church will preach the gospel in this generation to the 46,000,000 people of the Northeast. A church that fails will be an unfaithful church, a dishonest custodian of its Lord's substance and a church disobedient to its Lord's commands.

But in many respects the Northeast has some striking advantages over other mission areas. It is not necessary to learn a new language to work there. It is not necessary to adjust radically to a new culture.

More than that, in almost every part of the Northeast, any new work may be assured of the help that comes from the moving of Christians to work in the area in secular employment. The war was responsible for bringing numerous New Testament Christians to our section. Many members of our southern churches married northerners and now live in the North. These people have formed the nuclei of new congregations in several places. Our present defense program has sent members of the church that are in our armed forces to many places where there are not congregations. This presents an exceptional opportunity to plant the church in such places.

Prominent men and women, outstanding men and women, of every walk of life, from every part of the nation, find their way to the large offices of their companies and the large plants that are in this area. This has been an impressive instrument in the growth the church has already made. If it is properly sized up and exploited, it can be of immeasurably greater usefulness.

The Northeast is not declining economically or in population. Relatively in some respects it does not hold the position it has held in the past economically simply because there has been a greater expansion in other areas heretofore undeveloped within our nation. But every state in the Northeast showed a population increase in the 1940-1950 census interim. There were four states in the nation which showed a decline: Mississippi, Arkansas, North Dakota, and Oklahoma. The states of New York and Massachusetts were among those high in the nation in the percentage of population increase.

And, in spite of any relative decrease in its influence, the Northeast is still the area that exercises the greatest influence in the life of our nation. Our oldest and most

beautiful and outstanding schools are there. The greatest publishing houses, publishers of books and magazines, are there. The head offices of the radio and television networks are there. Our Federal Government is there. The United Nations has its headquarters there.

The Northeast is an area within our own land where we can train people native to almost every country in the world for work in their native lands.

There has been progress in the Lord's work in the Northeast—impressive progress. Since 1942 the number of congregations in the New England States has increased from 5 to 35. In Greater New York the increase during the same period has been from 3 to 12. In up-state New York at least four new congregations have been started and others, begun very shortly before, have made great growth.

In Greater Washington there were three congregations in 1942,—one just beginning. There are now nine. And the Sixteenth Street Church in Washington, itself a mission effort of only a few years ago, is supporting three missionaries in Korea, and only last month it secured the services of an additional preacher to plant a church in Lexington Park, Maryland.

In Philadelphia the number has grown from 2 to 6.

The two churches in the state of Delaware have both come into existence within the last fifteen years.

In Vermont four congregations have begun since 1941, three of them since 1947. The church in Barre, one of these three, has grown to a membership of 60. The church in Springfield, Vermont, is now a self-supporting church.

In Maine there were two congregations in 1946. One of these was in Portland and was thoroughly infused with Premillennialism. The other was in Lambert Lake, a village of 150 inhabitants. A background of work existed in sever-

al other communities in northern Maine. Thirteen new congregations have been established since that time; three of which are well on the way to a self-sustaining status.

This growth and progress, of course, have come because of the sustained, liberal support of our Northeastern work by many churches and individuals. There is no way of computing the amount of money that has been given; but men have been supported, radio and television programs have been maintained, buildings have been purchased and built—all of this almost entirely by churches and brethren in our southern states. Any reference I have made to mistakes is not to be construed as a lack of gratitude for this help. And any reference to a need to do more is not to be so construed. We are grateful. And I believe our northern churches as they grow will take as their examples the churches whose zeal and liberality have brought them into being and supported them.

The Herald of Truth I regard as a valuable instrument in helping us evangelize this area, though I do feel that its value to the Northeast has been limited by the fact that its emphasis have been largely related to issues that are typically southern than to the issues that are dominant throughout the entire nation. Its ultimate power is to be realized only when Christians personally in every area can further teach and baptize and organize those who have been impressed by this program.

The Northeast, brethren, needs an authentic word to answer to its confusion of tongues. It needs a trumpet that will give a certain sound. It needs those who speak with "authority and not as the scribes." Except for the Catholics (who do have what they believe is a certain word), the religious people of the Northeast have been fed the Liberal diet of watered-down half-truths that left them

without doctrinal conviction or moral conscience or confidence of the future.

Let me hasten to say that we do not need the belligerent dogmatism which is a substitute for faith. We do not need the disguised fear that shouts and harangues, that berates and denounces. This is identical with the spirit of the man who whistles as he passes the grave yard.

But a strong faith in the authority of the Word of God, a certainty of the personal, living Christ who was and who is, and who is to come; a clear grasp of the positive commands of the New Testament; and a confidence in the validity of the example of the early church with its Holy Spirit-filled instructors answers to a deep hunger which is felt in countless hearts. This we can affirm in calmness and confidence that it will bear fruit.

The main problems we have in the North are in the South. The churches here and the preachers here are our problems. Churches in the South are the ones which are able to send men into our area. Our problem is to get them to send them. The preachers we need are in the South, and our problem is to get them to come. We invite them, but they turn every man to his farm and to his business. There are some who say, "I've married a wife, and I cannot come." (Usually I doubt that answer).

Our problem is the lack of the pioneer spirit. Abraham, the father of the faithful, left his home in the Ur of the Chaldees and went out into another land to which God led him. And he might have turned back, but he didn't turn back. Moses gave up his place in Egypt to suffer affliction with an oppressed people and to lead them out of their bondage. Jesus left his place of equality with God and emptied himself to share the lot of benighted men and redeem them from their sins. The apostles saw the ends

of the earth as the goals of their personal efforts. My preacher brothers, I dare you to look at their examples again in relation to the immediate challenge of the multiplied fields where the gospel has not gone and remain comfortable in your places with established churches filled with multiplied unused teachers and preachers. To whom does God say "Go" today? Who is exempt from this command?

You say, "I can do more here."

I answer, "If everyone who says, 'I can do more here' would go out with the gospel of Christ, the number of workers in the needy fields would be multiplied many, many times. A thousand who "can do more here" have sent in twenty years a hundred to the needy fields.

"Here am I, send him" is the watchword of our biggest preachers and teachers in the church. (That is a sad commentary on the church of our generation). And this is one of our biggest problems. We need strong men in the Northeast and in every mission field. We need mature men and men of experience. We need men who can be patient. But our strong men are ambitious men—ambitious for positions with strong churches that can sponsor a big program. These men are unwilling to go to the needy fields.

If Jesus had yielded to the program these men propose, he would have concentrated his work in Jerusalem until he had built up a very strong church. Then upon his ascension, he would have designated that Peter remain indefinitely with this Jerusalem church until it was able to send out men. He would have insisted that John should settle with the church in Samaria, and that Philip should locate permanently at Caesarea, and that Paul and Barnabas should remain at Antioch. The book of Acts would

have had twelve chapters if this had been the case. The work of invading new fields would have been assigned to John, Mark and to Timothy and Titus and other youths like them.

And he would have laid the plans for some colleges located where the church was strongest whose call for men should take priority over the needs of any destitute field. Or would he?

Please do not misunderstand me. I do not oppose strong churches or strong schools. I oppose a policy of evangelism that mans the neediest fields with the culls and rejects of our preachers. Our current policy of mission work is to support anybody—but to send, really send, nobody. We wait for impulsive, inexperienced, untrained men to volunteer. They come around and solicit us and we support them. God bless them; if it weren't for them almost nothing would be going on! Those who fail, we berate. Those who succeed, we call back to preach for a strong church or to teach in a Christian College! It's wrong—all wrong. It's unscriptural. It's un-Pauline, un-Petrine, un-Johannine, and un-Christian. The only church I know that has approached a New Testament pattern in this is the Memphis Union Avenue Church when it sent Brother McMillan to Japan.

Let me make some concrete suggestions. I've been told that I can condemn people but that I offer no positive direction. Perhaps that's right. I've always felt Jesus covered the ground pretty well in the Great Commission and that the book of Acts fills in the gaps. But here are some ideas.

In the first place, let's make every unevangelized part of the world a burden on the hearts of our people. It hasn't been ten years since the elders of one of the biggest

churches in the nation vetoed a suggestion of their preacher that I speak at their mid-week service—"Because," they said, "We are concentrating on the Northwest and if he gets our people worked up about the Northeast, we may have difficulty carrying out our program." That's the world outlook with blinders! Thank God, they afterward repented and I went.

Let's inspire at the local level and encourage and prepare men and women to go to the unevangelized areas of the world. How long has it been since you have heard some young person, or older one, in your congregation express the hope of doing mission work? And what have you done to encourage and help them?

Parents, instead of hoping and insisting and helping to make your sons and daughters settle down immediately around you that you may have them with you here, urge them to lift up their eyes and look upon the needy fields away—that they may have you with them "over there" in the better world that is to be.

Preachers and elders and teachers, lead the flock. Be examples of the kind of evangelism you preach. Get up and leave your settled dwelling and go to some needy field and see how many will follow you. They'll be more than you'll ever send! "You that teach others, do you teach yourselves?"

And then, as a congregation—adopt a city. Take it as a project of your congregation to firmly plant a congregation in a strategic city in the Northeast. Send your elders there, or other men who are capable of doing it, to study the city. You pick the man to go—pick two men. Any substantial city deserves at least two men. Don't wait for someone to pick you as a sponsor. Give consideration to the proper location of a building. Don't be satisfied

just to support a preacher or preachers. Support a program—a program adequate to the challenge of the city you choose. That means advertising, radio work, supplying tracts of the right kind in sufficient quantity. And stay with your workers until the work is well begun. Don't withdraw your aid to leave a group of babes in Christ stranded without leadership or teachers. Remember the last half of the Great Commission. Your own congregation is better prepared to do without a preacher than such a new congregation in a new field.

And finally, "pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into the harvest." Pray, but—I warn you,—not too earnestly. Don't pray too often. Be very general in your prayers. Don't let the needs of any one place become too acute in your thoughts. Remember to keep your prayers in the third person and your exhortations in the second person. Always put this in your prayer—don't forget this—"Help us to **send** them, Lord." Otherwise you might get into this business yourself!

## THE WORK IN JAPAN

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Edward Brown

Several times in the past 150 years the people of America have had their attention drawn rather rudely to some island territory in the Pacific. The most recent illustration of this is the case of the Tachen Islands. For several days it seems as if our whole nation might be plunged into war over incidents happening on those small islands. Earlier our attention was called to unfamiliar names on the peninsula of Korea. Thirteen years ago we took a 'short-course' in island study when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Our nation looked on in amazed horror as the Japanese practically wiped out our Pacific Fleet and swept quickly and efficiently over southeast Asia and over islands of the mid-Pacific.

Surely it is time for America to become familiar with the islands of the Pacific. I am certain that the history of the world for the next 200 years will be written around incidents that originate in Asia. And I am equally certain that Japan will play an important part in the composition of that history.

This review of secular history is interesting to us only to the extent that it provides a background for understanding religious movements that interweave themselves in history.

The islands of Japan are small; there are over 1,000 in number. The combined area is smaller than that of the state of California. In this small area live 86,000,000 people; almost half the population of the United States. These people represent the most progressive, potentially influential people in Asia. A Japan for Christ would be an important step toward an Asia for Christ.

Over 65 years ago the first minister of the gospel began to work in Japan. The first 50 years were extremely difficult and there was little to show for the long effort. But God in his providence arranged a set of circumstances at the close of World War II which made it possible to reap a bountiful harvest of souls.

At the close of World War II there were three groups moving toward Japan. Pre-war missionaries were anxious to re-enter the country. Certain churches in America, anxious to reach our former enemy with the message that would make him an everlasting friend, sought opportunity to survey Japan. Many Christians in the military, unaware of the great opportunities that would unfold around them, were moved by government orders to Japan. All three groups were astonished at what they found. The pre-war workers could not believe the changes in attitude that characterized the people. The survey groups returned with the conviction that the country could be taken for Christ in a generation. Christians in service were so impressed by the opportunities that many determined to enter missionary work in the country. Gradually representatives of these three groups merged efforts, and there was the soul-satisfying experience of seeing thousands obey the gospel.

It has been nearly 10 years since the war ended. The work of evangelizing Japan is far from complete. But a very real progress has been realized. I ask you to consider some of the current efforts.

If you should take a crescent shaped object, place the center of that object over Tokyo, and let the two ends extend into the Pacific Ocean, you would have a picture of the area in which we worked in Japan. To the south, 140 miles from Tokyo is Shizuoka State. At the center

of the crescent, measure a breadth of 70 miles. Yamanashi State, Yokohama, and Tokyo fall in this center. To the north over 100 miles is Ibaraki State. These areas represent the points of concentration for the work of Christ in Japan.

In Yamanashi State, where I worked for 5 years, there was no work by our brethren prior to the war. There are now 2 congregations with their own buildings. They are moving toward congregational maturity. Among the leaders of these groups are four doctors and four school teachers. At one of the churches is a day school, where almost 70 pre-school children come six days a week to be instructed by Christian teachers in the pre-school materials that children study, and to be taught of God.

This state has one of the most famous natural wonders of Japan—beautiful Mt. Fuji and the five lakes which surround it. The combined efforts of American and Japanese brethren made possible a summer Bible camp on the shore of one of these beautiful lakes. This project serves the church in 5 states of Japan, and has had visitors from Okinawa and Korea. Young people of high school and college age have a period of wonderful recreation in the atmosphere of a summer Bible school. In three summers of operation, this type of work has proved itself to be of the same value to the church in Japan that similiar projects have been in America. Some of our finest converts have received their early teaching in this Bible camp. Some of the most capable men in the church received in this camp experience the vision which changed them from 'just so-so' individuals to enthusiastic leaders. In the first year, when two souls were baptized within the shadow of that traditional symbol of Japan, we knew the project was a success. In the second year, when a Korean

minister (whose country had been occupied by Japanese for 40 years) preached the gospel to a Japanese audience, and an invitation was extended by a Japanese brother, and 9 young people responded to that invitation, we knew the project was a success. And in the following weeks when 29 others responded to the gospel invitation, we were happy that the camp had been constructed. Then in the third year, when over 20 other souls were baptized into Christ, we knew the project was a success.

The future of this project is in doubt. The land on which it is located is leased. It now seems unlikely that the lease will be renewed. But in an even more ideal spot on the same lake there is land which can be made available for permanent use. We are hoping that when the arrangements are worked out, brethren here will make it possible to move the camp, enlarge it, and provide the permanent facilities that will keep this inspirational activity available to the churches in Japan.

The cost of this camp was \$2,200. Some would ask, "Are you going to lose that money?" I prefer to think of the matter in another way. I say the souls that have been led to closer union with Christ are more than worth the price that was paid for the camp. My question is this. Will we, or can we afford to lose to the church the opportunity for the future that is represented in this camp work? That would be the real tragedy.

One of the greatest opportunities in Japan is in the city of Tokyo. The very population of the city provides opportunity. Tokyo is now the second largest city in the world. There is constant migration from rural areas to Tokyo. The truly great universities of the nation are in Tokyo. Each spring high school graduates take competitive examinations for entrance to these universities, and

young Christians are among the contestants. Tokyo is more adapted to Western thinking and is therefore more receptive to Western religious ideas.

Tokyo is important because of its symbolic significance to the Japanese. Some have said that "Tokyo is Japan." It is the center of politics, education and culture. This is a condition that could be used in the wrong way; or it could be used to advantage.

Undoubtedly Tokyo has the strongest congregation in Japan. The Yoyogi-hachiman congregation, under the leadership of Brother George Gurganus, has made excellent progress. Its membership is over 100. Last year there were 50 baptisms. The congregation has outstanding leadership. Judge Inomata, a judge in the Tokyo Higher Court, speaks excellent English—visited the United States at the invitation of our government. His family is well represented in the church. His wife is a leader among the women. His son is an excellent song leader. His daughter is a Bible teacher and leader among young women. Then there is Brother Takata, a graduate of a medical school who gave up a career in medicine to preach. And finally Brother Matsumoto, who was sent by his government to study a year in America.

In addition to its size, its excellent leadership, its splendid physical plant, this congregation has set an outstanding example in taking steps toward self-support. In October of 1954 they agreed to pay all their congregational operational expenses. They pay the minister's salary and all expenses incident to the conduct of their local program. This is a wonderful step, and has encouraged all missionaries in Japan. The Tokyo program is not entirely free from American help, but this congregation has done a

wonderful thing in accepting the financial responsibility that it has accepted.

With the financial backing of American brethren, a radio program has recently been inaugurated, the first of its kind in Japan. It easily reaches all the congregations of the church in Japan.

With the large number of educational institutions in Tokyo, it seemed wise to begin a program which could be developed into a "Bible Chair" sort of arrangement. Several missionaries cooperate together in conducting an evangelistic training program. It has been extremely effective in qualifying Japanese men to work more efficiently for the church among their own people.

There is yet one other great work being done in Tokyo. The Japanese are avid readers. Brother Colis Campbell is guiding the operation of a printing press. A monthly magazine, a religious debate, religious books by our brethren, and tracts for evangelistic purposes are among those items being printed there.

From this brief sketch you can understand why the work in Tokyo is a great work. The whole church in Japan will benefit from the work being done at the Yoyogi-hachiman compound.

Another area of great opportunity is Ibaraki State. This area lacks some of the natural advantages of Tokyo, but there are many compensating factors. Where Tokyo provides one kind of natural service for the church, Ibaraki and the program being conducted there supplements and provides an invaluable contribution of its own. It was here that most pre-war missionaries concentrated their efforts. Ibaraki Christian College is located in this state. There are six missionary families now living in the state, and two families now in America plan to return to Ibaraki.

The congregations in Ibaraki are, for the most part, poor congregations. Yet they are attempting to conduct their work independent of American support. One congregation is paying its minister. Others pay as much as they can, and receive assistance through some missionary. There is the instance of two congregations cooperating to pay one minister.

Ibaraki Christian College exerts a tremendous influence in this state. Its influence is by no means limited to Ibaraki. Just as Abilene Christian College renders service in and out of the state of Texas, so does Ibaraki Christian College. There is one young man doing evangelistic work on Okinawa who received some early training in ICC. The two full-time evangelists working in Yamanashi received training in Ibaraki. A young man working in Yokohama received some early training in Ibaraki. And as the school grows older, its influence will naturally grow. When the school was started eight years ago, there were five congregations in the state. There are now 35 congregations.

There is another way in which Ibaraki Christian College can exert influence for Christ. Graduates of a Junior College are qualified to teach in elementary schools in Japan. With so many Americans on the staff, ICC has an excellent English department. Every elementary school in Japan teaches English. Graduates of ICC are very much in demand as teachers. Can you see what an opportunity this presents for the church? And in addition, the college is preparing Home Economics teachers.

As is the case with every Christian College, the important factor is that of teaching Bible, providing a Christian atmosphere in which the student may evaluate and adjust to his secular subjects. Each time I walk on that

campus I thrill to think that a situation similar to one of our American Christian Colleges is being duplicated for the young people of Japan. I sit in their chapel services and find it difficult to sing, because I am remembering precious experiences of my own college days and am realizing that those young Japanese are passing through the same type of experiences. I sit on the floor with them at night as they have their devotional service, and I remember Tuesday nights on the Administration steps—student devotional. I see a little dark haired girl coming across the campus to greet me and thank me for helping her attend the college. She is loved by the people of her home town, by the students and teachers of the school, and especially by the church members who watch her work with little children. I say to myself, "Satomi, I am so thankful it was possible for you to come here. I am thankful that the college existed as a place for you to study. I am thankful that you brought your Christian personality to the college."

Brethren, this is a brief picture of the work in Japan. Yamanashi with its two congregations and the Bible camp. Tokyo with its wonderful opportunities and its splendid example. Ibaraki with its practical work program and its tremendous potential for influence. Would you join us in this work? Join us through your prayers. Join us with your support. Join us in actively taking the story of Christ to 86,000,000 people who have proved themselves the most influential of Asia.

## PROSPECTS IN SWITZERLAND

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### Heinrich Blum

On Saturday morning, January 1, 1519, a great throng of people crowded into the Cathedral of Zurich, Switzerland, eager to see and hear the new parish priest. In a solemn address, the priest declared that he would preach nothing but what he could prove from the Scriptures, the only rule of Christian faith and practice. "It is to Christ," said he, "that I desire to lead you, the true source of salvation. His divine word is the only food that I wish to set before your hearts and souls."

The people of Zurich received the message enthusiastically. "Such preaching was never heard before," they said. The vast Cathedral could not contain the multitude of hearers who came daily to listen to the readings and expositions of the Scriptures.

This man was Ulrich Zwingli. Born and reared in a small but beautiful mountain village he left his home early to study in Basel, Bern, and even in Vienna. According to the wishes of his parents he became a priest and was ordained in 1506. Ambitious to learn Greek and Hebrew he pursued his studies privately and soon developed into a classical scholar and great preacher. He occupied the pulpit of Glarus, Switzerland for ten years, and then became priest for the famous monastery at Einseideln. As his reputation grew he was called to Zurich in 1519 and elected pastor of the Cathedral. At that time he was already convinced that the church needed a thorough reformation. As a priest he did not experience the inner moral and spiritual struggle which Martin Luther had undergone. His concern was not his own soul's salvation, but of the condition of the people, their religious illiteracy, their gross

superstition, their very souls abused by the corruption of the church.

For two years Zwingli freely preached his reformatory notions to the people of Zurich, yet without an open breach with the Catholic hierarchy. In the year 1522, however, the scene changed. Opposition arose from every side. The Bishops of Constance and Chur and even the Pope attempted to stop the "heretic of Zurich." In the same year the plague broke out and wiped out more than a third of the population. Zwingli himself was affected as he was bravely helping his fellow-citizens in the fight against this terrible pestilence. Fortunately he recovered but his life was still in danger, as it was constantly sought after by the agents of the Bishop. It was time for the civil authorities to intervene. Accordingly the city council proposed to settle the conflict by public debates and invited Zwingli as well as a representative of the Bishop to speak. On this occasion Zwingli's courage was at its peak. In his forceful speech he attacked practically every false doctrine and practice of the traditional church. There was no doubt that Zwingli won the audience over to his side. Immediately the council ordered all church buildings to be cleared of pictures, relics, crucifixes, and altars. Latin chants and songs, and also the playing of organs was abolished and replaced by congregational singing in the mother tongue. Mass was restored to a simple communion service and both bread and wine were distributed. Zwingli and many of his colleagues, both priests and monks, got married and those who had been secretly married made their union official.

Not only did Zwingli defend his cause by the spoken word, but also by publishing tracts, letters and commentaries. In his works the supremacy of the Scriptures over Roman traditionalism is always emphasized. The most

important literary achievement, however, was the translation of the Bible into the Swiss dialect. A revised version of this translation is still being used in the Reformed Churches today. Though it cannot compare with Luther's in beauty, force, and popularity, the Zwingli-Bible is known as being more accurate according to the Greek.

While Luther was shaking off the yoke of the Papacy in Germany, Zwingli was doing the same in Switzerland. Both did their work independently and the following statement shows that Zwingli took a great deal of pride in originality. He said: "I began to preach the gospel in the year 1517, that is to say, at a time when Luther's name had never been heard in this country." The truth is that Luther and Zwingli did not know each other until 1529, when they met in a debate in Marburg, Germany. The debate, an attempt to bring the reformers together, was unsuccessful. Especially was this true in regard to the Lord's supper. Luther was unwilling to give up his erroneous consubstantiation and dismissed Zwingli with the words: "You are of a different spirit than I." The essential difference between the two is that Zwingli would hold only to doctrines and practices which he could support by Scripture, whereas Luther retained everything that was not in direct contradiction to the Bible. It is evident that Zwingli's principle is much safer and quite similar to the plea of the early Restoration preachers of America.

Like a fire the Reformation had swept over the country and more and more priests as well as laymen accepted the new views. Only the central mountain regions of Switzerland remained loyal to the Pope. These were so disturbed about the success of the Reformation that they decided to crush the movement even by using violence if necessary. Forming an army, they marched against Zurich in three

different campaigns. The citizens of Zurich were at once informed of their vicious intention and went forth to meet them outside the city. A terrible battle ensued. Zwingli was slain on the battlefield and his body cut up into hundreds of pieces. In the prime of his life and in the midst of an unfinished work his own statement was literally fulfilled: "With blood the church was bought, and with blood she must be restored." Even though the Reformation was carried on by his followers, Zwingli's death was a blow to the movement, and a complete return to New Testament Christianity has until this day never been accomplished.

It took centuries before hard feelings between the Protestants and the Catholics were overcome and mutual toleration was granted. Today, however, the troubled waters have calmed and both parties live together in harmony. The Catholics claim 45% and the Protestants 50% of Switzerland's population. The remaining 5% is made up of various sects. The central areas as a whole have remained Catholic and the cities and villages of the lowlands perpetuate the Reformed faith.

The present-day Reformed Church of Switzerland has become rather static, formal, and traditional. The Reformation is regarded as something belonging to the remote past and Zwingli is honored as a hero, but his principles have long since been considered obsolete. The very pulpit where Zwingli once stood is now occupied by the champions of Modernism. Neo-Orthodoxy has become the standard theology of the Protestant clergy. The authority of the Bible has been replaced by human reason. The Bible, they say, is only valuable in that it contains the history of God's revelation to man. But far be it from them to admit that the Bible itself is the Word of God.

How thoroughly this modernistic attitude toward the Scriptures has influenced the religious leaders of Switzerland is evident from a letter I received from my former Pastor, and I quote: "Among us, the Pastors of the Reformed Church, one must look as for a needle in a haystack for those who still believe in the inspiration of the Bible in the sense of the fundamentalists. Indeed hardly one can be found. Thank God." What he considers a great achievement is actually the greatest tragedy in modern Protestantism. Millions of honest people believe their liberal views and are thereby deprived of the truth and salvation.

To our knowledge there is no church of Christ in Switzerland. Probably my twin brother Kurt Blum and I are the only native Swiss that belong to the body of Christ. We were converted five years ago by an evangelist traveling through our country on his way to Germany. It was Weldon B. Bennett of Lubbock, Texas, a 1938 graduate of ACC, who taught us the first elements of the gospel while I was employed with a Travel and Shipping Company of which he was a customer. Deeply impressed by the things we learned, we both decided to give up our jobs and devote our lives fully to the preaching of the gospel.

We have been in this country studying for nearly three years and are now making definite plans to return and establish the church in Switzerland. Next year at this time, the Lord willing, we shall make our first efforts toward the conversion of the Swiss. The Trinity Heights church in Dallas has been especially interested in this plan and has decided to send us back to our home country and support us as full-time workers. Naturally we need two or three capable evangelists to accompany us. In this respect I am happy to announce that Brother Jack McKinney, an

ACC faculty member, and his wife have decided to join us in this great work. They are to sail this summer and will work for a few months in Frankfurt, Germany, and then move to Zurich by next January. The Graham Street church of Christ in Abilene, of which they are members, has agreed to send and partially support them. Brother McKinney speaks German and French and has had experience in mission work while he was in Europe as a student. Frankly I can think of no one better prepared and qualified for the task than he. We earnestly hope that others will come and help us to establish churches in Bern, Basel, Geneva, and in many other cities of our land.

Our goal is to give as many people as possible a chance to hear the truth. It is challenging to me to realize that there are now hundreds of people there, just like you, who would gladly obey the gospel if some one would bring it to them. I think that my mother would be among that number. Once when I had discouraged her from visiting the Mormon church she answered me: "If I shouldn't go there, my son, tell me, where should I go?"

Admittedly we will have many difficulties to overcome. Century-old religious traditions must be broken. The Swiss are cautious and extremely hesitant to accept new ideas or anything that appears new or foreign. They are somewhat self-contented with their lot, as peace and prosperity have reigned in the country for centuries. On account of these facts we do not expect a sensational growth of the church, but rather a slow and hard beginning.

On the other hand there are many factors that speak for a successful future. First, the Swiss are an educated people, and will appreciate the reasonableness of the pure gospel. A plea to study and learn the Bible will appeal to them. By nature they are stable and dependable. Once a

Swiss is converted he will likely remain faithful. Their high standard of living and economic prosperity should make it possible for future churches to be self-supporting within a reasonable period of time. Switzerland guarantees religious freedom and there is no cause to fear that the government would in any wise interfere with our evangelistic efforts. On this point I can quote a statement by Dr. Bauer, a Swiss author: "The constitution has declared religious belief to be a private matter in which the state has no right to interfere but which has a right to the protection of the state against the domination of any other religious community. One way in which this is carried out is by the civil marriage, for all official acts are performed by the state and the commune, and not by the church. The state schools are open to all, without prejudice to their freedom of conscience and creed. Thus Switzerland is a country of absolute religious tolerance." Lastly we should not forget the importance of Switzerland's political policy, namely neutrality. The Swiss have succeeded in staying out of the last two world wars and are determined to remain neutral in the event that another war should break out. It is quite possible therefore that once the church is firmly established, Switzerland may become a stronghold of New Testament Christianity for all Europe.

Four hundred and thirty years ago men died in their efforts to preach the gospel and restore the church in our country. The danger is no longer present, but the challenge with all its difficulties and opportunities remains before us. I hope you will be looking forward to the reports which we shall send back next year when the work begins. If you have a special interest in hearing more about this work, please give me your name and address, contact the Trinity Heights church of Christ in Dallas, or the Graham Street congregation here in Abilene.

## OUR MOST NORTHERN COLLEGE

J. C. Bailey

In the little prairie town of Radville, Saskatchewan is located Radville Christian College. This school is not large as measured by such schools as Abilene Christian College but it is large in the affection of its directors, its faculty and students. This is true whether they are there now, or have gone on to other schools, or have passed out into the business world.

Without question Canada is a land of opportunity today. Her broad fertile acres yield food, under the providence of God, that will feed millions of people. Her lakes teem with fish. There are literally thousands of fresh water lakes. The waters of both oceans that bathe her eastern and western shores are a fisherman's paradise. To those who enjoy hunting her forests are alive with wild animal life. Thousands of Americans cross the international boundary line to fish and hunt every year. The greatest oil field in this hemisphere to be discovered since the war is found in Alberta, Canada. Great mineral discoveries have added to the potential wealth of the country. The longest railroad line to be built since the close of the war on this continent has been built to tap the great iron ore deposits of Quebec and Labrador. Time would fail us to tell you the story of Canadian wealth both real and potential.

However, how little all these blessings of God avail if these people die without the gospel. To people who live in Texas it is hard to visualize just how weak the church is in so many parts of the United States as well as in all of Canada. Why? There has not been enough work done to firmly plant the cause we all hold so dear.

We just cannot excuse ourselves from work in the North

with the alibi that people will not heed the message. Here are some facts. I held a meeting at Bengough, Saskatchewan. This was a new work. I preached nineteen sermons and baptized nineteen people. I held several meetings when fourteen obeyed the gospel. Yes, there have been long weeks and months when none obeyed the gospel. Planting time must precede harvest time in any new place.

All the time at my disposal could be spent in telling of the work in Canada, or the lack of work in Canada. I could tell of the pressing needs in many of the northern States as well but I want to tell you about our effort to give to young people in this northern country an education under Christian environment. If there is a need of education under Christian teachers, if there is a need of schools where the Bible is taught every day under guidance of godly teachers; then, surely where members are few and preachers are scarce is the place where this need is most urgent. If the schools fill a very needed social aspect in the life of young people where the church is strong then how much more will this be true where churches are small and scattered.

Convinced of the need of a Christian school to promote the work of the church in Western Canada, in 1945 Radville Christian College was born. This new college was the outgrowth of years of Bible teaching that had been carried on as a personal obligation of some young preachers and some school teachers in a three months winter Bible Course in which Bible and kindred subjects were studied. The first school of three months duration was held in Ogema, Saskatchewan in the winter 1932-33. This in turn was the fruit of a summer school of three weeks duration that had been held in Minton, Saskatchewan in the summer of 1931. A number of vacation Bible schools

are held throughout the province each year ever since. We must get back to Radville Christian College which as I said began in the summer of 1945.

We had one building that had been bought for \$550.00. A good brother donated a tract of land. We had an ideal and so we set to work. It would be hard for my readers to imagine the adverse circumstances under which we labored. Did not Jesus himself labor under very adverse circumstances? I am sure that Paul often underwent privations that would make anything we did pale into nothingness but by modern standards we endured hardships, and do to this day. For several years we did not have electric lights. We did not have a power washing machine, etc. Our teachers teach for a pittance of what they could get in the business world, but they teach. They love the Lord and they are laying up treasures in heaven.

Year by year we see improvements. Students no longer sleep in rooms that are not even plastered. We no longer have to use one room for a laundry, kitchen and dining room.

One thing we do have is a good location for our school. It is situated on the banks of Long Creek. There is a railroad dam a short distance below the school. Thus the river provides swimming in the summer and skating in the winter. Along the river bank and around the campus, trees grow that had been formerly planted on this land. With a little more work our campus can be made a place of beauty and a joy forever here on the prairies of Saskatchewan.

The first year of the new school there was just Bible work such as we had always carried on. It was now under a board of directors. 1946 saw our first High School work. This was under the able administration of Miss

L. M. Torkelson, who has devoted more time and given up more money to see this work succeed than any living person. Here is what she says, "I read of such and such Christian College starting with stone or brick buildings worth many thousands of dollars. I sigh and think how wonderful that must be! Then I quickly add, but our school would not have been started even yet if we had to wait for well equipped modernized buildings. Then a troupe of ghostly figures of my former students at Radville Christian College pass before my eyes. I see their growth and development in the Christian faith and in good citizenship. What would have happened to them if we had waited for impressive buildings and expensive equipment?"

"The one building on the campus had finished flooring in one floor, the class room. There was plaster on two rooms, this class room and my bed room. There were no desks in the class rooms. Each student was provided with a little table and a new chair. There were no doors on the girls' rooms, no plaster on the walls, no furniture but the beds. We had no laboratory equipment. We had no library except my own personal books. We had no cook or janitor. (The day is started teaching high school in rec.) But in spite of all the inconveniences it was a 'Great Day' for me. I was enthusiastically happy because I was doing something I had looked forward to since the summer of 1931."

"You will wonder what kind of a year of school we could possibly have in such an environment! I taught eight subjects to each of the four High School grades. In spite of lack of books and laboratory equipment, in the Provincial Department examinations which our grade 11 and 12 students write, one of my graduates received the highest

marks in our school unit (ten high schools) and another student received 100% in geometry and algebra."

Nor were the scholastic honors that came to the students all of the story. In the field of sport we took part in the local field meet and on a percentage basis we stood highest. Competing against sixty schools one of our girls won a medal for standing first in number of points gained by any one student.

We had an oratorical contest. Our students had wiener roasts, etc., just like a big school. Bible work has been carried on each year and in that first year Brother Morris Bailey taught Bible every day to the school and taught in the Bible Department students who were not taking high school work.

The enrollment in high school that year was only eleven but it has increased every year until this year. There is a slight drop. The Bible department at times has been larger than the high school and has dropped to just a few students some years. The Bible department is larger this year so our enrollment is nearly as large as last year.

The school now boasts five teachers and this winter has had two part time teachers in Bible while I have traveled in the interest of the school. It would be hard to find a more consecrated staff than we have at RCC.

Many changes have taken place in the physical plant since I told of the early days a few moments ago. In the spring of 1948 electricity was installed. Our first building that we owned in town was sold and another building was bought from the War Assets Corporation and moved 90 miles to our campus. There have been many set backs as we moved slowly, almost painfully slow, along the way to the present time. We discovered to our sorrow that we had built too near the river and when we have wet weath-

er the water seeps into the basement of our first building. Can you imagine a cook going around in five or six inches of water preparing meals? Then one spring the river flooded and our basement was full. Some of the students thought it was fun.

The basement under our second building is high and dry. We have a good kitchen and dining room as well as our laboratory house there. The other basement is now used for our laundry. There is supposed to be water in a laundry? At least one of the students thought so for when he was asked to go down into the basement and get some fruit sealers (jars) he put a small boat into the basement and maneuvered it into the fruit cellar. He was quite proud of his accomplishment!

Between the time that we sold the house in town and the time we had enough money to make the War Assets Corporation building usable our boys lived in a small house made of tamped earth that was near by. It was so cold, they said, at times, that their words froze as they came out of their mouths. At breakfast they would discuss what they would sound like when they thawed out in the spring.

Our facilities today are reasonably good except for one thing. We do not have proper bathroom facilities. We have no running water. Why? No cash. There has been no epidemic, or sickness from this cause but stringent care has to be exercised at all times. Surely there are those among my readers who will help us rectify this serious matter.

We have made and are making progress. Real progress is not measured in material assets but in character. When the school started we were referred to as the "mud rats" or the "river rats." Strange stories were circulated to discredit the school. It has won a place of distinction in the

community. Last winter just after our hockey team skated unto the ice a coach for one of the other teams said to me, "I did not know there were that many gentlemen left among young people today." I overheard this conversation between two men as our boys came unto the ice for another game. "There will be no fighting in this game." The other man asked, "How do you know?" The first man said, "The Christian College is playing." It is commonly accepted in the community now that our students will win many of the prizes in the local track meet. It is an accepted fact that their scholastic standing will be well above average. Our students are sought as workers in season in town and farm. This is as it should be and in this phase of their Christian development we are justly proud.

As I said in my opening remarks, if there is a need for Christian schools it is where the cause is weak. We all know the need and we have seen the fruit of such labors in these United States. We need the earnest prayers of those who believe in Christian education and we need your financial assistance. There is a pressing debt of some \$3500 hanging over the college. When this is paid then we can start on our needed plans for the future.

There is one other thing we need to do. We need to build up a Student Loan Fund. We want to encourage students to pay their own way. Money spent in this way or rather money given for this purpose could be used over and over again.

There are few places where so much can be done with so little investment as at Radville Christian College. It is no longer a dream. One man had this to say (He had formerly said he was not altogether a believer in Christian Schools) "I do when I see the results: the students who

leave your school are definitely better Christians than when they came."

Our board is zealous and active. Our teachers are hopeful and realistic. We can not fail under God but God works through his servants. The fruit of Radville Christian College will shine through faithful students as members of the blood sealed church of the Lord. May God help you to help us to hasten the day of greater worth.

## OPPORTUNITIES OF THE BIBLE CHAIR

Mont Whitson

### What is a Bible Chair?

Bible Chairs had their origin some sixty years ago in order to meet the need caused by the rapid growth in attendance at tax-supported schools.<sup>1</sup> The Disciples of Christ (Christian Church) were the first religious group to take advantage of the opportunity of establishing a religious college as an annex to a state university. The first Bible Chair was organized by the Disciples, under the supervision of H. L. Willett and Charles A. Young at Ann Arbor, Michigan (University of Michigan) in the fall of 1893. Since that time other religious groups have seen the need of making it possible for students attending secular school to take courses in Bible.

A Bible Chair is simply an arrangement in a state school where Bible is taught by an instructor selected by the church and recognized by the school. From six to eighteen hours in Bible can be counted toward a degree. Usually

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<sup>1</sup>By the end of the 19th century and during the first half of the 20th century, the trend in the United States has been toward a smaller enrollment in private schools, and a steady increase in the state-supported schools and colleges. "More than half the students who went to colleges or universities in 1954 attended state-supported institutions. That was by no means true a generation ago. But it will be a fact to reckon with from this time forward. However strong independent and church-supported colleges become in America, however many junior colleges are established in local communities under public school administration, as long as increasing thousands crowd onto state-supported campuses, the church will have an inspiring opportunity in Christian education laid out for it." ("The Bible Chair—Harold Barr, *Christian Evangelist*, April 1954, p. 8).

in connection with the Bible courses taught, there is a daily devotional held for all interested students and opportunities provided for Christian fellowship. Usually Bible Chair work is conducted from a Student Center building located adjacent to the college campus. The program of a Bible Chair can be just as broad as the vision of those who oversee the work. In many instances it amounts to something like a small Christian college adjacent to a state university. The work of a Bible Chair centers around five areas of work. These include Bible classes, daily devotionals, fellowship, counseling and administration.

### Religion in State Schools

With the ever-increasing enrollment in state-supported schools, we find ourselves confronted with the problem of educating the mass of our young people in a completely secular environment if the principle of separation of church and state is dogmatically and strictly enforced. Many state and national legislators are becoming conscious of the dilemma in which the American educational system finds itself. We claim to be a religious nation, but do precious little to encourage religious training for our young men and women in college. We are sure that a unification of church and state is not the answer since this system has proved to be very unsatisfactory in many European countries. However, we are beginning to feel the secular pull of our present educational setup. Our theory of freedom of religion has actually turned into a freedom from religion. There must be a well-balanced field of operation somewhere in between the European system and the one which we operate. It appears that the Bible Chair arrangement is the answer. Under this setup there is no dangerous tie between the school and the church; yet at

the same time Bible instruction is given to the students enrolled in state schools.

Realizing the need for spiritual guidance and instruction of students in state schools, a great number of educators, churchmen and legislators have encouraged various methods of combating the problem while at the same time upholding the principle of separation between school and church. It is believed that the number of influential people favoring a more vigorous religious crusade in higher education will steadily increase. It is not unreasonable to expect to see within the next fifty years, in all state colleges and universities, a vital and important religious program of work functioning in conjunction with the school. The churches in the community will furnish money and teachers for the work and the college will cooperate by giving credit to students enrolled in Bible courses. Maybe a year's study in Bible under this arrangement will be required of every student enrolled, for example in Texas Technological College, University of Texas, University of Oklahoma and the like.

There are four general methods followed in the different colleges in the United States as far as religious instruction is concerned. In some schools all four of these methods are employed; however, in most cases the schools can be properly classified under one of the following: (1) Religious instruction may be offered by the Department of Philosophy, History, Sociology or English. The University of California and Purdue follow this plan. (2) A department of religion may be established, supervised and financed by the university. The universities of Iowa and Virginia have adopted this system. (3) A school of religion established and conducted by a board of trustees, representing cooperating churches, is the system used by

the University of Tennessee. (4) The more common plan is the Bible Chair arrangement where any church may maintain a Chair adjacent to the campus, financing and supervising the work which is recognized by the college. This plan is followed at Texas Technological College, University of Alabama, and Eastern New Mexico University.<sup>2</sup>

### Bible Chairs operated by churches of Christ

In 1918, A. B. Barrett, with the help of Charles H. Roberson, established at the University of Texas the first Bible Chair to be operated by the Church of Christ. The work continued under Brother Roberson's direction until 1928, at which time the work was discontinued. In the fall of 1951 Ray McGlothlin revived this work. All activities are conducted from the church building and the work mainly consists of Bible classes.

In the fall of 1928, A. R. Holton established a Bible Chair at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma. John P. Lewis replaced Brother Holton in 1935 and continued the work until 1948. Since that time there has been a general ban against Bible Chairs working in conjunction with that school. It seems that this situation arose as a result of misunderstanding on the part of the administration of the college and the different churches sponsoring such work.

A Bible Chair was established at Oklahoma A & M in

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<sup>2</sup>"Many people will be surprised to learn that today more than 100 state-supported colleges or universities offer (Bible) courses. Dr. Merriman Cunningham's study in 1941 showed that of 70 state universities accredited by the association of American Universities, 72 were offering opportunity for students to take credit courses in the field of religion. It is particularly impressive to note that 21 of these 70 state universities maintain departments of religion." ("Toward A Complete Education," *University of Tennessee Bulletin*, 1953, pg. 18)

Stillwater, by A. T. Smith in the fall of 1933. Wilburn Hill took up the work in 1935 and continued until 1943 at which time Eldred Stevens accepted the combined work with the church and Bible Chair. In the fall of 1952 J. Harvey Dykes replaced Brother Stevens and is still engaged in this work. The Bible Chair at Stillwater is limited almost primarily to Bible courses. The classes are taught in the church building.

Bible Chair work was begun at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa by H. A. Dixon in the fall of 1946. The work was discontinued after a brief time, but was revived by Orlan Miller in the fall of 1950. Since 1951 the work has grown steadily under the directorship of Kenneth Reed. The students have access to a Student Center where Bible courses are taught, daily devotionals are conducted and a full Christian fellowship is realized.

Carl Spain organized the Bible Chair at Texas Technological College in Lubbock in the fall of 1946. He resigned the work in the fall of 1951 in order to devote full time to a local work. Since that time Mont Whitson has been working with the Lubbock Bible Chair. The students at Tech have a nice Student Center adjacent to the campus where a total program of work, including Bible classes, daily devotionals and fellowship, is enjoyed by some 150 different students. A religious library of some 1200 volumes is a center point of interest at the Tech Bible Chair.

A Bible Chair was organized at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales by E. Debs Smith in the fall of 1947. George Estes assumed the duties in 1950 and remained with the chair until the fall of 1952 at which time Steve Eckstein became the director. A nice Student Center has been erected where daily Bible classes and devotionals

are held. One of the unique features of the Portales Bible Chair is the opportunity to receive a Master's Degree in Bible.

In the fall of 1949 a Bible Chair work began at West Texas State College in Canyon, under the directorship of Earl Craig. Brother Craig stayed with the work until 1954, being replaced by Casey Kay. The Canyon Chair has become very active in recent months. A separate building is provided for the students where they enjoy fellowship, devotionals and classes in Bible.

Recently Bible Chairs have been organized at Odessa Junior College, Odessa, Texas; at Vanderbilt-Peabody colleges in Nashville, Tennessee; Lawton Junior College in Lawton, Oklahoma; and the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

Other places which offer excellent opportunities of this kind, needing only someone to promote the project, include: Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn; State Teacher's College, Florence, Alabama; Arkansas State Teacher's College, Conway; University of Arkansas, Fayetteville; University of Florida, Gainesville; Florida State University, Tallahassee; Wayne University, Detroit, Michigan; Southwest Missouri State College, Springfield; East Central State College, Ada, Oklahoma; Northwestern State College, Alva, Oklahoma; Austin Peay College, Clarksville, Tennessee; Memphis State Teachers College, Memphis, Tennessee; Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, Cookeville; Sul Ross State College, Alpine, Texas; East Texas State Teacher's College, Commerce; North Texas State Teacher's College, Denton; Stephen F. Austin College, Nacogdoches, Texas; Southwest Texas State Teacher's College, San Marcos; and Tarleton State College, Stephenville, Texas.

### Future of Bible Chair Work

More and more ministers and elders are seeing the opportunities afforded at state colleges and universities for a Bible teaching program. The campuses of our state-supported colleges are one of our most neglected mission fields. We must catch the vision and see the great challenge of this work. The church must indeed follow the student. With some 90% of our most promising young people enrolled in these schools we cannot forget them. Their talents and abilities are needed by the church. Their souls are important.

With the increased interest in this work, coupled with the rapid growth of our colleges, the future indeed looks good. We need to make plans now to take care of the new influx of students. Fifty years ago only 4% of college-age youth attended college; whereas, it is estimated that some 50% will be enrolled in college by 1970. If this prediction is true, there will be over six million college students in 1970 as compared to less than a quarter million in 1900. In 1950 some two and a half million enrolled in our institutions of higher learning.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed the field is ripe unto harvest. The time has come for the church which, incidentally, is growing rapidly itself, to capitalize on the marvelous opportunities afforded in the Bible Chair work.

"One can think of few fields more difficult for religious work than the campus of a great, modern state university. Modern university life is so distracting and interests are so many and diverse, automobiles are so plentiful and roads so good, and thereby far places made near; love

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<sup>3</sup>"The Impending Wave of Students." A presentation by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, 1954.

of even innocent pleasure to say nothing of questionable and sordid pleasure, so passionate; science is so emphasized and misinterpreted, departmentalism is so pronounced, purpose in life is so absent, social distinctions are so evident, student religious background is so lacking, as well as many other hindrances and hazards, that one wonders sometimes if any religious response can be found at all. And yet, in spite of all these difficulties inherent in this field, one finds here some of the finest simon-pure Christians in all the work. Such Christians are here by the hundreds, and not just a few hundreds. The gold along with the dross and difficulties make the field a fascinating and also a challenging field."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>"The Story of the Texas Bible Chair," Frank L. Jewett. A pamphlet distributed by the United Christian Missionary Society, Indianapolis, Indiana.

## CONGREGATIONAL TEACHING

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Alan M. Bryan

Christ said, just before he ascended to heaven, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. 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."

In speaking of congregational teaching we assume basic principles. First, we understand that in teaching we can teach only by his authority and only that which he authorizes. Second, we understand that God not only expects us to teach but he expects us to teach every soul that it is humanly possible for us to teach. Third, we assume that his word must be taught as effectively as it is possible for us to do so. We are also assuming that we can teach by the class method or by any expedient method which we might choose. It is not in our province today to discuss the Bible class question. Lastly, above all else, we must never forget that God's work must be done in God's way, using the means he provides and the methods he sanctions and stresses.

Christ said in John 4:35, "Lift your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white already unto harvest." This verse, brethren, can be applied with great emphasis on the educational work of our local congregations. I know of no phase of the Lord's work that is any more "white already unto harvest" than Bible school work.

To reap the great harvest that awaits us in our educational work we must be guided by four basic principles. First, Bible classes must be evangelistic in scope and ac-

tivities. The Bible teaches us to reach for people. In Deut. 31:11-12 we find, "When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law." God expected, therefore, the Jews to teach not only their own people but even strangers within their gates. Christ himself said, "For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9:13).

As we read the first ten verses of Luke the fifteenth chapter we are impressed with the concern that we must have for those that are lost. In the Great Commission we are told to, "Go ye there and teach all nations." Until every man and woman that walks the face of this earth has been taught God's word, this command must still be obeyed.

Too often brethren fail to have a vision of multitudes as yet unreached by the gospel. Some see only those enrolled in classes as they now are. Others are deceived as to the importance of reaching people. Such expressions as, "It is not numbers that count, but quality," may have some truth, but not all the truth. The statement, "I had rather have a good Bible school than a big one" comes from a heart that has been deceived by the forces of evil, from a heart of indifference, or a heart that is seeking to caress failure with pious platitudes.

Any impression or suggestion against numbers for Bible study does not come from heaven, because the invitation of heaven is, "Whosoever will, let him come." The command of heaven is, "Go out into the highways and byways and compel them to come in, that thy house may be filled."

Denominations have shown that they teach their people in their Sunday Schools to be members of their particular faith. They plan on and convert those enrolled in their Bible classes. In the church of Christ 85% of our converts come from or through the Bible School. Therefore, we should all strive to enroll more so that more can be taught.

There are many ways by which we might reach others. First, we should keep accurate records of the enrollment of every individual. By checking the church roll against the rolls of the Bible classes we can find many members who need to be attending Bible classes. A religious census might be taken. Many interested people are usually found by this manner. In this work of increasing enrollment every member of every class must be taught to be an active participant in the campaign to enroll others. A regular visitation program must be maintained in every class. In the lower grades the teacher, co-teacher and visiting teacher can do the visiting. In adult classes the entire class can set aside one night each week, or at least, each month to visit prospects for the class. Lists obtained from Vacation Bible Schools can be used to contact prospects for class enrollment. Last, classes can be planned for the primary purpose of interesting people outside the church. A theater building, funeral home or community building might be used for a meeting place for a class to reach outsiders.

Second, the educational program must be sound educationally. There is far too great a contrast between the efficiency of our secular institutions and our Bible classes. To have an efficient educational program the teaching staff must be able, active and willing to serve God to the utmost of ability. We have stressed what to teach, when to teach, sometimes where to teach; rarely have we stressed how to teach. It is a sin to teach God's word poorly. Surely this

is the lesson of the parable of the Foolish Virgins or the Man Who Buried His Talent.

To be sound educationally adequate facilities must be provided. Few congregations have enough rooms. In many cases classes are entirely too large for efficiency. To maintain efficiency, the maximum number in pre-school classes should be ten; in primary grades, twelve; in junior grades, fourteen; in intermediate grades, sixteen; in high school classes, twenty or twenty-two; in adult classes, thirty-five should be the maximum before starting a new class. Adequate library materials and books should be provided for teachers also.

To be efficient the program must be conducted efficiently. Regular teachers' meetings should be held at least once each month. An adequate system of records must be maintained and checking of absentees should be constant and complete. What would you think of a public school that didn't keep a record on pupils, or didn't check on absentees when they were out for a month?

Third, Bible classes must provide opportunities to use great Christian principles. This is the principle of "Use us or lose us." Classes must be designed not only for imparting truth, but for the development of Christian attitudes and skills in living. To do this a full teaching program is necessary. Classes can be taught not only on Sunday morning but on Sunday evening and Wednesday evening, also. Teacher training, Christian marriage, training of children classes could be taught in every congregation. Many congregations are finding that many children outside the church can be reached with classes on Saturday morning. No educational program is complete unless at least one vacation Bible school is conducted each year.

Four, to be successful an educational program must be

a missionary-minded program. Someone has said, "that in order to multiply happiness you must divide it." Every teacher and every pupil must be sold on the principle of carrying and sending the gospel. The church must provide outlets for this missionary spirit in work abroad, in this country and locally. Deaf mutes and minority groups such as Indians and Mexicans need to be taught. Cottage Bible classes and prayer meetings can be conducted in every community.

In conclusion we ask, "What is the task that lies before us?" Faithful and devoted elders must carefully and extensively plan the educational work. In many congregations, elders will hire full time workers who are especially trained to assist them in supervising and organizing the Bible School. Faithful and consecrated teachers must strive constantly to improve in the art of teaching. Additional facilities will have to be provided in nearly every congregation in the country. The curriculum of our Bible Schools must be so planned to lead each individual to the maximum spiritual growth. No longer can we be satisfied with any or no curriculum, but we must take advantage of all that the study of educational psychology and human development have taught us in the last few years. Our materials and equipment should be the best that our money can buy and our wisdom can produce. In no way, however, can we sacrifice that which is scriptural merely to obtain efficiency.

In all of this zeal and fervor must be shown. We must, "Pray as if everything depended on God. Work as if everything depends on us."

## THE CHURCH AS IT CAN BE

Jack Hardcastle

“And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.”<sup>1</sup>

The quotation is from the words of a man whom God labeled “a fool.” However, he was a fool not because he made a resolution, but because he resolved in the wrong direction. Every man who has conquered an empire, accumulated great riches, or made great success in any realm, started with a resolution that was powerful enough to take him through the many sacrifices that beset every road to success.

Let us look at the resolution: “This will I do.” “I will” is the essential starting point for every step of progress; and for every worthwhile achievement there must be a time when mind or minds are set definitely in the direction of such accomplishment. “I will do this” is a definite commitment to a specific undertaking, making no provision for falling short, leaving no loopholes or excuses for use in case of failure.

### Not a Resolution To “Try”

It is not “This will I try to do.” Why should one try to do that which he believes to be an impossibility? He certainly will not try very hard. If we believe it is impossible, we have made up our minds to fail; and the person who approaches a project with the attitude of “I will try,” has convinced himself that the thing may be impossible, and he is avoiding that complete commitment to a task which he fears his inability to finish. Thus, in a job which

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<sup>1</sup>Luke 12:18

requires unreserved dedication of all his resources, he assures his failure.

### Not "This I Wish"

"This I wish I could do" is not a resolution, and wishing will not make a thing come to pass. Far from being an element of strength, wishes have so much of the character of day-dreaming in them that they actually are weakening and depraving if they are not followed up by something more substantial. However, when we see the wish or desire followed by a determined, workable, and worked plan, and when the undertaking is according to God's will, there is never the least doubt of ultimate victory.

Luke tells of a young man who sat brooding and bemoaning his fallen state and wishing he could be home; but he did not get anywhere until he decided to do something. "I will arise," he said, "and go to my father."<sup>2</sup> This resolution in a pigpen developed into the joyous reception in the father's house.

Joshua was uncertain about Israel. He did not know whether they would be willing to turn from the idolatry of their fathers and worship God, but he knew what he was going to do: "As for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah."<sup>3</sup> This bold resolution publicly declared was followed immediately by a loyalty pledge from the whole nation. Joshua's leadership, already established in war, now was solidified in peace, because he could determine which way to go and was willing to commit his all in that direction.

### Individual Resolution to Obedience

In becoming a Christian, every act connected with con-

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<sup>2</sup>Luke 15:18

<sup>3</sup>Josh. 24:15

version takes place first in the mind; and the person who never wills to obey, never obeys. The man or woman who obeys the gospel and is content to drift along, putting in time, and taking things as they come, never will be worth much to the church or to himself; but the child of God who says: "I will be faithful in attendance; I will be faithful in learning God's will; I will be faithful in giving a definite portion of my money, my time and my thinking to the Lord and his church;" this person, no doubt, will be "like a tree planted by the water that brings forth fruit in his season."

### The Church As It Can Be

Let us turn now from consideration of the individual to a few thoughts about the church as it is and as it ought to be and as it can be.

In doctrine, name, worship, and organization, we are fairly well agreed that the church already is what it ought to be; and we have no desire to change it. These are the marks by which we identify the New Testament church today, because they are the marks possessed by the New Testament church when it was described as the "body of Christ, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." In questions of morals and godliness, most Christians adhere to the divine standard; although worldliness and compromise are a constant threat. The only change we would want to make here is to have members of the church just start doing what they know is right without question. In these great principles of truth, we cannot progress; we cannot change.

It is in the realm of **purpose** and **procedure** that we see a deplorable failure; and in these departments the church

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<sup>4</sup>Eph. 1:21, 22

as it is is not the church as it ought to be, and it is not the church as it can be.

### Purpose

Before starting a trip, we decide where we want to go. This we do first of all, and then we determine as best we can by what route we best can reach our destination. In like manner every congregation ought to have a goal; a goal which the wisest minds of the congregation have envisioned as a possibility. We should not be satisfied with the lowest estimate of our possibilities, nor should we seek a compromise between the high and the low; but let the doorway to our future be high enough for the tallest among us. The wildest hopes of the most confirmed optimist in the church are probably beneath our possibilities.

How can we determine our possibilities? Certainly not by the standard of "what we have been doing"; for what man among us will affirm that we have been doing all we could do? The truth of the matter is, we have been doing only what we wanted to do, and we still will do no more than we want to do. It is true also that we can do anything we want to do if we want to do it enough to make the necessary sacrifices. In this vein let us think of what we want the church to be and then count the cost. Do we want more than anything else in the world to see the church be what it can be? Only in this way can we set up for ourselves a purpose worthy of the mission which Christ has intrusted to us. Too many times when we analyse our congregational plans, we find that where we hope and plan to go is so close to where we already are, that arousing the needed enthusiasm is next to impossible. People can hardly be expected to get excited in a proposed battle between a lion and a mouse, and they will be even less likely to get excited or feel any challenge in a church program

that calls for almost no sacrifice and no effort beyond the role of a spectator watching the battle between the preacher and the devil. My conviction is that if we give the members of the church of Christ a goal that seems worth sacrificing to reach, there will be enough faithful ones to accomplish the purpose.

### Procedure

When we have set the goal, the next step is to plan the procedure by which we will move to the goal. We will need time, and enough time should be allotted to make success possible. Five years, ten years, or even twenty years may be needed to work out our plans. It is important that we have time for our plans; it is equally important that we have plans for our time. Just planning to be guided by circumstances is not planning, and whatever growth the church experiences by such method can be classed with the gain one might get from a slot machine—just pure chance.

Our plans should include enough work for the entire membership to be challenged beyond its present ability, and proper provision should be made to train all members to become more and more proficient in the work. Nothing can be more beneficial to the teaching program than a concentrated effort to teach the teachers to teach better. Our success in improving our Bible school should encourage us to provide means of growth for our deacons, our ushers, our personal workers, our song leaders, and our preacher students. There is no scriptural or logical reason why the church may not plan to encourage and finance the training of such workers as may be necessary for the carrying out of its mission. I never could see much difference in supporting a preacher while he is going to school so he can prepare to preach and supporting him after

he gets out of school so he can preach. In either case the support is given so the gospel can be preached. Elders ought to be careful in spending the money that is contributed to the Lord and spend it only in doing the Lord's work; but carefulness is not fearfulness, and elders are accountable only to the chief Shepherd and should be concerned only that his will be done. It is more profitable to concentrate on what the church **can** do, than to spend a great amount of time speculating on what the church **cannot** do. Of course, we should be aware of the fact that there are things which the church cannot do; but the emphasis should be on finding what can be done. The New Testament is a book of instructions and examples designed to equip us for doing the work of the Lord. Whatever the New Testament authorizes, the church can do; and whatever is necessary to carry out that which is authorized is the work of the church. Certainly the church **can** do that which is the work of the church. Not only so but a church **can** do that which is the work of the church **anywhere in the world**. There is no restriction of territory or limitation of location. We, of course, are expected to use judgment in choosing our field of labor, since manifestly we cannot be in every place. We must see the need in foreign lands, but we must not ignore the people who live right around the church house. Oftentimes we reach the man across the ocean by evangelizing the man across the street, and it is in such local personal evangelism that every faithful member of the church can find work in abundance.

Since the success of our work depends on influencing people, every church should have definite plans to reach with the gospel a great many more than we hope to convert. We know from experience that most of those to whom we preach turn the gospel down; therefore if it

is our purpose to convert a thousand people in the next ten years, then we must contact with the gospel probably ten thousand. Most churches have no plans to reach any given number of sinners, but their entire hope for growth is based on the chance that someone will happen to visit the services and be impressed with the sermon enough that he will come back. If enough accidents occur in proper sequence, we will convert a few that way, but by such methods a church could not hope to convert a thousand people in a hundred years. Our best thinkers ought to be encouraged to think of ways and means to bring the gospel message into contact with as many people of every sort as possible, and then repeat that contact and that message over and over again. Here again provision must be made to use every member of the church. Every member certainly can think of five or ten acquaintances he would like to see have an opportunity to be saved, and just the simple procedure of gathering these names would give most churches a work-list of a thousand or more souls, each of whom is known by at least one member of the church. Such a list would be invaluable for use in publicising a meeting or other service that we want to advertise in a special way. Those who turn in such names should feel more than a passing interest in the people they have put on the list, and every member can be encouraged to work and pray and to have a feeling of responsibility for his own little list. Ten thousand people constitute quite a crowd; and when we think about having to teach that many, we are likely to despair. However, when we break that big number down into lots of five for each member for each year, it does not seem big at all. A brick-layer easily can lift a carload of bricks—one brick at a time; and a church with two hundred workers easily can contact and teach ten thousand in ten years by each member

taking responsibility for just five people each year. Of course, we can count on new members being added week by week and even day by day; and since men and women who are converted by a working church swiftly become working members themselves, new fruit will result in new fruit-bearers, and soon we will have many more workers than the number we started with. This might enable a church to fulfill its ten-year obligation in much less than that amount of time.

Great care should be exercised, however, to make sure that the church while growing in numbers is maintaining its spirituality. There is a great difference between "growing strong" and "growing fat." A church never is "too big" as long as all the members are included in the planned congregational work; but any time a church reaches the point that it has members for which no work can be planned, then either that church is too big or that eldership is "too little."

#### Plan To Use Money

The congregation that plans to grow must plan also to spend money—not just the bare minimum necessary to carry on the worship and hold services, but the maximum that can be invested wisely to help bring to fruition our plans and purpose. Our local work, of course, must be carried on; our evangelism of regions beyond must be supported; and our support of the weak and helpless must not be allowed to fail. In addition, we need to advertise the church and its aims and principles until every newspaper reader, radio listener, and television viewer, has opportunity to be familiar with what we are and for what we stand. We ought to provide daily Bible classes, vacation Bible schools, protracted gospel meetings, radio broadcasts, and Bible correspondence courses, with regard to

the need and the probability of good results; the cost in dollars should not be the controlling consideration. It is true that we must have money in order to spend money, but there is no lack of money for the things we really want. Let members of the Lord's church be shown a goal which to them seems worth sacrificing for, and they will support the planned efforts to reach the goal.

#### Let Nothing Interfere

Once embarked on a five, ten, or twenty year plan, the resolution must not be allowed to weaken. There will be discouragements and difficulties, and there will be opposition. We must be strong with the assurance of God's word that our purpose is his will, and we must be armed with truth for an answer to every opposition. Oppositions that cannot be overcome with truth ought not to be overcome, but like the signs on our highways, they ought to be observed carefully. Gold is purified in fire, and many a great effort has been purified and ennobled by the heat of opposition. We must not, however, allow opposition to cool our enthusiasm or prevent our reaching our goal. Our procedure might have to be altered, and errors in operation must be corrected; but our faith must not waver, and our purpose must remain steadfast.

If the work and the goal are God's will, and if the purpose is strong, even a small group can become an irresistible force. Show me twelve men who know what the church ought to be and who more than anything else on earth want to see the church grow and become what the Lord wants it to be, and I will show you a force that no power of man or devil can stop. No righteous power would want to stop it.

"The church as it can be" is just the church as Christ wants it to be. For it, he made the supreme sacrifice. What sacrifice are we willing to make?



*Panel Discussions*



## MUST A CHRISTIAN DO ALL HIS BENEVOLENT WORK THROUGH THE CHURCH TREASURY?

Ira North

My topic today is: "Should A Christian Do All Of His Benevolent Work Through the Church Treasury?" First of all I would like to emphasize the fact that benevolent work **must be done**. The Bible is literally filled with direct commandments for this work. Here are just a few examples:

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again" (Prov. 19:17).

"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor" (Prov. 22:9).

"Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy" (Ezek. 16:49).

"Blessed is he that considereth the poor. The Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth; and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies" (Psalm 41:1-3).

"He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack; but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse" (Prov. 28:27).

"He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise" (Luke 3:11).

"Rather give alms of such things as ye have; and behold, all things are clean unto you" (Luke 11:41).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring

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 to receive" (Acts 20:35).

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

"And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col. 3:17).

"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).

"But whoso hath the world's goods and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" (1 John 3:17).

And to these might be added:

Luke 4:18-19.

Deut. 8:10-20.

Luke 7:19-22.

Matt. 25:34-46.

Luke 14:12-14.

James 1:5-7.

Luke 18:18-30.

1 John 3:22.

Romans 12:16.

Matt. 5:3-12.

Rev. 3:14-20.

The thing that concerns me principally and primarily is not whether or not benevolent work should be done through the church treasury or individually, but the shameful truth that benevolent work is for the most part not being done. To emphasize this point let me quote from one whom I believe to be one of the greatest preachers of our time. After pointing out that we build buildings, and rightfully so, on the ground of "necessary infer-

ence" he reminds us that approximately 50 to 90% of our total contributions are spent for brick and mortar. He declares: "In contrast, a study of the published reports of what we call the best congregations reveals that less than 5% and often less than 2% of the total contribution goes to any form of charity or to helping others in any way except through teaching.

"I would be the last person in the world to oppose the construction of adequate church buildings, homes for preachers, or any other buildings or facilities that would advance the kingdom of God, but I do say that when we have practically abandoned the whole cause of relieving human suffering, we have abandoned what God has specifically commanded.

"There are approximately a million and a half members of the churches of Christ. I dare say that the states and our religious neighbors, and even some of our irreligious neighbors, are actually caring for more of our orphans than we are. What kind of an example is this? Does this callous unconcern make us the 'light of the world and the salt of the earth?' When you add to that awful fact, the opposition that is bristling up to what little we are doing the situation is tragic indeed."

For us to abandon benevolent work on the ground that somebody else will do it, is poor reasoning indeed. My wife and I could abandon our four children and someone would take care of them. The Catholics, the Masons, the Jews, or State, would not let them starve. The point is this, it would not answer our responsibility. Their generosity would not cleanse us of neglect.

There are two extreme positions that one can take on the question, "Must all benevolent work be done through the church treasury?" First, the position that all benevo-

lent work must be done through the church treasury and second, the position that it should all be done individually. In this case, as in so many others, the truth lies between the two extremes. The Bible does not say that everything must be done through the church treasury. If so, a cup of cold water could not be given in the name of Christ without running it through the church treasury. We must do all in the name of Christ or by the authority of Christ. The Book does not say, "And whatsoever you do in word or in deed, do all through the church treasury." Yet, it is a mark of wisdom for Christians to do all they can through the local congregation.

I was born and reared in the shadow of David Lipscomb College and the great spiritual giants such as David Lipscomb, James A. Harding, and H. Leo Boles had great influence in my home country. My great-grandfather and grandfather were preachers. My father is an elder in the church. I have been taught from my youth up that it is a mark of wisdom whenever possible, for Christians to do benevolent work through the local congregation. When a local congregation in a community is active in benevolent work, it puts the church in a favorable light before the public, it builds good will for the church of our Lord, and it causes the church to be spoken well of by outsiders. From my own study of the Bible, I know of no reason to reject these thoughts which I received in my youth.

There may be times when it is wise, expedient, and necessary for the individual to do benevolent work on his own, but whenever possible and when he is convinced that by doing it through the local congregation it will build good will for the church and do more good for Christ, then he certainly should do it through the "church treasury."

I heard of a prophecy made by a young preacher recently

which I hope does not come to pass. He prophesied that within a few years, our brethren would be giving all their money through foundations, or individually, and that the church would be by-passed until it would become an empty shell and not have enough money in the treasury to pay the preacher's salary or anything else. I don't think this will come to pass.

Let us emphasize the basic principle of Christian stewardship, namely, that all we have and are belongs to the Lord, and that we shall give an account of every penny we spend, every idle word we speak, and every minute of time we use. Let us be careful and not create the impression that the money we drop into the basket is the Lord's and that it is none of his business how we use the rest of it.

Let us be careful and not make a denomination out of the local congregation by drawing up a creed of arbitrary rules and forcing our opinions as matters of faith.

The real problem is the fact that we are doing such a little amount of benevolent work. Let us ask God's forgiveness and do better in the future.

Madison, Tennessee.

## MAY A CHRISTIAN DO GOOD THROUGH A CIVIC CLUB?

**Eldred Stevens**

One of the most popular ways of answering a difficult question is to say, "Well, that depends!" Actually, that seems to be our best answer. Whether or not a Christian may do good through a civic club depends first, on the Christian; second, on the civic club!

However, before I discuss these qualifying considerations, let me seek to establish what I conceive to be the technical "lawfulness" of doing good through a civic club. It is my conviction that the New Testament authorizes the Christian's support of such by its teaching concerning his civic, social, and community responsibilities. The duties of the Christian life are three-fold; religious, domestic, and civic. This classification of duties becomes more apparent when considered in connection with the three sacredly significant spheres in which the Christian must live and assume responsibilities. Those three spheres are the church, the home, and organized society. Regarding the last item, organized society, allow me to assert that Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1, 7; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13, 14, 17 demand that a Christian be a responsible citizen of the community. If someone objects that these duties are limited to government, I would suggest to him that perhaps his ultra-literal interpretation demands that such duties be limited to a monarchical arrangement. The truth of the matter is that these passages establish the principle of Christian support of society's arrangements for promoting the social and civic good and discouraging evil. These arrangements may assume various political, civic, and social forms. They may involve a monarchy or a re-

public, and they certainly may include such civic projects as we have under consideration. In the midst of his references to subjection to principalities, powers, magistrates, Paul injects, ". . . be ready to every good work" (emphasis mine-ENS).

"But," someone asks, "is that 'doing all in the name of the Lord'?" Why, certainly! Doing things in the name of the Lord does not demand the formal action of the church as an organized body for everything that a Christian does. One should pay his taxes, love his wife, eat his meals in the name of the Lord, but we understand that the church is not to have tax-paying, wife-loving, and meal-eating activities in connection with its program! Those are duties that a Christian performs in the name of the Lord, but apart from his church activity.

At the beginning of this brief paper, I stated that the answer to our question depends on the Christian and on the civic club. There is no doubt that we must answer the question with, "Yes, a Christian may do good through a civic club, if . . ." There are "ifs." Many things are lawful that are not expedient (1 Cor. 10:23).

It is inexpedient for any Christian who cannot maintain proper perspective to become involved in much extra-church social or civic service. Many become so enraptured with a civic project that they can, and do, push the work of the church into a relatively insignificant background. Many cannot establish any connection with benevolent, civic, or educational organizations without having their entire scale of values so twisted that their salvation is jeopardized and they become a problem to the church. If being a member of a civic club will affect in any way your feeling that the church is the most precious thing in your life, you should let it alone!

In the next place, there are some civic clubs that no Christians should support. Some are semi-religious with sectarian color. I certainly stand opposed to any Christian's lending support to any organization that encourages the teaching of religious error. If a Christian's membership in a club bids Godspeed to religious error, 2 John 9-11 demands that he reject it. Then, too, it is my opinion that there are some civic clubs that any conscientious Christian will refuse because the general behavior of the membership and the character of the meetings are hardly in harmony with Christian principles of sobriety and dignity. As a guest, I have attended meetings of civic clubs where I felt as out of place as a ring in a pig's snout! Although some overlap is inevitable and permissible, there is also the possibility of a civic club's work being so directly competitive and duplicative of the benevolent functions of the church that it would seem that a Christian should forego the civic club support.

In closing, let us summarize that a Christian may do good through a civic club, but that the answers to these questions may affect its expediency:

1. Is it really a civic club or mere entertainment?
2. Within my own heart, will it alienate my affections for the church?
3. Will it interfere with my church attendance and work?
4. Will it cause me to neglect my home?
5. How much of my time and money will it demand?
6. To what extent will it involve me in embarrassing social circumstances?
7. What effect will it have on my Christian influence, both within and without the church?

8. Will I be expected to do service that truly should be done only by the church?

9. Will it place me in the position of tacitly, if not openly, having fellowship with error and with works of darkness?

Our question cannot be dogmatically answered with "Yes" or "No." We simply must pray for Christian tolerance and for wisdom in the application of many Christian principles.

Fort Worth, Texas.

## MAY A CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTE TO SUCH INSTITUTIONS AS THE RED CROSS?

Max T. Neel

It would be rather difficult in a short article to treat this subject strictly. But that we may comprehend the desired application, we shall get to the point.

The term, "May a Christian," implies that which our theme on this panel suggests, "Doing All In The Name of the Lord." "In the name of the Lord," certainly means by his authority, or at his direction. If we understand the full meaning of the statement, "In the Name of the Lord," and our relationship as a "Christian," we must understand that our "Christian" relationship, has to do with those things the Lord has outlined for Christians to do. Viz.; our worship, devotions, teaching, etc. Our beloved and esteemed Brother David Lipscomb has put it this way: "To do a thing in the name of the Lord Jesus is to do as he directs. Do it by his authority; do it as his servant, for his honor and glory. Does anyone believe if Christ were here in person as we are that he would go into any human society and do things as they require? We are required to give and do all we do as the servants of God. Jesus, while on earth, did nothing save that which God required. If we are his disciples and do his will, we will not enter or remain in any society that Jesus did not appoint or command."

The church, as such, is not necessarily a benevolent institution. Nevertheless, as its individual members, we are instructed to "abound unto every good work." Jesus has even said, "Let your light so shine, that men may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." But we ask the question, does this mean that we are to use human institutions in order to accomplish this? God

forbid! There are many institutions that are so-called benevolent institutions that Christians are contributing to, perhaps unwittingly, that are denominational. For instance, in the city of Houston for 1954, the United Fund subscribed \$4,500,000 for such "benevolent" work. Of this great sum, 20% went to religious institutions. The Catholics received \$326,604.00; YM and YWCA \$356,037.00; Salvation Army, \$118,344.00; Jewish, \$110,344.00; Baptist, \$34,533.00; Episcopal, \$29,790.00; Methodist, \$2,095.00 (1953). To survey this tremendous innovation into "benevolent organizations" under the cloak of the United Fund, and to think that when Christians contribute to the United Fund, as such, that we can use the Lord's money, or money that could otherwise glorify him in "good works" to promote religious error, would be unthinkable. We do not mean to incriminate all the institutions that may be included in the United Fund, however, as there are many good works that we as Citizens should support. The Heart Fund, Polio & Cancer Research, and yes, the Red Cross. These are organizations that are promoted through our government, doing a work the church is unable to do, and is a work of our country, of which we are citizens. And it may be said, that in contributing to these organizations as citizens, we are still maintaining our position as Christians, "abounding unto every good work," as long as this good work is done through non-religious organizations, and we can do it as individuals. Therefore, whatever we give, even though it be a good work, we should not consider this a part of our contribution to the Lord's work, which should be done through the church. Needless to say, that when we give to such institutions as mentioned above, we should be sure we specify our contribution to be directed to the organization we desire to help, and not give to the United Fund for them to use as they will.

## THE LORD'S MONEY?

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James B. Scott

There is, of course, a primary and basic sense in which material wealth of any sort always belongs to God. This basic overlordship and ownership of all things material is set forth in several passages in Psalms, one of which Paul uses in 1 Cor. 10:26, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." In this sense, man is ever a servant entrusted with material things by Jehovah. These material possessions are to be used, as Jesus taught in the parable of the talents, for the glory and gain of the Master.

However, the Scriptures recognize a secondary and specific sense in which ownership of material things is vested in the individual. This human ownership of money seems to be recognized in all the teachings of the apostles, as for example, 1 Cor. 16:1-2. Along with this human ownership is also recognized a corresponding obligation of stewardship.

Perhaps the most graphic recognition of this principle of human ownership of money is found in Acts 5:4, in the language of Peter to Ananias regarding the gift made out of the proceeds of the sale of his field: "While it (i.e. the field) remained, did it not remain thine own? And after it was sold, was it (i.e. the money received from the sale) not in thy power?" This passage is very clear as to the time ownership of this money changed. The field is acknowledged to have been owned by Ananias. When he sold it, the proceeds are still recognized as belonging to him. But when he presented his gift, ownership changed.

The Jews of Jesus' day, however, went a step further than this, they believed that money became God's, not alone at the point of actual presentation, but when dedi-

cated to him by a vow. Jesus alludes to this in Mark 7:11. A careful examination of the context will reveal that his rebuke was not directed at this principle, but at their use of it to escape responsibility for the care of aging parents. Their misuse of this principle would in no way vitiate its truth.

Under this principle, then, money would become the Lord's before actual presentation, or before being actually placed in the treasury. By every moral right, funds promised to God in accordance with 2 Cor. 9:7, for example, would become theoretically his at the point of purposing or vowing, and for a Christian to divert such funds to his private needs or other secular uses would be the equivalent of dishonesty. Perhaps it was a recognition of this truth which led Paul to insist in 1 Cor. 16:2, that we "lay by in store." Scholars seem to be agreed that the force of the Greek verb here carries the idea of separating such funds and putting them where they are no longer subject to diversion by the giver. Paul's admonition likely is an inspired guard against this temptation which comes to the Christian in times of financial stringency.

Money, then, becomes the Lord's, and theoretical ownership of it passes from the individual, when that individual has specifically dedicated it to God's use. Actual ownership passes when the individual places it in the treasury of the church, or individually spends it in the discharge of the responsibilities inherent in individual Christian stewardship.

I have been asked this specific question: "Could a group of Christians get together on Saturday and contribute money together for a certain project, and that be scriptural, when it would be wrong for them to put the same money in the church treasury and then send a check in the name

of the church to the same project." In answering that, I would say "Yes." There are a number of things that Christians may do as individuals, and do those things in the name of the Lord, because they recognize their individual responsibility as stewards of the manifold grace of God, which are outside the fields of activity with which the church must concern itself. For example, the church as such has no responsibility for conducting great scientific investigations looking toward the control of or wiping out of certain diseases. These are problems at the community, state or national levels. Christians are citizens of the state and nation, and are often called upon to avail themselves of the help afforded by these great foundations. They have, as citizens, obligation toward such problems, and have a perfect right to contribute money toward those ends. But the church is not in such business, and therefore the use of funds contributed to the church would be highly questionable, at least in my own mind, for the same purpose. While such individual contributions might not in all cases be eligible for exemption under the income tax laws, the name of the Lord would, I think, be glorified if the end was humanitarian, and the donors acted in their capacity as individual Christians, implementing the teachings of Christ relative to individual Christian stewardship.

Harlingen, Texas

## “DOES SCRIPTURAL DIVORCE ALLOW REMARRIAGE?”

John G. Young, M.D.

Marriage should be a permanent union. It is so taught in the Bible. Our teaching should be true and firm. Young people should be taught this in childhood and it should be taught to teen-agers. It is not enough for fundamental principles to be mentioned to teen-age boys and girls for such principle should be built into their characters. The maladjusted individual is not likely to heed the teaching he hears in his teens, for he is not spiritually prepared to accept it. We must develop well-rounded characters in our children early to assure success in marriage.

Matt. 5:32, “But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.”

Also Matt. 19:9, “And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery, and whosoever marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”

This is the testament of the testator. A testament is written before the testator dies and it goes into effect with the death of the testator. It must be stated or written before the death of the testator, but once the death of the testator, then no change can be made.

Paul to the Romans said in Romans 7:2, 3:

“For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her

husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress."

In 1 Cor. 7:10, 11, Paul wrote:

"But unto the married I give this charge, yea not I, but the Lord, that the wife depart not from her husband (but should she depart, let her remain unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband) and that the husband leave not his wife."

From these scriptures, we see that it was God's purpose from the beginning for a man and woman to be joined together for life. But Jesus mentioned one exception, that if fornication is committed, the guilty party may be divorced and the innocent party may marry another and not be guilty of adultery.

It is admitted that if our Lord stated anything one time that is enough to settle the question for all time to come. If that language is not misunderstood, he teaches that fornication will dissolve the marriage vow and leave an innocent party free to marry another.

The cause must be scriptural. The cause must be fornication. Not something else, not forgiven infidelity that may later be brought up when a more pleasing possible mate appears. It reads "except for the cause of fornication."

The Lord was discussing what would dissolve the marriage and thus violate the original purpose and law of marriage given by Jehovah in the beginning. Paul was not discussing any violation of the law, but merely setting forth the law. He set forth marriage as God intended for it to be—a man and woman joined for life.

This is God's law, and this Jesus plainly taught. He showed that it can be broken but the one who breaks it is a great sinner. Whenever, therefore, married people are

even scripturally divorced, it means at least one soul has sinned greatly in God's sight. Let us quit talking of **scriptural divorce** in a light manner. No divorce is ever scriptural for both sides. When a marriage is broken, a soul has sinned and may be lost.

McGarvey wrote:

"From these premises the conclusion follows that what God has thus joined together man shall not put asunder. Of course, God, who joined them together, may put them asunder by prescribing the conditions of lawful divorce, but man has nothing to do in the case except to obey God's law. Any act of divorce, therefore, or any legislation by a church on the subject, inconsistent with the Divine Law, is open rebellion against the authority of Christ. They agree upon what the will of God on marriage is: One man and one woman joined for life. Christ showed that a man may violate God's law and break the vow. Paul discussed the law, not any violations that might occur."

In giving a rule or a law, we do not have to name the exceptions, especially where the law is not being discussed, but is only used as an illustration. In Romans seven, Paul was not discussing marriage but only used the marriage bond as an illustration. His emphasis is not so much upon the fact that a woman is bound while her husband lives as it is upon the fact that she is free when he is dead, so that she may be married to another. This is the phase of the relationship that is pointed out in the illustration. So the Jews who were once bound to the law of Moses were now free by a death and were married to Christ. This is Paul's argument and analogy and since he was not discussing marriage, but only using it as an illustration, of course, he would use marriage as God intended it to be, and only broken as God intends that marriage could be broken. He would

not argue, in such an illustration, that some marriages are broken by sin, which is not according to, but contrary to God's will and purpose.

All marriages are by God's law intended to last until the death of one of the parties to the contract. It is not God's will that fornication should be committed. Hence, married persons are bound till death by the law, as Paul says. It is only by a violation of the law that they can be divorced.

The teaching of Jesus does allow remarriage of the innocent party in a marriage broken for the cause of adultery.

## HOW DO REPENTANCE AND BAPTISM AFFECT UNSCRIPTURAL MARRIAGES?

James D. Willeford

In answer to a question asked by the Pharisees, Christ said, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:9). It is quite clear from this language of Christ that any one who has divorced his companion, except for fornication, and has married another, is guilty of adultery. On this point there is widespread agreement, though not universal agreement.

It is our purpose in delivering this lesson to determine how long an unlawful union continues to be adulterous. Some believe that such a union ceases to be adulterous when a couple repents and is baptized for the remission of sins. But it is our deep and unwavering conviction that such a union is unlawful in God's sight as long as the man and woman live together.

To determine how long a union continues adulterous, we ask, "Why is the union adulterous in the first place?" When a man divorces his wife for any cause, except marital unfaithfulness, and remarries, his second union is adulterous because in God's sight he is still married to the first woman. God joined them, and no man may lawfully put them asunder; only God can part them. He has decreed that death and fornication will dissolve that union. When the woman dies, the man is free to marry; when the woman commits fornication, the man is free to marry. But in the absence of one of these reasons, God holds the man in his first union. To contract another union is adultery, and continues to be adultery so long as God looks upon

the first woman as his wife. She remains his wife in the sight of God as long as she lives. Therefore his union with any other woman will be adulterous just as long as she lives.

But it is the conviction of some sincere people that this adulterous union is changed into a scriptural marriage when the man and woman repent and are baptized. To determine if this is so, we must know the meaning of repentance.

The most prevalent conception of repentance is that it is godly sorrow for sin; but according to the Bible, godly sorrow for sin produces repentance. The Lord says, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation" (2 Cor. 7:10). In writing to the Corinthians the apostle Paul said, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye werē made sorry unto repentance" (2 Cor. 7:9). These scriptures show that it is godly sorrow which brings men to repentance.

The fact that repentance is a result of godly sorrow for sin, has led some men to suppose and to teach that repentance means reformation of life. But while reformation does result from sorrow for sin, the Scriptures furnish clear evidence that it is distinguished from repentance. When the Bible says, "Repent and turn," the idea of reformation is involved in the word "turn," and if repent meant to reform then the command would be nothing more than reform and reform. John the Baptist distinguished between repentance and the deeds of a reformed life when he required the people to "bring forth fruits worthy of repentance." Thus we see that reformation of life is the fruit of repentance, and not its equivalent.

Seeing now that repentance results from sorrow for sin,

and leads to a reformation of life, we can have no further difficulty in ascertaining what it is; for the only result of sorrow for sin which leads to reformation is a change of the will in reference to sin. The primary meaning of the original word for repentance is a change of the mind. Repentance, then, fully defined, is a change of will caused by sorrow for sin, and leading to a reformation of life. Godly sorrow and a reformation of life are both necessary to genuine repentance, and without these no man can say he has truly repented.

The full meaning of repentance is further shown in the Bible examples of it. Christ said to the Jews, "The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah" (Luke 11:32). Whatever the people of Nineveh did, Jesus called repentance. Let us see what they did. Jonah preached. The people believed the preaching. They turned from their evil way (Jonah 3:10). The Ninevites changed their purpose toward sin, and turned from it. This is repentance.

In Matthew 21:28 Christ said, "A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went." Even a child would say that boy changed his mind, and that change led to a change of conduct. This is repentance.

Aylsworth and Trench say that "repentance was a far more serious thing in the early church than it is now—and with good reason; for divine acceptance was not then thought to depend on a simple state of feeling, but old wrongs had to be undone before the sinner was welcomed to the divine favor." (*Moral and Spiritual Aspects of Baptism*, by N. J. Aylsworth, p. 34).

In writing to the Colossians the Lord mentioned fornication and other sins which they practiced before they became Christians, and he says, "In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these" (Col. 3:5-8). In his letter to the Christians at Corinth the Lord mentioned fornicators, idolaters, and adulterers, and he said, "Such were some of you" (1 Cor. 6:9-11). When the people repented under the preaching of the apostles they put away adultery and other sins of which they were guilty.

Now, what must a couple living in adultery do to make their repentance genuine? They must cease to live in sin. Someone asks, "Wherein is their sin if they have repented?" Let us illustrate: A man steals a car. The sin of stealing is not the mere taking of the car without the owner's consent; but the continued holding of the car is sin. If the thief repents he will cease to hold the car. If a thief were to steal your car, and repent, would you expect him to keep it? The sin of adultery is not simply the taking of an unlawfully divorced woman as wife; but continuing in that unlawful relationship is sin. As long as the thief holds the car he is in sin; as long as the man continues in this unlawful relationship with this woman they are in sin. There is nothing in the nature of repentance to change an unlawful relationship into a lawful relationship. God has not promised to make it a lawful relationship at repentance. And he has said that the two are one flesh as long as they live, except for fornication. We therefore conclude that the sin of adultery continues, in spite of the fact that the persons have been baptized, just as long as God holds the party, or parties, joined to their former companions, just as long as they are "one flesh" with those whom they first married; and Paul says that is as long as they live (Rom. 7:2, 3).

To an adulterous couple that has been baptized some religious teachers say, "All that you can do is to obey the commandments of the Lord as far as they pertain to your case, genuinely repent of your sin, and ask God to extend his saving grace so as to take care of you." To our mind that is a most dangerous piece of advice. That is the equivalent of saying, "All you can do is repent and ask God to extend his grace so as to cover you—without your quitting sin!" This is the doctrine of repentance without abandoning the sins of which one is repenting.

John the Baptist was put in prison for rebuking Herod for living in adultery. The Bible says, "For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife" (Mark 6:17, 18). John did not suggest that God's grace would take care of this couple, and at the same time allow them to live in their adulterous state. Neither did John tell them to repent and be baptized, with the promise that the taking of these steps would change their adulterous union into a scriptural marriage.

We have heard it said that, "There is no example in the Bible wherein the inspired apostles required an adulterous couple to separate when they were baptized." Of course there is not, because repentance was placed before baptism, and its meaning was so clear that all sinners knew they had to quit all unlawful relationships and practices. When repentance is properly taught today, the church will not have much trouble over unscriptural marriage. That problem will have been solved before baptism. If it is not solved at repentance, baptism will not solve it. To be the Lord's people we must sever all unlawful relationships, whether they be business, social, or marital.

## DOES GOD'S MARRIAGE LAW APPLY TO THE ALIEN?

Lloyd Connel

In order to answer this question we must find out what God's law of marriage is. In Gen. 2:24, God said, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife. And they shall be one flesh." Jesus speaking on this subject said: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:5, 6).

Our purpose is to answer this question, but in order to do this we must ask a few ourselves.

1. Was God's marriage law binding on all people before the flood?
2. Was his marriage law binding on all when he called Abraham?
3. If yes, did it continue to be binding on all after God called Abraham?
4. If yes, was not God's marriage law binding on all when he gave the law on Sinai?
5. After the giving of the law did God's marriage law continue to be binding on all?
6. If God's marriage law was binding on all before the flood, before the calling of Abraham, after the calling of Abraham, at the giving of the law, after the giving of the law, a very important question is: Was it still binding on all when Christ came?
7. If yes, was it still binding when Christ established his church? Now here is our big question:
8. If God's marriage law is not binding on the alien,

when did he repeal it? At the flood, calling of Abraham, giving of law or when Christ died?

I find no reason to believe that it was repealed at any of those times, or that it has ever been repealed. I believe that it is binding on the alien today, as much as it has ever been; Yea, even as it was during the Old Law.

But does this conclusion mean that the alien sinner, who has broken God's marriage law, cannot be forgiven? Certainly not.

Let me ask a few more questions. Was Abraham under God's marriage law? Yes, but he had three wives, and yet today, he is spoken of as "the father of the faithful." Did he keep God's law of marriage? You know that he did not, but we read in Luke 16:22, that Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom. Wonder how Abraham got to that position? I think I know, but let's take a look at David. David was referred to as a man after God's own heart, and yet we find in the Bible that David had eight wives. Was God's marriage law binding on David? Certainly it was. Did David keep it? We know that he did not, and yet who is going to say that David was lost? Not a person here. Now, if we believe that Abraham, with three wives, was saved and David, with eight wives, was saved, we ought to know why we so believe. The answer is in Matt. 19:8. Jesus said, "Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so." Now, how did Abraham and David stand justified in the sight of God, even though they broke his marriage law? Here is how. God suffered it, "gave consent or sanction by a lack of interference or the nonenforcement of a prohibition."

In many ways God is doing the same today. In Luke 19:12-14, we find: "He said therefore, A certain nobleman

went into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called ten servants of his, and gave them ten pounds, and said unto them, Trade ye herewith till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent an ambassage after him, saying, We will not that this man reign over us." From this passage we find, that in one sense, Jesus is king over the whole world, but there are those that will not accept him as their king, but he is still their king, and they must give account to him as they will be gathered out of the kingdom. This will take place in the end of the world (Matt. 13:24-30; 36-43). In the meantime Jesus Christ is suffering them to rebel against him. But those who are in rebellion to God, the alien sinner, can turn at any time, obey the Lord and become a willing servant or subject. When they do this, God, through his Son, suffers them to come. He overlooks their sins, whether they have been married once, twice or perhaps have never been married. Regardless of their condition, they have been unwilling servants, prior to their obedience to the Lord. But in their obedience they subject themselves to God's law, and God overlooks their past, and they in turn bow in subjection to his divine will, being willing subjects.

Having done this they have put off the old man, and have put on the new. They are new creatures in Christ Jesus, and they have come into a new state, and they stand in Christ justified, cleansed from all past sins. God has suffered, overlooked what they did before they "willed that he reign over them."

Tulsa, Oklahoma.

## THE PREACHER'S RESPONSIBILITY CONCERNING MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

Wilburn C. Hill

I have been asked to discuss the preacher's responsibility to preach on marriage and divorce and the investigation he should make before saying a wedding ceremony, also his attitude toward the problems connected therewith in the local work.

The preacher's responsibility is to preach the word (2 Tim. 4:2-4). The word is the greatest weapon upon the earth to destroy evil and guide men aright, when preached in love and fulness. God places upon every gospel preacher the responsibility of wielding the sword of the spirit against every danger that confronts God's children. In the word of God we find far more teaching on how to have a good home than on the sin of divorce and on how to handle the divorce and remarriage questions. In order to have fewer divorces and far more stable, happy homes, let's follow God's wisdom in this and stress these truths regularly and more often.

1. Each Christian youth should develop a noble character to take to the marriage altar.
2. That all evil associations, recreation or habits will destroy not only the soul, but one's chance of securing a good mate and having a happy home.
3. That during the courting years (usually college years) one's associates should be among the best of Christian youth.
4. That one's dates and sweethearts should have the highest Christian ideals about their courtship and marriage.
5. That every Christian should be sure the one consid-

ered for a mate is a true Christian who has no living companion, and who looks upon marriage as permanent and sacred. If there is any question, investigate until there is no doubt. Never just take their word for it. It is so hard to be sure it is all right to marry a divorced person, you almost have to have the insight of God to know. There are so many things that can make the second marriage unstable like the first.

6. That the breaking up of a marriage is a terrible thing, not only for the husband and wife, but for the children, the church, and the world, leaving many open to the sin of adultery.

7. That good homes must be regulated by love and beautified by sacrifice and service one for the other.

Brethren, if these truths were preached more often, a lot of the messes that baffle us today would not be.

By nature youth thrills at a noble challenge, but finds it hard to appreciate a prohibition. The prohibitions in God's word are important and must be stressed, yet there is far more teaching given to the positive side of having a good home.

As to the investigation before saying a ceremony, let me say it is far more important to teach the truth about marriage and divorce than it is to say the ceremony. We should not be influenced by the desire of gaining goodwill or money to violate, by our actions, the principles found in God's word. Nowhere in the gospel do we find even a hint about a preacher performing a wedding ceremony, but he is given much to teach about marriage, the home, and divorce. In saying a ceremony we act as the agent of the state, yet it does not free us of our responsibilities as gospel preachers; our acts should always be consistent with the teaching we give from God's word. We should, by in-

quiry and investigation, find out if the couple has the right to be joined together in God's sight. If we think they are acting contrary to God's will, we should tell them kindly why we can not perform the ceremony.

As to the preacher's attitude toward divorcees and their problems in the local work, it should be one of love and courage, with determination to do God's will about it and thereby save the souls of those who are in sin and protect the church from being contaminated. Withdrawal should be exercised, if certainty of sin can be established and all else fails. In cases where there is a question that can not be cleared up, it is unwise to use the divorcees in any public way or as teachers, lest the impression be left that we are condoning that which God condemns.

There is great pressure being brought by the world and many religious groups and some even in the church, to ignore the divorce and remarriage question. We must withstand this by preaching God's word on marriage, divorce and remarriage and urge all Christians to stand for it.

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## THE PROBLEM OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Buddy Stewart

Last year about a million young persons were arrested for breaking the law. About 435,000 appeared before our courts. Someone has said that the year 1954 may go down in American social history as the Year of Juvenile Delinquency. Certainly this growing problem has become one which demands our attention. Other matters of a social nature may be clamoring for solution; other needs may be pressing for instant attention. But if the perilous predicament of youth is not of prime importance, then nothing is.

A juvenile delinquent is a person under age who is guilty of antisocial acts and whose misconduct is an infraction of the law. Bear in mind the definite distinction between the mischievous child and the juvenile delinquent.

The primary factor, the root at the bottom of this problem, is the failure of parents to properly discharge their responsibilities. J. Edgar Hoover said, "I do not look upon this situation simply as a juvenile delinquency problem; I think it is more properly described as adult delinquency, the failure of the mother and father to properly establish a home and take care of their children." Children come into this world as soft wax, to be molded into manhood by understanding and loving parents and elders. If there is wholesale failure on the part of youth to reach this goal, somewhere along the line the finger of failure must be pointed at their elders.

Briefly, here are some of the ways in which I feel that parents fail their children: Lack of love heads the list. I have never dealt with a juvenile delinquent who did not exhibit a personality partially or wholly void of this es-

sential human need. Indulgence and indifference are often confused with genuine parental love. The universal appeal of the juvenile delinquent is, nobody wants me, nobody cares for me, nobody loves me.

Broken homes is another very important causal factor in juvenile delinquency. A boy's or girl's earliest and richest experiences generally come from the home. Home must mean more to a child than a place to eat, sleep, and watch television programs. A broken home is not always one where death or divorce has struck. We have too many houses and not enough homes.

Four out of every five cases of juvenile delinquency handled by the Juvenile Officer are referred to him by the Police Officer. It is poor supervision which allows the child to go so far as to necessitate the calling of the Police before anything is done about his delinquency.

One cannot escape the conclusion that more intelligent participation by the parents in the lives of their children is absolutely essential. If we want our children to grow up to cherish and maintain a decent way of life, we've got to show them, by example, that there is a decent way of life—and that we believe in it too.

The automobile plays an important part in the juvenile delinquency of America. A staggering number of our young people are vitally affected by what I choose to call the automobile craze. Youngsters under eighteen commit more than half of all automobile thefts and nearly half of all burglaries. It is becoming characteristic of far too many young people to lie, cheat, and steal to own and decorate an automobile. Misuse of the automobile leads to many and varied juvenile crimes.

Let me cite a true case, with which I am familiar, to illustrate what I have been saying. When a certain lad

was ten years of age he was forsaken by his parents and sent to live with his Grandmother. That same year he was placed in a reform school as a juvenile delinquent. For the next seven years he was constantly in trouble and spent most of the time in a reform school. At the age of seventeen he was convicted of car theft and spent a year in the penitentiary. In his twenty-first year he killed a man when he was surprised in the act of stealing the man's car. He was sentenced to life in prison. He escaped ten years later and after a car theft, an armed robbery, and a gun battle, in which one bystander and an officer were wounded, he was slain. I was present and heard his dying words—"I'm glad you did that." May we never be guilty of driving a child to such a destiny as that.

Time permits only the mention of such things as lack of religious training, movies, comic books, environment, school factors, lack of community facilities, group tensions, slums, social insecurities, and emotional disturbances. These all enter into the over-all picture of the problem of juvenile delinquency.

What is the answer to the problem of juvenile delinquency? The Wise Man said, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). The apostle Paul again gives us the answer, ". . . bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

# WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH TOWARD COUNSELING YOUNG PEOPLE IN COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE PROBLEMS?

P. D. Wilmeth

## Introduction

Counseling is not a new enterprise. It is not a departure or a new discovery. It is not an importation from agencies without. The practice of counseling can be traced back to the book of Exodus when Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses gave this instructive recommendation: "Hearken now unto my voice. I will give thee counsel . . . and thou shalt show them the way where they must walk" (Ex. 18: 19-20). The burden of the lifework of Jesus was a ministry to men and women one by one. The Book of Acts bears eloquent testimony to the fact that the early church carried on an unceasing ministry to individuals as well as the masses (Acts 5:42; 20:20; 28:30). One has but to read the personal references at the close of several of Paul's epistles to realize how extensive was his ministry to men and women.

### I. Counseling in Marital Problems

This is one area within the framework of a large number of classes who need counseling. In this area will be such groups as: (1). Young People, (2). Pre-engaged Couples, (3). Engaged Couples, (4). Young Married Couples, (5). Parents with small children, and (6). Those in Marital Distress.

(1). **Young People.** Most young people from 15 and older are ready to do a lot of thinking about boy-girl problems. They don't usually ask the preacher about those affairs, yet do have a real need. This group may be reached inform-

ally, or in a class, by stressing "character" rather than "popularity." Give a sense of compensation. Good reading and good company will help.

(2). **Pre-engaged Couples.** Those in this area should know something of the serious dangers of mixed marriages, hereditary illness, and too early marriage. Literature, mimeograph sheets of information on the whole problem of dating and engagements are in order. Personal counseling will follow.

(3). **Engaged Couples.** Those in this area normally come to the preacher. Some will not perform the marriage ceremony without a pre-marital conference. Plan to meet at least once, perhaps more. Some need more counseling than others. Discover areas of special need. Establish rapport, and then the following questions may be discussed (You Can Be Happily Married, Gilbert Appelhof, ch. 3). Most couples could appreciate counsel on wedding plans, the ceremony, etc. (Ibid. pp. 57-91).

(4). **Young Married Couples.** At least one counseling interview is advisable shortly after the wedding or honeymoon. This should be another happy occasion, when no difficulties are envisioned, and the couple may ask the preacher anything on their hearts. Such things as prayer, daily Bible reading, family devotions may be discussed. Devotional books, magazines, giving to the Lord, finding themselves in the work of the church, and an introduction to a new group in the church who are married.

(5). **Parents with Small Children.** All parents at first are amateurs at rearing children and it is a wonder how well we do. Little training is given in this field from grades to graduate school. We can not make blanket rules, but can suggest that children need love, security, sympathy, authority, and understanding.

(6). **Those in marital distress.** Here we consider the sources of distress, whether physical, mental or spiritual. If it is the latter, we may do good.

## II. Some Basic Attitudes in Good Counseling

1. **Establish rapport, confidence, empathy (feel for), vs. sympathy.**

2. **Maintain reverence for the integrity of the individual.**

3. **Be a good listener.** Sir Arthur Helps has said, "It takes a great man to make a good listener." Good listeners are extraordinarily difficult to find, Most people want to talk.

4. **Begin where the person is, not where you'd like to have him.**

5. **The counselor must be emotionally mature.** He must have marked progress in his own resolved problems and adjustments.

6. **Be sparing in that overrated commodity known as "good advice."** Everyone is ready to give advice, but few take it. Carefully designed questions which lead the counselee to see alternatives, to discover, to arrive at the solution of his problem.

7. **Bring the counselee to an independence of the counselor.** A failure to do this creates a dependence which grows in proportion to the counselor's domination. It in turn feeds and nurishes the counselor's ego.

8. **The counselor will carefully accept his own limitations.** Mental and physical disorders will need referral help—some one trained in that field. He must recognize that there are some cases beyond redemption—nothing can be done with them. The wise Physician finds cases like this in his practice.

9. **Be in control.** Control the interview by directed lis-

tening, and by skillfully phrased questions. Control the emotions by manifesting no surprise, shock, anger, repulsion, affection, or other extreme reactions.

10. **Never violate the confidence of a counselee** (not even to the counselor's wife). When necessary to consult a Physician or Psychiatrist, the identity need not be revealed. When details are employed in any public way they should not be recognizable by any one—friend, intimate, or loved one of the person concerned.

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## WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS IN GUIDING THEIR CHILDREN?

Harrison A. Mathews

What is the responsibility of parents in guiding their children? That parents have such a responsibility needs no proof and very little discussion. God has always expected his people to teach and train their children. Moses said to the people of God, "Behold, I have taught you the statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep, therefore, and do them; for this is your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. . . . Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons, and thy son's sons" (Deut. 4:5-6, 9). Again hear Moses, "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deut. 6:6-7). Paul emphasized the same principle when he said, "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Surely we as parents do have a responsibility. The real question is, how shall we meet such a responsibility.

We live in a day of many activities. The family circle was once broken by death; now it is broken by life with its many demands upon our time. Each family is faced with the problem of when to teach the children. That they

must be taught should be self evident. Character is the product of our education. We are what we believe in our heart. What we believe in our heart is the product of our training. Some type of character is being developed in every child. The emphasis we give either to material things or spiritual things will determine in part what character is finally developed in the child. It should be the concern of every parent to see that time is given to the emphasis of spiritual values. "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it."

There are five great things to be taught each child. They are as follows: God and his love, Christ and his life, Christ and his church, the Christian home, and the necessity of obedience. There are many things to be taught under each, but these constitute the great things. They should be emphasized often. What great love our Father in heaven has shown and is showing daily. Our children should be taught to look heavenward and say, "Our Father, which art in heaven." They should be thrilled with the story of the life of Christ and challenged with the message of his way. They should be taught the glory of the New Testament church. It should be made to shine forth in its pristine beauty and holiness. Its mission should be stamped indelibly in the heart and life of every child. As so much in life is dependent upon the home and its attitudes, the Christian home should be taught daily. Our young people should be taught the desirability of selecting a Christian companion. With two joined as one in the same faith, the battle of life is still a severe one; how much more difficult if a Christian does not have the benefit of a Christian companion. It is said concerning Christ, "I come to do thy will, O Lord," how important it is then that our children be taught that obedience to all of God's word is essential,

not only because of duty, but also because it is reasonable. Joy, happiness, peace, life; these are the products of doing his will. If our boys and girls are taught these great things, we need not fear for their safety or that of the church.

How can we meet these responsibilities? Perhaps there is no one method that will meet the needs of all. Christian parents by their godly example are training their children. Right habits of church attendance for the entire family is one of the best teaching mediums. Pure and chaste conversation in the home is another medium of teaching. Proper emphasis should be placed upon good literature with special emphasis upon the daily reading of the Bible. Prayer should be as natural in our life and the life of our children as eating and sleeping. Daily discussion by the parents with the children concerning some phase of God's word and will is a necessity according to Moses. The Christian parent who recognizes his or her great responsibility will incorporate all of these suggestions into life itself. They will realize that life is more than eat and drink and will do their best to lift the eyes of their children heavenward. May it be said of us as of Abraham of old, "He will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment" (Gen. 18:19).

San Angelo, Texas.

## WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH TOWARD PARENTAL GUIDANCE?

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Max Leach

One of the greatest, and possibly one of the most neglected, responsibilities of the local congregation is that of helping Christian parents do a better job of being Christian parents.

It is through the parents that Christian education is most potent. During the first six years of the average child's life he spends the great majority of his time with one or both of his parents; all of us know how important these years are. During the first two years of the child's life, when the basic elements of his character and personality are crystallizing, the child's world is made up largely of parents, and brothers and sisters if he has any. As they are, so will be the child.

If the parents are emotionally unstable, so likely will be the child. If the parents are insecure, unhappy, this the child will absorb. If the parents are lukewarm, can the child be hot? If the parents are at peace with God and themselves and the world, will not the child be infected by these same good qualities?

All of us know that if a child is brought up in the way he should go, that when he is old he will not depart from it. All of us know that as Christian parents we are to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We can be about no more important Christian business than the business of being Christian parents.

Yet I am afraid that this tremendously important thing is too much overlooked in most assemblies of the body of Christ. All of the services, all of the class work, all of the benevolence, all of the visitation, all of the missionary

efforts of the individual congregation are extremely important—but what have we gained if we lose our own children? Isn't it one of the greatest tragedies in the Christian world to see a parent or parents so interested in the welfare of the soul of the man down the street or across the ocean that they neglect the souls of their own children? Though this isn't done often, we all know of instances where it has been done.

Then what is the local congregation to do about this matter of tremendous import?

Through its teaching program the responsibilities of Christian parents to their children should be continually stressed.

Classes should be regularly conducted by the congregation to aid parents in better fulfilling this greatest of their tasks. Many ladies' Bible classes would do much better studying at regular intervals the ways wherein a woman and man might make a better home as Christians, rather than spending too much of their time on theological theories.

Home study groups should be encouraged by the congregation among Christian parents to discuss better ways and means of doing this great job and for these parents to exchange workable information.

In congregations of size a good library of selected materials should be maintained and be available to all parents of the congregations.

It should be realized that the time to aid parents in being better Christian parents is not when they are middle aged and their children grown, but such instruction should begin even at the engagement period or before, and continue until the children are ready to go out on their own.

We must never be tricked into thinking that there is any substitute for the Christian home. The local congregation of the body of Christ is not nor will ever be this substitute. Though the local congregation may implement, it must never take over the duties of the Christian home and parents in furnishing love, Godly instruction, creative activity, and proper recreation for our children.

Christianity begins at home.

## WHAT SHOULD THE CHRISTIAN'S ATTITUDE BE TOWARD RACE RELATIONSHIPS?

J. Roy Willingham, Jr.

The Christian's attitude toward race relations—as in all other realms—should be that of Jesus Christ.

As we look to the word of God we find several unmistakable guideposts. First, concerning the origin of man we read, "God created man in his own image" (Gen. 1:27). Hence, we see that every man—black or white, red or yellow—bears a likeness to Jehovah. Further the apostle Paul, as he stood before the Athenians on Mar's Hill, declared, "And he hath made of one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). It is interesting, though certainly not necessary, to observe that this concept of man is supported by the modern science of genetics. Genetic findings very definitely support the assertion of the apostle that man consists of "one blood," i.e., one species. The fact that we are "brothers under the skin" is self evident when we recognize what physical differences between the so-called "races," such as color and texture of hair and color of skin, are all superficial in nature. There are no fundamental genetic or biological differences—such as blood types—between the various "races" of man. Neither is there scientific nor Biblical basis for the concept of white supremacy. The overwhelming abundance of evidence points toward similarity of capacity.<sup>1</sup> It seems a paradox to note that often those who are the most vocal on the subject of "White Supremacy" are those whose own abilities provide the most

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<sup>1</sup>For greater detail, see "Christianity or Racial Prejudice" by Robert T. Clark and J. Roy Willingham. Firm Foundation: February 19, 1951 and February 26, 1951.

profound basis of humility. The Christian attitude in this matter is perhaps best expressed by the apostle Peter at the household of Cornelius. After having been warned in a vision, "What God hath cleansed make thou not common" (Acts 10:15), Peter observed, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34, 35). My friends, if you are looking for a Biblical basis for human relations—racial or otherwise—one need look no further. The basis of acceptability to God, and hence to Christians, is two-fold: (1) righteousness and (2) a fear of Jehovah. Equality before God, then, is a fundamental Christian concept. Paul, speaking of the new creature in Christ, declared, "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, scythian, bondman nor freeman; but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11).

Christian actions may be guided by a simple rule—a rule well known, and little practiced, for 2000 years—"All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12). Brethren, let each one ask himself this question, "Are my actions in these matters guided by the Golden Rule? Is it possible for me to practice the Golden Rule and refuse to allow a person created in the image of God to sit beside me on a bus, or in a restaurant, or in the worship of God?" Is Christ living in us when we refuse to use our influence to secure for minority groups the rights of education and suffrage and those other privileges which we have come to consider as inalienable to ourselves?

Sometimes the influence of Christianity upon society is slow, e.g., the abolition of slavery. Neither Christ, nor

his apostles, attempted to foment political unrest and revolution. Yet, nevertheless, Jesus destroyed the institution of slavery as surely as he walked upon this earth. For this reason we should not be overzealous in attempting to produce immediate changes in social and political structure. Christianity is rather an evolutionary force in society. However, Jesus told Nicodemus (John 3:1-5) that conversion is a new birth. The effect of Christianity on the individual is a revolutionary one. We cannot individually claim the new birth if our ideas have not in many instances undergone a revolution. We cannot excuse ourselves by a geographical accident of birth, but we must grow into a full knowledge of him.

Brethren, we have long possessed a distinctive plea—a plea which I believe has stood us well in the sight of God. That plea, which is familiar to every babe in Christ, is that in matter of faith and practice, “Speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where it is silent.” Too many times in regard to our actions toward this great and noble people in our midst we have been silent where the Bible sounds a clarion call. We should bow our heads in shame when we see modernists and infidels standing alone in their defense of these Christian principles. We should be filled with righteous indignation when we see our brethren “dragging their feet” or even, God forbid, leading the opposition. “My brethren, these things ought not so to be!”

## THE CONGREGATIONAL ATTITUDE TOWARD RACE RELATIONSHIPS

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Leon Locke

An "attitude" is a position or bearing indicating action. The attitude of a congregation on this subject determines the basis upon which it does the Lord's work. It involves more than individual attitudes and relationships. By this "attitude" the church determines whether it will work and worship on the basis of racial integration or racial segregation.

The work of the church is the salvation of souls by the preaching of the gospel. Its purpose is not the accomplishment of social or political reforms. What social or political reform may be effected by it is incidental to its purpose, and is the result of exemplary living by individuals composing its membership. To espouse the church to an organized agitation for social and political reform would be a betrayal of its glorious assignment, and would remove the church from the sphere of its influence.

The body of Christ became a reality in an age of social disparity and inequality. Although the early disciples said "We must obey God rather than men," they were not anarchists. They submitted to laws and even to customs in some cases where such did not render obedience to God impossible. They made no effort to bring about any violent disruption in the organization of society. Though slavery was widespread, the apostles issued no edict designed to sweep away this practice. On the contrary, Paul sent a converted runaway slave back to his master who was a Christian. In addition, he wrote to Timothy: "Let as many as are servants under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the

name of God and the doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but let them serve them the rather, because they that partake of the benefit are believing and beloved. These things teach and exhort" (1 Tim. 6:1-2). They sought to avoid any circumstances in this social relationship that would bring the church into disrepute. Their first intent was the preservation and extension of the influence of the body of Christ.

Most of us were born into a society that not only recognizes some racial segregation, but in instances has required it by civil law. This is not true in every nation; nor is it true in all areas of our own country. But where it is true, each congregation should strive to maintain a maximum influence by avoiding any social situation that would hinder its work. The church bears a responsibility to all races of men. The most effective lawful way should be used to reach them. Segregation of races on a voluntary basis where each recognizes and respects the problems of the other, has much to commend it in the Lord's work. Segregation as a matter of discrimination would constitute respect of persons and therefore be wrong. But where a mingling of different races in one congregation would jeopardize the influence of the church with a large segment of those it needs to reach with the truth, segregation on this voluntary basis would be required by the simple rule of expediency.

Let me be more specific. There are areas today where a congregation working and worshipping on an integrated basis could have very little influence with either the Negro or White population. Fifty or a hundred years from now this may not be true. But at the moment, the very presence of this atmosphere leads to a more effective

program of soul winning on a segregated basis. Differences in nature, background, language, and emotional constitution of various races make segregation the more effective plan. This fact is emphatically illustrated by observing, for example, that in areas where segregation is not the order of the day in public affairs, the vast majority of negroes voluntarily segregate themselves in their church activities. Among our own brethren, most of the Negroes realize that the lost among their people cannot be effectively reached on any other basis.

Where segregation poses no problem, let each congregation become all things to all men that we may by all means save some. Where segregation is the social order of the day, let us not allow the church to become a part of organized agitation for reform. May we be content to let the church fulfill its glorious mission of saving souls. In the absence of a "thus saith the Lord," may God grant unto us the wisdom to do this in the most effective way.

Hungerford, Texas.

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT RACE RELATIONSHIPS?

J. W. Treat

Ethnology is "the science that treats of the division of mankind into races, their origin, distribution, relations, and peculiarities." The ethnological definition of race is, "A division of mankind possessing constant traits, transmissible by descent, sufficient to characterize it as a distinct human type."

Thus men have made divisions and sub-divisions of what in reality is only **one race**—the human race, or **homo sapiens**: the organic species to which all human beings belong. Authorities agree that "There are today no 'pure' races" (*World Book Encyclopedia*, Vol. 14, p. 6732). But let us accept for the present study the usual definition of race: "A group of persons who have a fairly definite combination of distinguishing physical traits which is handed on from parents to children."

Speakers One and Two on this panel, I judge in advance, of necessity base their conclusions on what the Bible teaches in establishing what should be the **Christian's Attitude and The Congregational Attitude Toward Race Relationships**. Some repetition, therefore, seems inevitable. Nevertheless, I want to set forth briefly now—and plain honesty forces me to add—subject to my own limited knowledge **What the Bible Teaches on This Subject**.

### The Bible Teaching

According to Gen. 9:19, all the inhabitants of the earth are descendants of the three sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Shem means "name" (probably the eldest son of Noah, Gen. 5:32); Japheth means "enlargement";

Ham means "black." Historians say that Shem's descendants occupied what we now know as Asia Minor, Assyria, Arabia, etc.; that Japheth's occupied the coast lands of the Mediterranean Sea in Europe and Asia Minor; that Ham's descendants were the Egyptians, Cushites and Phoenicians. Psalm 105:23 refers to Egypt as "the land of Ham." Because the name Ham meant "black" and because of Noah's curse on Ham's descendants through his son Canaan: "Cursed by Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren" (Gen. 9:25), some would conclude that even today it is God's will that the "blacks" serve the "whites." Secular history does not bear that conclusion; neither does Bible teaching. Languages and nationalities and ethnological divisions have come into existence, but the most expressive and most nearly accurate description of these relationships from a Biblical standpoint is: "For we are all brethren," and again, God made "of one (King James version, "one blood") every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26).

New Testament language refers to Samaritans, Jews, Greeks, Gentiles, etc. Were there prejudices, hatred and strife among these groups? Yes. What teachings opposed such bitter relationships? At least a partial answer follows:

1. "For God so loved the world . . . that whosoever believeth . . ." (John 3:16).
2. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost" (Luke 19:10).
3. "But glory, honour and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God" (Rom. 2: 10-11).

4. The Gospel . . . “. . . the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16).

5. “Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . .” (Matt. 28:19).

6. “Go ye unto all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature . . .” (Mark 16:15).

7. “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47).

8. “And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

9. “What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common . . .” (Acts 10:15). And in verse 28: “Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or to come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.”

10. “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Acts 10: 34-45).

### In Christ

1. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free . . .” (1 Cor. 12:13).

2. “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3: 27-28).

3. From Ephesians, chapter 2: no longer aliens, uncircumcised, strangers or "foreigners" and without hope, but "fellow citizens with the saints," "in Christ": "**one new man.**"

4. In Christ, "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all and in all" (Col. 3:11).

Thus is brought into being the Kingdom seen in prophecy by Daniel (Dan. 7:14), "All people, nations, and languages."

#### Conclusion

If I were limited to just one sentence in answering the question of what is the Biblical teaching about race relationships—as well as about **all human relationships**—I would say: **the golden rule** (Matt. 7:12).

**"WITHOUT RESPECT OF PERSONS"**  
**The Negro and Race Relationships**

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L. M. Graves, M.D.

Negroes constitute the most important minority group involved in race relationships in the United States. According to reports from the Federal Census Bureau the negro proportion of our population is steadily increasing. Relative increase in the size of this group, together with recent legislation and court decisions intensify current interest in the problem and call for calm and thoughtful consideration.

In the City of Memphis there are approximately 155,000 negroes. This represents more than 35 per cent of the total population. The birth rate has almost doubled in the last ten years and is presently 50 per cent higher than the white rate. Many significant advances have been made by the negroes of Memphis in recent years, particularly in the fields of health, education and economic status. At the same time moral improvement and social maturity have lagged behind. The illegitimate birth rate is fourteen and one-half times as high as that among the white group and the venereal disease rate is 30 times as high.

There can be no doubt that the negro has been discriminated against in many ways in the past. He has not always received equal pay for equal service. He has sometimes failed to receive fair treatment at the bar of justice. Advantage has been taken of him in business transactions. He has not enjoyed equal educational, recreational and social opportunities. These things constitute unfair discrimination against the negro, and demand correction in the sight of God and in keeping with the constitution of the United States. Race relationships have improved mark-

edly as the negro has progressed and as the white man has lost some of his prejudices.

White Christians have fallen short in their obligations to the negro in the preaching of the gospel and in providing Christian education for the development and training of leaders in the church. Negroes are deeply religious by nature and are highly susceptible to the gospel. On the other hand, they are emotionally and spiritually immature as a race. They are only about 100 years out of slavery and have lived rather dependent lives since emancipation. Keeble, Holt, Hogan, Stewart, Locke and a few other voices have been crying in the wilderness with remarkable immediate results. In the heavily negro populated areas of the south thousands have been baptized into Christ, but the withering blights of ignorance, poverty, immaturity and lack of leadership have destroyed much of their noble work and prevented the establishment of strong, permanent congregations.

Nashville Christian Institute and Southwestern Christian College are making valiant efforts within their limited means to correct this deplorable condition, but are not receiving adequate support.

There is much current discussion on the subject of segregation versus integration of the races. Extreme positions, pro and con, have been taken by persons motivated more by emotion than reason.

It is assumed by some that discrimination and segregation are synonymous and that integration would therefore cure discrimination. Neither assumption is true. The problem is not that simple. There is no assurance that mixing the races would improve the lot of the negro or change the attitude of the white. In some instances integration has had the opposite effect.

Improvement of man's attitude toward his fellow man comes through acceptance and practice of the principles of Christianity and not through judicial pronouncements or the following of social theories.

Many of the best thinkers among the negroes do not consider mass integration of the races timely. They do not advocate it. They do advocate equal opportunity for the negro and the end of discriminatory practices against him.

Integration may come in the future. Recent rapid changes point in that direction, but if allowed to come through a process of evolution, as both races become better prepared for it, the welfare of both will be better served. It is not expedient for Christians, white or black, to participate in radical efforts to uproot deep-seated social customs that are not directly inconsistent with living the Christian life. Paul recognized this principle in dealing with slavery among Christians in the Roman Empire.

#### Summary:

1. Negroes have made rapid advances in health, education and financial status, but moral and social maturity have lagged behind.
2. Discrimination against the negro has been practiced and should stop.
3. There is urgent need for better trained church leaders among negroes.
4. Segregation is not necessarily discrimination and integration is not its cure.
5. Christians, both black and white, should cultivate Christian attitudes and conduct toward each other, but should not attempt to revolutionize long established social customs that do not interfere with living the Christian life.