

1974

## 1974: Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures - Full Text

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Charles Mickey

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# DISCIPLESHIP

being the

Abilene Christian College

Annual Bible Lectures

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## PREFACE

When Jesus walked upon the earth, His call to the men and women of His day was "Come follow me." Those who responded positively found the basic priorities of their lives dramatically changed. They became part of that large group that was utterly committed to Jesus the Christ. Driven by the love of Christ, they traversed land and sea as heralds of the glorious message, tirelessly pressing on to new areas, finding in every soul they met a soul for whom Christ died.

Jesus still calls men and women to discipleship, and true Christianity is still an all-out commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing less than unconditional surrender could ever be a fitting response to His sacrifice at Calvary.

The Lord never tried to coax men into a glib profession of faith. Neither did He seek to attract a large following by preaching a popular message. The life to which He calls people of every age is the most demanding, challenging, rewarding life that it is possible for human beings to live.

The theme speeches and panel discussions presented in this volume challenge us to probe again the meaning of our own discipleship. The Lectureship Committee chose this theme because of its conviction that this is one of the pressing needs of Christians in every generation.

This volume goes forth with the fervent prayer that the messages it contains may be helpful to everyone who reads, in his own discipleship and in leading others to the Lamb of God who still calls, "Come follow me."

# MAIN SPEECHES

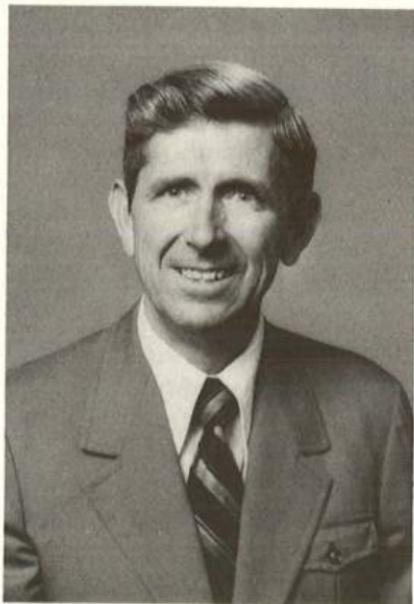


## “GO . . . MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS”

Parker L. Henderson

Born November 29, 1924, in Miami, Florida; served during World War II in the China-Burma-India area. Mr. Henderson is a 1950 graduate of Abilene Christian College. He pioneered missionary work in Thailand, arriving there in February of 1958, being supported by the University Avenue Church of Christ, Austin, Texas. He has worked in the interest of the gospel in Southeast Asia since that time.

Henderson teaches in the Sunset School of Preaching and School of Missions in Lubbock, Texas, while he is on home leave. He will have spent the month of January, 1974, in Thailand and surrounding areas, arriving back in the States on February 3. He will instruct in Sunset School of Preaching during the February-July term before going back to Thailand with his family for a fourth long term of work in that country.



He is married to the former Donna Deacon. They have four children, Larry, Jeanie, Rebecca, Priscilla, and this year adopted a Thai baby boy, Pragart Timothy.

Among the last words of the Lord Jesus Christ are these, “Go . . . make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19). Surely, this is the greatest task and the most glorious responsibility ever given unto mortal man. The word “disciple” or “make disciple” in the original language is defined as, “to

enroll as a scholar . . . teach or instruct." That "teaching" is defined by the ISBE as teaching one to become a real disciple of Christ who "believes His doctrine, rests upon His sacrifice, imbibes His Spirit and imitates His life." This well defines our task of teaching people not just to be students, but students of Christ who will believe and obey him who is our king and saviour (Isa. 9:6,7; Mat. 1:21).

The material that is to be taught in this "discipling" is made very clear in the example of the apostle Paul and Barnabas in the city of Derbe, "And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra . . ." (Acts 14:21). That which they taught and preached was the gospel of Christ which is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16). The word for "the gospel" is EUANGELION and to "preach the gospel" is EUANGELIZO. Gospel preachers are then those that preach the gospel and there is no true preaching if the true gospel is not preached. "Missionaries are evangelists, as being essentially preachers of the gospel." We must ever keep before us our commission as we "Go"—"Preach the Word" (2 Tim. 4:2) or "Preach the gospel" (Mk. 16:15).

The last half of our subject says ". . . of all nations." This is "the who" of our commission—ALL NATIONS. Just as we usually use the term, "nations," our task is seen as a staggering one! There is estimated to be more than 250 nations in the world. It is a great task just to get one preacher into each of the nations. As late as 1967, a survey revealed that we still lacked 120 of the nations of the world having one worker per nation. There are still at least 120 nations where there were no known proclaimers of the pure gospel of Christ. The Sunset church in Lubbock, Texas, began having mission forums that year and had as its theme then and every

year since then until 1973, "Let's get the gospel into every nation on earth!" In 1973 all known nations either had gospel workers in the country or someone or some congregation trying to get workers into the country. This is a sign of great progress and we rejoice to have come thus far.

Upon closer examination, the Greek language which is translated "All nations" is "PANTA TA ETHNE." It is very interesting to note that the word "ETHNE" is the root word from which we get "ethnic" as "ethnic groups." Thus the Lord's word is really not saying "disciple all large nations" but rather "disciple all the ethnic groups of people." Within every large nation there are many small "nations" or ethnic groups. No one knows just how many, but it is estimated that there are between 15,000 and 20,000 ethnic groups in the world. There are literally thousands of these small "nations" of people with their own language, customs, and culture, the most of which do not even have a Bible in their language, much less a preacher in their midst. To "disciple all of the Ta Ethne" on earth is an amazing task, the scope of which is almost beyond our comprehension. In Mark's account of the great commission, Jesus said "preach the gospel to EVERY CREATURE . . ." (Mk. 16:15). With 3.7 Billion creatures in a possible 20,000 ethnic groups and the militant command to disciple them all, even with a limited understanding of how many 3.7 Billion really is or how many tribal nations actually exist, we are overwhelmed with the enormity of our task to "Disciple All . . ."

We are tempted to say, "we cannot do it" and indeed the task is a great one. However, the largeness of the task but shows the confidence our God has in us and something of what His potential through us really is. His word gives us assurance that we can make disciples of all nations! He has

promised us. “. . . I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5). This is a fine promise in English, but the Greek language in which it was first written literally says something like this, “NO, NOT THEE WILL I LEAVE, NO, NOT NEVER WILL I FORSAKE THEE.” There are five negatives in the original language which in a powerful way assure the Christian that the Lord will never fail in His care and concern.

Perhaps we can see the absolute dependence upon the Lord in this task by the realization that there are 128 persons born into this world each minute. Now that doesn't seem like so many, but when you count the minutes in an hour it comes to 7,680 persons. With 24 hours in a day, that comes to a total of 184,320 new souls coming into the world every day. That means every 15 days 2,764,800 people are born. So we have as many new persons reaching the accountability of life every 15 days as there are members of the church in the world. In order just to keep up with the newcomers among the nations we should baptize five million people every month or 60,000,000 per year. This is just to keep up with the newcomers into the world and does not take into consideration that there are more than 60 times that many people already here.

The foregoing facts are sufficient to show that there must be a mighty change in our attitude toward evangelism and the church must be mobilized into a mighty army on an offensive that reaches the mighty cities of the greatest nations and the humble villages and tiny hamlets of the smallest of nations and tribes. Great is our task! Great is the confidence of our God who entrusted us with such a responsibility.

## THE JOB IS NOT TOO GREAT

Sometimes when we begin to see the enormity of the task, we just give up and say it cannot be done. This is not so—IT CAN BE DONE! Notice some reasons why it CAN be done! In the first place our God is able. “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Eph. 3:20). In the second place His word is able. “The gospel is the power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16). We have the right message to make men free (Jno. 8:32). It is the “glorious gospel of Christ . . .” (2 Cor. 4:4), the only saving message for a dying world. His people, His church, are the only people who are equipped with His message. There is but one truth that will save—the gospel of Christ. There is but one church that comprises the saved—the church of Christ. All such talk of “the man not the plan” is foolishness as you cannot have the man—Jesus Christ—and reject his word (John 12:48). It is likewise just as foolish to say, “we are only Christians not the only Christians.” If you mean that the people in this building are not the only Christians, of course that is true. Or the people in any one congregation are not the only Christians, that is obvious, but to say that His church is not made up of all the Christians is just like saying that “all the Christians are not all the Christians.” “The Lord adds to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47). God translates into the kingdom of Christ those who have the forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:13, 14). Therefore if one is saved, the Lord adds him to the Lord’s church and if one be forgiven God adds him to His Son’s kingdom. To be forgiven is to be in the kingdom and to be saved is to be in the church. Therefore, all of the saved are in the church of Christ or the kingdom of Christ. Inasmuch as the Lord does

the adding of saved people to His church, no mistake is made and the church embraces all of the saved. Not being in that one true church is equivalent to not being saved. No double talk or compromise can change Bible truths. Only the truth will make men free (Jno. 8:32). Brethren, let us stand firm for the one proven gospel that will lead men from darkness to light and from sin to the Saviour. With God and His power to save we can evangelize the nations—without Him or His gospel we can do nothing (John 12:48; 15:5).

Today the church has the manpower; the financial power; the preacher-power; the congregational power; the communication power and the transportation power to disciple all nations. I am convinced that only the will-power is lacking and when we are willing—when we have our “want-to’s” straightened out we can and will disciple the nations.

### HOW IT WAS DONE IN THE FIRST CENTURY

The New Testament shows how the world was evangelized in the first century. Let us notice who it was that went to the nations. The well-educated went as we see in the going of Paul who was trained at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). Also, there were those sent like Peter and John who were unlearned and ignorant (Acts 4:13). Married men like Peter were sent (I Cor. 9:5) and single men like Paul. Old men like Paul the aged were sent (Philemon 9) and young men like Timothy (I Timothy 4:12). Men went to preach like those who stood up with Peter of Pentecost (Acts 2:14). Women were workers in the gospel as Euodias and Syntyche (Phil. 4:2,3) and husbands and wives went like Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:24-28). Even four young girls were teachers in the working family of Philip the evangelist (Acts 21:8)

They went in different ways. Sometimes congregations sent them as Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:1,2). Sometimes they went on their own as did Philip (Acts 8). Sometimes they were supported by a plurality of churches as was Paul when he robbed other churches to preach in Corinth (2 Cor. 11:8). Sometimes the preachers were supported by only one church as when only the church at Philippi had communication with Paul in giving and receiving (Phil. 4:15). Then at other times no church supported the preacher and he had to support himself and those that were with him (Acts 20:34).

Sometimes the churches cooperated in evangelism as when the church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to work with the church already established in Antioch (Acts 11:22-24). Sometimes they cooperated in benevolence (2 Cor. 8:18-24), as we read that churches chose men to work with Paul in raising money for the poor saints and they did appear before the churches (1 & 2 Cor. 8:24). Then there were times that one church worked by itself without assistance of others (Phil. 4:15).

There was much variety in the work they did. The churches helped the saints (2 Cor. 9:2), but the churches also helped the saints so that they could glorify God for the help as could others who are called "all men."

"For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; While by the experiment of this ministration they [saints PLH] glorify God for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men." (2 Cor. 9:12,13)

Who were the "all men" if the "they" and the "them" were saints?

They preached unto the poor (2 Cor. 8:2) who were in deep poverty, but they also preached to the rich Theophilus (Acts 1:1). They preached to women by the river side (Acts 16:13,14); to a distraught maiden with an evil spirit (Acts 16:16-18). They preached to a jailer from prison (Acts 16:29-32) and to prisoners in jail (Philemon 10). They traveled to preach (Acts 13) and they preached while traveling (Acts 8:36). The length of stay at any one place varied: in Samaria Philip preached a while then went off by the roadside. He stayed in Azotus briefly and passed through preaching in all the cities till he came to Caesarea (Acts 8:40). His practice seemed to be to stay but for a short time preaching till he got to Caesarea, where he is still staying in Acts chapter 21:8, a period of more than 20 years. Barnabas and Saul stayed in Antioch a year (Acts 11:26). The stay was short in Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Yet in Antioch they abode a long time with the disciples (Acts 14:28).

There was much variety in the types of places the early church used for meeting. "... they continuing daily with one accord in the temple . . ." (Acts 2:46); "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:42). So they met in the temple and in homes. Also, they met by the riverside (Acts 16:13), in a chariot (Acts 8:36); in ships (Acts 27:21-35), in jail (Acts 16:25) and by the beach (Acts 20:36).

When it came to communication, they used every means available to them: They spoke it (Acts 16:13), they shouted it (Acts 2:14), they wrote it (Eph. 3:3), they read it (Eph. 3:4) and they let it be seen from within themselves as they lived it (1 Tim. 4:12).

The time of their meeting was varied. They met Sunday

morning at 9:00 o'clock (Acts 2:14), Sunday night when there were many lights required (Acts 20:7,8); they met at midnight (Acts 16,20), and on holidays like Pentecost (Acts 2:1-3). They met on Saturday (Acts 16:13), on Sunday (Acts 20:7) and on every other day (Acts 5:42). In fact, it was in season and out of season religion with them—always on the job for the Lord (2 Tim. 4:2)

As to language, they spoke Hebrew (Acts 22:2), Greek (I Cor. 1:23), Latin (Acts 2:10), Egyptian (Acts 2:10), etc. In fact, on the birthday of the church they spoke the language of devout men out of every nation under heaven (Acts 2:5-8).

The purpose and point of all this variety is explained by the Apostle Paul: "If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them" (Rom. 11:14). "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (I Cor. 9:22). The early church was evangelistic! Those Christians were after souls because their master had said, "Go make disciples of all nations."

There were some failures in their mission program. John Mark quit the field and returned home after Paul's first face to face encounter with a sectarian preacher, where Paul called names ("O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?"—Acts 13:10). There were forbidding brethren ". . . whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things" (Phil. 3:19). One missionary named Demas forsook Paul because he loved the world (2 Tim. 4:10). This did not

lessen the efforts of godly men in the first century because it did not lessen the marching orders of the Master who said, "Go make disciples of all nations." Likewise today, elderships and preachers cannot neglect the white foreign fields where most of the people live just because some brother failed! Let's profit from our mistakes of the past and press on with our chief business of DISCIPLING THE NATIONS. Those who quit because someone failed join the ranks of the failures, the quitters, the objectors, the Demases, the John Marks and the Diotropheses and will answer to God for obeying men rather than God on the judgment day.

#### THE NEED OF THE HOUR—LET'S GET TOUGH

Now, what is the need of the hour? Our basic need is to get tough. We need: (1) ELDERS who will get tough enough to lead the churches of Christ in the main job given to us by the Lord—Go make disciples of all nations. World evangelism should not be considered an appendage to the work of the local church—this is the heart and the core of our work. We need elders that are tough enough to stand up to the unlearned and ignorant, the objectors, the blind, the selfish, the stingy, and those whose eyes have been clouded with a special gospel complex, and demand that DISCIPLING THE NATIONS BE THE FIRST ORDER OF THE DAY; OF THE WORK; AND OF THE BUDGET; elders that will not wait for men to come asking for help to go, but elders that will SEE the white fields and will look for the men to send. Elders and preachers, bless your hearts, so often you are not leading in world discipling, but are actually holding back the congregation, keeping the missionaries away and closing the door of heaven to many who could be taught if we would but go. Knowing that you cannot just make money for mission work

when you don't have it, I can tell you how the church where you work can double your mission effort for a whole year in just one day. Set a day two or three months in advance for a gospel meeting on mission work. Have some outstanding missionaries come and tell of the opportunities and needs. Set a goal for a contribution on that day 20 times your usual Lord's day contribution **ALL TO BE USED FOR MISSION WORK NOT CURRENTLY BEING DONE BY THAT CONGREGATION.** Urge the brethren to buy a large High C can of fruit juice, drink the juice and let every member of the family fill that can with money looking forward to giving what they CAN for mission work on the appointed day. You will be amazed what our brethren will do when given the challenge. We recently did this in Lubbock at the Sunset congregation and took up a collection of \$91,000.00 on one day, \$85,000.00 of which was specifically for new mission work. We took up the collection in garbage cans (I wanted to take it up with wheelbarrows), and we carried the collection to the bank in a Brinks armored car. I tell you brethren, *the real need of the hour is to get our "want-to's" straightened out.* We do what we want to! We buy a house because we want to, a car because we want to, a farm because we want to, a new church building because we want to! We borrow money by the hundreds of thousands of dollars for: buildings, land, orphan homes, homes for the aged, busses and parking lots—all of which are matters of importance. But, the greatest of all the matters—the discipling of the nations—is of such little importance to most of us we would not even have a missionary speak on Sunday morning when most of the congregation is present, and if we do let him speak it is against our practice to let him take up a collection; and if we do let him take up a collection he gets to stand outside the door with a pan in his hand. All he would need would be dark glasses and a monkey to complete his picture

of a common beggar. We then add insult to injury by telling him that we are glad to help this much in "your work." Is not this really one of our main problems? We think that local work is "our work" and that mission work is the missionaries' work. World evangelism is OUR MAIN work! It is our first work, our foremost work, our biggest work! Elders and preachers take the lead, the brethren will follow!

### THE CHURCH AT HOME MUST BE STRONG

(2) In the second place the need of the hour is for strong churches at home! We desperately need preachers that will preach that old Jerusalem gospel at home as well as abroad. The old gospel of Christ is still God's power to save (Rom. 1:16). It is still the "truth that will make us free" (Jno. 8:32). We must have men that speak where the Bible speaks and are silent where the Bible is silent. We must do Bible things in Bible ways and we must call Bible things by Bible names (1 Pet. 4:11). We dare not, we must not, we cannot think of men above that which is written (1 Cor. 4:6). Men of uncertain sounds should not be allowed in the pulpits of the churches. Preachers that preach to the people of God at home or at lectures such as this must continually call men back to the word of God and the one true church for which Christ died (Acts 20:28). Abilene Christian College and the other Christian colleges of our great brotherhood were established by men who believed the Bible, they are supported by men who believe the Bible and the teachers and administrators are men who believe the Bible. They resent preachers who come to this platform and leave an uncertain sound. The board members resent it, the graduates of the school resent it and the current student body of Christians resent it. I know this is true because some of my best friends are teachers and administrators here and they resent it. Many

of my co-labourers on the mission field and in training preachers are graduates of Abilene Christian College and I am a graduate; and they resent it and I resent it. I have a son who is a student here and he resents it. I have relatives and friends who are board members and they resent it. I know preachers all across America and the world and they resent it. Therefore, I speak on behalf of Abilene Christian College—from its very capable president to the youngest Christian on the janitor's staff; I speak on behalf of the board of trustees from its chairman to the newest member of the board; I speak on behalf of the students, the graduates and friends of Abilene Christian College; I speak on behalf of the mothers and fathers who send their children here and to the other Christian Schools. You preachers that do not believe the old time gospel of Christ, you preachers that have sold out preaching the gospel for some kind of social improvement program, you preachers who preach no distinctive gospel of the New Testament, you who compromise and sell the Lord, His gospel and His church down the road to apostasy, **WE DON'T WANT YOUR GARBLED UNCERTAIN SOUND PREACHED HERE, TAUGHT HERE OR TALKED HERE.** We can never disciple all the nations if the one nearest to being discipled should lose her love for truth, for the Christ, for His church and for His word. We must be strong at home to ever be strong abroad.

### LET'S SEND OUR CHILDREN

(3) If we are going to be serious about discipling all the nations, we mothers and fathers are going to have to get tough in reference to our own children. Too long we have paid lip service to world evangelism and yet have not been willing to be hard enough on ourselves to be willing to give our own children to disciple the nations. Fathers and mothers, how many of your children will go into the mission

fields? It is only natural that all of us would like to keep all of our children within a few miles of where we live. We want our grandchildren to be able to come over often for visits. If we are not careful, we will just be like the rest of the world and carelessly drift into hell. Some of the biggest problems I have in getting people to the mission field are their mothers and fathers that cannot bear to let their children leave the country. All of the tears and crying and sobbing fits imaginable take place when some Christian parents learn of the plans of their would-be missionary children. Do we have no tears for the lost? Do we have no hurt in our hearts for the children of others? Are we so selfish and so self-centered that we really do not care about anybody or anything except ourselves? Let Jesus speak, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children and brethren and sisters yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). This passage sounds hard even when we understand in the light of a parallel passage that "hate" as here used means "to love less" (Matt. 10:37). Thus, we are to love even our own children less than we love God and His word. God gave His Son; are we willing to give ours? Millions of parents have given their children to die on some battlefield for some country that they loved, let us give ours to live and to teach and to spread the good news—to disciple the nations!

#### WE NEED TO GO OURSELVES

(4) Let's get tough enough to GO! So many of us want somebody else to do it! We don't like the heat, or we don't like the cold, we don't like the smells, the humidity, the flies, the food, the color of the people, the language, the housing, the highways, the red tape of the government, the water, the sewage, the dogs, the cows, the cars, the horses, the thieves, the liars, the corruption, the children who stare,

the women who giggle, the men who laugh. We are a nation of sissies and patsies that are afraid of anything that tastes different, looks different, feels different or smells different. We want everything that is the biggest, the longest, the shiniest, the hairiest; we want the most expensive, most elaborate, the most outstanding and the most talked about. We want things until we get them and then we want something else. We wear our clothes until about the time they are comfortable and then throw them away. We drive it till it's broken-in and swap it, we live in it till we like it and sell it to buy another, we fish it till we catch it and then leave it to others to scale and eat. We waste more, buy more, throw away more, discard more and over-eat more than any nation that ever lived. Let's get tough enough to go where it is rough. Let's get tough enough to stay long enough to teach people enough the way of the Lord, enough that they in turn will take the gospel to their own people.

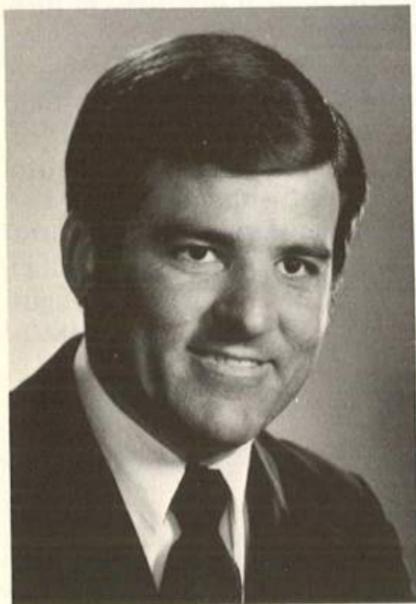
Let's get tough enough to do without some things that we would like to have in order to do our primary task of making disciples of the whole world. The field is white unto harvest, the Laborers are few, the need is desperate and the hour is late. Let's pray the Lord of the Harvest to send forth reapers and then let us help to answer that prayer by (1) Sending the light; (2) Taking the light; and (3) Being the light (Matt. 5:16). **OUR KING HAS SAID "GO . . . MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS."**

## ABILENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE LECTURES

### JESUS CALLS US

Gary Beauchamp

Gary R. Beauchamp was born in Abilene, Texas in 1942, Mr. Beauchamp has received both the Bachelor and Masters degree from Abilene Christian College. He has also studied at Baylor University. He preached for eleven years, serving congregations in Ranger, Waco and Houston, Texas. In Mr. Beauchamp's preaching career, he held over sixty gospel meetings in twelve states and appeared on five colleges' lecture programs. Mr. Beauchamp has been active in community affairs having served as a past President of Rotary, past Director of the Ranger and Waco Junior Chamber of Commerce, past Pony League President, past City Commissioner, past Head of Community Development Council, he served on the Executive Board of Directors of the Greater Houston Safety Council, the Cherokee Children's Home Board and the Advisory Board of ACC. He was nominated "Outstanding Young Men of America Award" in 1970. He received the "Fred Brown Memorial



Award" as outstanding speaker of Texas given by the Texas Jaycees in 1971. He was awarded the "Outstanding Speaker of America" award by the National Junior Chamber of Commerce in the Summer of '71. Mr. Beauchamp is Chairman of the Board of Orate, Incorporated of Houston. He is married to the former Deanna Kirk. Mrs. Beauchamp has been active as a writer of Bible school materials, an active interpreter to the deaf, taught a weekly ladies class of over one hundred ladies and lectures extensively to ladies groups. The Beauchamp's have three children, Greg, 9, and Betsy, 7, and Katie, 1.

Imagine with me for a moment—

You are sitting at your desk doing the everyday mundane tasks of your business, too full and a little drowsy after lunch; or standing at the sink looking out the same window at the same scene, doing the same dishes, bored and daydreaming; or sitting in your room typing a drawn-out research paper, exhausted from no sleep the night before. Day in, day out—the same faces, the same voices, the same chores, the same problems, the same desires and dreams.

And then the telephone rings. The voice on the other end of the wire says your name and you answer “Yes.” The voice says, “Will you hold please for a call from the Governor”; or “This is the White House, will you hold for the President?”

Try to imagine your emotions of that moment—Surprise? Shock? Anticipation? “What can this mean? What can I expect?” Then excitement and following in rapid succession—fear, “What have I done, what will I say? What will I do?”

Few of us in this vast audience tonight will ever hope to expect such a call in our lifetime. But I have a message for you tonight more incredulous and more poignant than any such you could dream of in your wildest imaginings. I can tell you with all certainty that tonight, this very moment—Jesus calls you!!

He calls you. The one Who was from the beginning with God,

“He who laid the foundation of the earth, Who

determined its measurements, Who stretched the line upon it, Who sunk its bases, laid its cornerstone. He Who shut in the sea with doors, when it burst forth from the womb, who made clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band. He Who Commanded the morning since your days began and caused the dawn to know its place; He Who has entered the storehouses of the snow and the hail; Who has cleft a channel for the torrents of rain and a way for the thunderbolt to bring rain on a land and make the ground put forth grass. He Who gives the horse his might who clothes his neck with strength, who commands the eagle to mount up and make his nest on high; He Who has an arm like God and can thunder with a voice, Who is decked with majesty and dignity, clothed with glory and splendor. Upon earth there is not His like, a creature without fear, He beholds everything that is high, He is king over all the sons of men." (Paraphrased from Job 38-42) He calls you!

He who left the beauty, splendor, and comfort of His heavenly home to be born and dwell on an ungrateful earth among despicable men, to be abused, bruised, spat upon, and—crucified, He calls you.

The magnitude, power, and honor of this call, now 1974 years old, should have so overwhelmed the world, that by now every mouth should join in one great chorus of praise; every eye be raised heavenward in prayers of thanksgiving; every heart should be filled and overflowing with gratitude for His constant care. Yet quite the opposite is true. In fact, the vast majority of the world doesn't even know the Jesus who calls you. To narrow this further,—the majority of Americans, while perhaps knowing the name of Jesus do not believe in Him, have not obeyed Him, can not hear the voice of that most powerful King Who calls. To narrow this even further, I fear we have many in our own brotherhood who, while professing to believe, obey, and live for Jesus, have in

fact largely closed their ears to His call. Can you believe it? Can you imagine responding to that omnipotent call with a no answer, or worse—a busy signal. Yet, my brethren, I am tonight trying to warn you that our fellowship is suffering from a chronic state of deafness that is weakening our influence, sapping our spirituality, and damning our souls.

Now it is one thing to perceive the problem and quite another to diagnose the cause and prescribe the cure. In this, as with all problems, there are a multiplicity of vast and varied causes, but I wish tonight to center our minds on what is perhaps the main source of our problem.

Paradoxically, I believe—are you ready—the major cause of our dilemma is in truth the affluence of our Church. What irony that that of which we have long dreamed and consider our greatest blessing in the Church today may well be the albatross of our plight.

This affluence is, of course, a by-product of the age in which we live. Future historians will probably characterize this generation as the Great Society of the Expanding Economy, an economy that has provided us with an abundance never before enjoyed by any people: cars, airplanes, bathtubs, telephones, television—the problem is not in beginning but ending the list. Our times are unequaled by any past civilization. The spirit of the age is well characterized by the experience of the Texas Bible teacher who attempted to get her class to sign purpose cards. Whereas most of them put down a dime a week, one lad turned his in with one hundred dollars a week. The teacher promptly called on his parents and explained that she knew that children often made mistakes in such matters, but the parents returned, “Oh, no. It’s quite all right. We teach him to tithe.”

Ours is an age in which we preachers can call on the people to sacrifice because we drive two cars instead of three, one of them non-airconditioned. It is an age in which each member of the family can come to worship in a different car—you see, one of our major church problems is how to provide ample parking space. We deny ourselves by watching one black and white television instead of two color sets. I must confess that this is the type of sacrificing in which I like best to participate. This is like the spinster who was reminded that there is a man for every woman and you can't improve on that. She replied, "I don't want to improve on it, I just want to get in on it."

The church has shared this prosperity. From congregations with contributions of ten to twenty dollars per Sunday, we have moved to many with multiples of thousands of dollars per Sunday. We have budgets running into impressive figures, and name what you want, with persuasion, the money can be forthcoming.

This affluence has placed at our disposal tremendous power to accomplish great things. We have exchanged one-room type buildings with middle-room stoves, for semi-cathedrals. We can and are planning and carrying through church building projects well over the one million dollar figure in cost.

The part-time preacher who made his living at secular work has given way to the church staff which may include the preacher and his associate, a song leader, an educational director, a youth worker, a personal work minister, a bus minister, and a corps of secretaries. The reason we do not have larger staffs is not money, but that we cannot find the personnel. Gone is the preacher's family who was a marvel at

making ends meet—the man whom the Lord kept humble while the brethren kept him poor.

“This is an age in which we can realistically talk of new periodicals, world television coverage, world radio, direct mailing, and free correspondence courses. This is a wonderful time to be alive. Who could ever have dreamed that such resources could have come to be controlled by those who love the Lord?”<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, as R. P. Marshall has said,

“It is an interesting fact that a depression never hurts religion so much as a boom. Losing your money can make you tighten your hold on God, but the man who owns a yacht and a million-dollar estate may begin to think that he has no need of divine aid . . . ”<sup>2</sup>

I am afraid that what Mr. Marshall says has come true. Let us look at some things our affluence has done to us. It is said that one of the popes was showing a guest through St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome. While seeing its splendors, the pope commented, “No longer can Peter say, ‘silver and gold have I none.’” The guest returned, “Neither can he say, ‘In the name of Jesus rise up and walk.’” Affluence has furnished us great resources, but in so doing has exacted its “pound of flesh” in toll.

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis, Jack P., Lecture: “Affluence in the Church”.

<sup>2</sup> Marshall, R. P., *Christian Advocate*.

### AFFLUENCE HAS CHANGED OUR POSITION.

We have become accustomed to supposing that we hold the center of the stage of life. By trusting in our own resources we may have banished Jesus into the wings. Like Laodicea, we are the more likely to consider that we are rich and in need of nothing. We add house to house, and field to field. Good food, better homes, more leisure, speed boats, cottages on the lake, a pool on the patio, and distant vacations are the real center of our striving. A preacher recently said, while discussing his plans for a program, "It's not money that is holding us up. Our people have more money than they have religion."

We are a people at ease in Zion, as Amos described (Amos 6). Ezekiel raised the question of why Sodom was destroyed and replied that it was "pride, surplus of goods, and prosperous ease" that brought her doom (Ezek. 16:49). The age-old danger of materialism was warned against by Moses:

"And when the Lord your God brings you into the land which he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you, with great and goodly cities, which you did not build, and houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, and cisterns hewn out, which you did not hew, and vineyards and olive trees, which you did not plant, and when you eat and are full, then take heed lest you forget the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." (Deut. 6:10-12)

Solomon waxed wealthy and forgot God. The rich fool tore down his barns and built larger ones, but left out God.

We sometimes wonder why we don't feel as close to Jesus as we ought. Who moved? It wasn't Jesus; He is and

always will be centerstage in every walk of life. If someone has moved into the dark wings of your life, it isn't Jesus, it is you. The amazing fact is that Jesus stands there beckoning to us to share life with Him, make room for Him in our personalities. He takes this call seriously, so seriously, that He didn't send holy men, messengers, or angels to pass it on. He came himself.<sup>3</sup> If Jesus' call has not been heeded, it is because I stand in the way. My pride, my self-assurance, my accomplishments—these must all be sublimated to His way, my assurance in Him, His accomplishments through me.

#### AFFLUENCE HAS CHANGED OUR MESSAGE.

This is not the day of the steam-rolling super-salesman, the promoter, the high-level advertiser. Gone is the pressure-packed, coercion tactics in the business world. It is very unwise to oversell, marketing personnel advise. An insurance salesman today is not there to "sell you insurance," he is available as your friend who "helps you buy."

This has affected our thinking in the Church also. Unconsciously we are accommodating ourselves to the society and conditions about us: the "soft-sell"—don't make many demands, we might lose the prospect. It is more comfortable to be all things to all men, to be their compadre, and hope they will ask me about my Saviour, His Church, and how they can become a member of it.

An Englishman once asked a Saudi Arabian visitor to Britain, "You have been here a month, what do you think of our TV?"

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<sup>3</sup> Green, Michael, *Jesus Spells Freedom*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1972), pp. 103-105.

"It's almost perfect," replied the Arabian gentleman. "The good men beat the bad men in almost every program. All you must work on now is the news."<sup>4</sup> That might be said of us. Trying to be "good guys" to everyone, we forget to work on the News. The Gospel is powerful in its entirety. The good news is that Jesus came and died, to remove our sins, *when* we believe and obey His conditions. The early Church was militant in spreading that message. "The Church seems unable to endure freedom and prosperity. With its wealth, its power, and its ambition, its militancy for God's truth disappears."<sup>5</sup>

I love to listen to the eloquence of Billy Graham. He can tell a convincing story. But it chills me to watch him stand before one million men on the other side of the earth, and lead them to the brink of salvation and stop short of the message. To assume the world will be saved when we show the beautiful promise of eternal life stripped of its requirements is to commit the world to death.

We cannot sell the Gospel short. We must listen to the call of Jesus, "Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you . . ." (Matt. 28:20. "Why call ye me Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46).

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<sup>4</sup> Droke, Maxwell, Ed., *The Christian Leader's Golden Treasury*, (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1955), p. 74.

<sup>5</sup> Benson, George S., "The Militant Church in a Free Society," (*World Radio News*, October, 1973), p. 2.

## AFFLUENCE HAS CHANGED OUR TARGET.

Money has moved us out of the city to the suburbs. We have never been successful in converting any sizeable number of rich people; but our prosperity encourages the development of a gulf to separate us from the poor. The man of low degree is not comfortable with us, nor we with him. Our clothing, cars, homes, etc., separate us from him. We have created a system of catering to the successful. Preachers find it hard not to act as James 2:2 describes. The poor resent the rich. The rich expect to be heard because of what they put in the program. I realize there are lost rich men, but I wonder at our motivation. "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward *all* men" (I Thess. 3:12).

We have lost any real communication of spirit with the man in sin. Around us there are seas of faces whose names we do not know and will not know. We shy away from the rank sinners—the thief, the drunk, and the harlot. Relationships become more and more impersonal. Would you believe that in cities of tens of thousands the plaintiff cry of our people is, "I don't know anyone who is not a Christian."

Jesus warned of the dangers of this in His parable in Luke 14:15-23. A great man gave a banquet and invited all his influential friends, but they all began to make excuse. In modern-day excuse-making, it would go something like this:

"I would love to come to Church with you Sunday, but I have this tremendous land-deal, and closing date is Monday, so you understand, I need to spend all day Sunday wrapping it up."

"I'm sorry I can't participate in that campaign this

Saturday. We recently purchased several head of Black-Angus cattle, and with beef prices what they are, I need to go and check to make sure everything is all right."

"I'd love to help with the Gospel meeting, but my wife has been hounding me to get her out of town, and we planned a cruise that week. She'd never forgive me if I changed that now. You understand."

So the great man told his servants, "Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city and bring in the poor and maimed, the blind and the lame, that my house may be filled."

Another prime example of the dulling power of affluence is seen in the experience of the rich young ruler. He was offered the Divine Call in a special individual way. He wanted to obey, but Jesus touched him at a critical spot, "Go, sell all that thou hast . . . And the young man turned and went on his way sorrowing, for he had great possessions" (Matt. 19:16-22). His affluence deafened his ears to Jesus' call.

The bus ministries are a great innovation of our day to bring children and adults alike to Bible study. I think I am safe in saying that every bus minister will tell you that their highest concentration of interest comes from the lower stratum of the population. Why? Perhaps it is their lack of affluence that has opened their ears to the call of Jesus. The rich today upon hearing the claims of Jesus say "hallelujah;" the poor cry out "HALLELUJAH!"

Our target must be the souls of men, not their pocket-books. We must reach the souls of men and tell the story

where it will be received, wherever that will lead us.

### AFFLUENCE HAS CHANGED OUR METHODS.

Nothing is impossible for us today in the realm of aids for teaching. We have television shows, campaign plans, personal evangelism kits, and various other gadgets to spread the Gospel. We are more than willing to finance and turn over to Herald of Truth, World Radio, direct mailing, correspondence courses, or periodicals the task of reaching the lost man. Having provided these great things, we feel we have discharged our task.

With all these methods we do not need to have a good personal grasp of Scripture. The experts take care of that. I have often heard a brother say, "I had a discussion with my neighbor last night. He brought up this subject. 'Say, what do we believe about that?'" We are neglecting the admonition, "Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account for the hope that is in you . . ." (I Peter 3:15). We must do more than study up on schemes and better methods, we must return to the method given by the Master Teacher, personal—heart to heart teaching.

I do not say this to be knocking the Herald of Truth, or World Radio, or our brotherhood periodicals. May God richly bless each as they serve a great purpose. We must not, however, become so dependent on these things that our affluence permits, that we slack off the real task of reaching lost men with the Gospel.

I am not a military man, but I understand that if you want to take any territory, you can pulverize it with shells, you can bomb it to pieces, but despite the destructive power of all these, you must finally send in the slogging footsoldier

if you want to take it and hold it. Impersonal methods just won't do it; they will never impress a heart with the love, the urgency of the call of Jesus, like the love and caring of one man who will share his salvation with another.

We are caught in the web of affluence, and it is not realistic to suppose that we can or want to escape from it. Nor am I speaking of these things as one on the outside looking in. It is all a part of us. It is not a realistic approach to the problem of affluence to think that we would or could take personally the advice given by Jesus to the rich young ruler: "Go sell what you have and give to the poor and come follow me." But having noticed its dangers, perhaps we are in a better position to make the best of the problems that face us, and to hear more clearly the call of Jesus.

#### TO WHAT IS HE CALLING?

Look around you tonight. You are surrounded by the cream of the congregations: preachers, elders, deacons, missionaries, Bible teachers. Everyone in attendance is here because he is vitally interested in this program. It would be useless for me to stand here and deliver the usual lesson on commitment; you are committed; you are dedicated; it's useless to attempt to draw you closer to the Master, you are here because of your close relationship with Him.

I am giving this message to you because you are today's key-link between God and man, and this is the one thing our affluence cannot buy. In every age God needed key people to bring His message to the world: Abraham, Moses, Peter, Paul—they all heard a call. The result of their hearing was action, courage, and determination to convince men that the words of Jesus are true, His ways are just, His salvation is

sure. Today Jesus needs you and He calls you. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (I Peter 2:21).

### HE CALLS US TO BE RICH IN GOOD WORKS.

"As for the rich in this world, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on uncertain riches but on God who richly furnishes us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good deeds, liberal and generous, thus laying up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life which is life indeed." (I Tim. 6:17-19)

We must remember that Jesus won victory without money or position. When his disciples talked to him of power and urged him to use his power to establish an earthly kingdom, He answered in terms of service. He wanted us to understand that the criterion for God's victory is not in things, but in actions. "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this; to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world" (James 1:26). "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only . . ." (James 1:22). Imitate Christ who "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38). If my Lord could win heaven for me without any of the material means which we count so extremely important, surely I can learn from Him that my faith and trust must be placed in treasures in heavenly places.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Johnson, Ashley S., *Life of Trust*, (Dallas: Eugene S. Smith, 1949), pp. 23-34.

HE CALLS US TO NOT CONFUSE WHAT WE HAVE WITH WHAT WE ARE.

Spiritual life is not to be evaluated in the sharpness with which one can fill the job at which he labors for his daily bread; nor is there any relationship between the ability to acquire and enjoy the good things of the Great Society, and life in the Lord. The success of the church is neither its bigness nor its smallness, but in the basic goodness it brings about in the lives of its people.

Jesus teaches that a man's life is not in the abundance of the things he possesses. Paul's work was not built on the almighty dollar. It was built on sharpening the ears of his hearers to the continuing call of Jesus.

HE CALLS US TO EXPERIENCE A KEENER PAIN AT THE LOSTNESS OF MEN.

How apathetic we become when viewing another's sin. We dare not! If sin mattered so much to God that He let His very Son die to save men from that sin, it must matter to us. Jesus calls you to take up His burden, put your shoulder beneath it and enter the fellowship of His suffering.

Sharing that burden, I cannot be selfish, unloving, or impure; for by so doing, I am striking a blow in the face of my Saviour. If I am not willing to take Jesus to lost men, I am condemning their souls, making His death and this burden futile. Take up the cross of Jesus and if that burden doesn't make you want to change the world in His name and for His sake, nothing else will.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Weatherhead, Leslie D., *Discipleship*, (New York: Abingdon Press, 1934), pp. 139-146.

### HE CALLS YOU TO SURRENDER YOUR LIFE.

Can you imagine Abraham answering God's call partially? Listen to the words of Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God . . ." (Gal. 2:20). Can you imagine this Paul giving his life to God only on Sundays and Wednesday nights; No, because their call was for a life of surrender. This meant to them that they yielded their thoughts and actions to God's will. They moved where He moved and spoke where He spoke. Because of their complete lives, a nation of God's people was born, and the Gospel was spread to the corners of the world.

Is the need for surrendered lives any less today? By all means no! God's work will never be finished if only part of our lives are committed to him. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1).

We must be God's people when we rise up till we lie down. At home, at the office, at the store, on the highway, in the neighborhood, at the ballpark, wherever we go, in every way, we must portray Jesus to all we meet.

Though we are caught in a web from which we cannot extricate ourselves, we can use the affluence we enjoy to carry out good works, to take Jesus' message of salvation to *all* men, to surrender our lives and belongings to Him.

Jesus calls you, He alone has the right to claim your life, He bought it with the precious price of His blood. He does not claim it by force, He merely calls you. What will you answer?

## THE DISCIPLE'S LORD

Dan Anders

Born in Dallas, Texas in 1936, Dan Anders grew up at suburban Seagoville. He obeyed the gospel there at the age of 12, and preached his first sermon one week later at an area youth meeting. He held his first evangelistic meeting while a high school junior, and began preaching each Sunday at Scurry, Texas, his senior year. He continued to preach for the Scurry church throughout college.

Mr. Anders graduated *magna cum laude* from Abilene Christian College in 1958. While a student he won the J. D. Thomas Bible Reading Contest and the James F. Cox Extempore Speaking Contest. After graduation he made a 36,000 mile world mission tour with E. W. McMillan. Having done graduate work at ACC and Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology, he earned the Master of Divinity degree at Fuller Theological Seminary in 1969.



His full time preaching ministries include the Graham Street church in Stephenville, Texas, (1961-65), and El Monte, California, (1965-69). Since 1969 he has served the Central congregation in Houston.

Mr. Anders was married to Judy Snow of Dallas in 1963. They have two daughters, Leigh Ann (8) and Lara (5).

He has preached in more than 100 gospel meetings, and appeared on lecture programs at ACC, Fort Worth Christian College, and Pepperdine University. He writes on the staff of 20th CENTURY

CHRISTIAN, and served previously on the POWER FOR TODAY staff. In Houston Mr. Anders is on the sustaining board of Christian Child Help Foundation, and is an active member of the Rotary Club of Houston.

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“But in your hearts reverence Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and reverence” (1 Peter 3:15).

We are here dealing with the very throbbing heart of discipleship. This is the crux of the matter: the relationship of the follower to his leader. If indeed we reverence the proper One as Lord of our lives all else falls into place. Until that matter is settled nothing else does matter. Our aim, then, is to explore again this fundamental of all fundamentals. We must understand who is Lord, and why, and what that means for our daily lives. All those questions are answered in principle if we grasp the true significance of our confession “Jesus is Lord.”

Let us begin right there. The core of Christian discipleship is in the confessed conviction that Jesus is Lord. “Because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. . . . For, ‘every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved’ ” (Rom. 10:9, 13). Verbal acknowledgment of one’s inner conviction that Jesus is Lord is the starting point of a new relationship with God. It is essential to confess that Jesus is the Son of God (1 Jn. 4:15), and even that he has come in the flesh (1 Jn. 4:2). But there must also be the related acknowledgment that Jesus is Lord. Paul is

sure that a sincere confession of the lordship of Jesus demonstrates that the confessor is motivated by the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3).

This confession is crucial because it is both the center and the circumference of the Christian faith. It is the center, the starting-point of the Christian life, because it is central to the Christian proclamation. "For what we preach is . . . Jesus Christ as Lord . . ." (2 Cor. 4:5). This is the essential Christian message. The lordship of Jesus is the circumference of our faith because it provides the guideline for all the instruction we receive. "As therefore you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so live in him . . . just as you were taught . . ." (Col. 2:6, 7).

"Jesus is Lord" is the indispensable creed, the core of all evangelistic proclamation, and the basis of all Christian teaching.<sup>2</sup> What, then, do we mean when we confess "Jesus is Lord?"

For one thing, the confession that Jesus is Lord means

### JESUS IS THE DISCIPLE'S MASTER

This fact is the bedrock of the Lord-disciple relationship.

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<sup>1</sup> George Eldon Ladd, *The Theology of the New Testament* (Pasadena, California: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1962), ch. XXX, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Vernon H. Neufeld, *The Earliest Christian Confessions* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1963), p. 68.

It is in fact the root idea involved in lordship. The earliest uses of the noun "lord" in Greek literature refer to the owner of a slave and to the legal guardian of a woman. The obvious meaning is that the lord has total authority over the other person. A lord has the right of disposal. He has absolute rights over someone or something.<sup>3</sup> At the simplest level the acknowledgment "Jesus is Lord" means he is the full master of our lives. This recognition of Jesus' authority is of course grounded in the gospel records themselves.

Jesus clearly assumed the position of Master in relation to his disciples. The call of Jesus to his initial followers rings with imperious tones: "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men" (Mk. 1:17). No explanation is offered; no rationale given. Just a clear straightforward summons, presuming that he had every right to issue it.

The teachings of Jesus echo that same theme of rightful authority. "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master; it is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the slave like his master . . ." (Mt. 10:24, 25). The same saying about the master and his slave is set in the Fourth Gospel in the scene of the last supper. There Jesus uses it to remind the apostles of their obligation to serve one another, even as their Master had served them (Jn. 13:12-17). Examples of this lordly instruction by Jesus could obviously be multiplied. These brief references are adequate to indicate that Jesus' followers had reason during the days of his earthly ministry to regard him as their Lord.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Werner Foerster, "Kurios," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Gerhard Kittel (ed.), Geoffrey W. Bromiley (trans.). (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1965), III, 1042-45.

<sup>4</sup> Alan Richardson, *An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1958), p. 154.

Scholarly opinion is divided as to what extent Jesus' disciples actually called him "Lord" during his ministry. Now any reader of the gospels can quickly determine that in them Jesus is frequently called by the title. Luke's narrative calls Jesus "the Lord" thirteen times, and John uses it five.<sup>5</sup> Most of these instances are in narrative and, therefore, could fairly be said to reflect the writer's post-resurrection faith. In addition, Jesus was sometimes directly saluted by others as "Lord." But the exact force of the word, and the precise understanding the speakers had is not always easy to determine. Some scholars see the vocative "Lord" as a simple greeting of courteous respect without real significance theologically.<sup>6</sup> Others, while feeling that it was used rarely and primarily as an equivalent of "rabbi" or "teacher," still feel it paved the way for later theological usage.<sup>7</sup>

There is one extremely important piece of evidence that the title "Lord" was applied to Jesus in the very earliest times. I refer to Paul's passing use of the Aramaic expression *Maranatha* in 1 Cor. 16:22. It is unnecessary here to analyze the alternative pointings and syllabification that the Aramaic

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<sup>5</sup> Foerster, *op. cit.*, p. 1093.

<sup>6</sup> F. F. Bruce, "Jesus Is Lord," *Soli Deo Gloria, Festschrift for William Childs Robinson*. J. McDowell Richards (ed.). (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1968), p. 26.

Oscar Cullman, *The Christology of the New Testament*. Revised Edition. Shirley C. Guthrie and Charles A. M. Hall (trans.). (Philadelphia: Westminster Press), p. 196.

<sup>7</sup> Foerster, *loc. cit.*

Reginald H. Fuller, *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1954), p. 112.

original could have taken. The arguments seem convincing to me that interpret *Maranatha* as a prayer for Jesus' presence (either in the observance of the Lord's Supper, or at his Second Coming).<sup>8</sup> In it the early Christians prayed "Our Lord, come!" That this is the correct view of the word's meaning is corroborated by the similar prayer which John breathes at the close of Revelation, "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20). It is altogether probable that John had the earlier *Maranatha* clearly in mind.

Needless to say, liberal scholarship has questioned the impact of the evidence from *Maranatha*. At least as long as 60 years ago, Wilhelm Bousset argued that the term need not have originated in Palestine or in the earliest Christian movement, but that it could have sprung up in a Hellenistic congregation like Antioch.<sup>9</sup> While disagreeing with Bousset as to the place of origin for *Maranatha*, Rudolf Bultmann denies that it referred originally to Jesus. He avers (with no supporting documentation) that it originally could have been addressed to God the Father, rather than to Jesus.<sup>10</sup>

Intriguing as these aberrant views may be, the weight of evidence is against them. There is no good ground for ques-

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<sup>8</sup> See the excellent discussions in Cullman, *op. cit.*, pp. 209-214, and in

K. G. Kuhn, "Maranatha," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, IV, pp. 466-472.

<sup>9</sup> Wilhelm Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*. John E. Steely (trans.). (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), p. 129.

<sup>10</sup> Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*. Kendrick Grobel (trans.). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), I, p. 52.

tioning that *Maranatha* originated in Palestine at a very early date. That Paul quotes the formula to the Greek-speaking Corinthian church indicates that it must have arisen in a setting where Aramaic was the principal language, not in bilingual Antioch.<sup>11</sup> The fact that "the Lord" was being used so frequently of Jesus as early as Paul's Thessalonian correspondence (i.e., c. A.D. 51) is proof that it must have originated much earlier, probably in the first decade of Christianity.<sup>12</sup> Certainly Professor Bultmann's argument that *Maranatha* may have referred to God has little to commend it. Primitive Christian eschatology anticipated the return of Jesus Christ (Acts 3:20; 1 Thess. 4:16). So it is all but impossible that they would have prayed "Our Lord, come!" to anyone but Jesus himself.<sup>13</sup>

The evidence is as nearly conclusive as is possible: at a very early date the original followers of Jesus knew him to be their Lord. They confessed him as their sovereign Authority, they followed him as their Leader. But why?

We have already examined briefly the fact that Jesus spoke authoritatively, that he behaved in a lordly fashion. But is there a deeper reason than that why his followers would confess his lordship over their lives? Indeed there is.

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<sup>11</sup> Kuhn, *op. cit.*, pp. 470, 471.

<sup>12</sup> Vincent Taylor, *The Names of Jesus*. (London: MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1953), p. 47.

<sup>13</sup> Fuller, *loc. cit.*

Jesus himself not only spoke authoritatively, he even used the word "Lord" to describe himself. During the last days of his ministry in Jerusalem Jesus climaxed a series of conflicts with the religious establishment with these words:

And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, "How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? David himself, inspired by the Holy Spirit, declared, 'The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, till I put thy enemies under thy feet.' David himself calls him Lord; so how is he his son?"

(Mk. 12:35-37)

Jesus taught that the Messiah (who was clearly to be of Davidic lineage) was more than David's son. He was also David's Lord!

Again it is hardly surprising that radically liberal writers have denied these words to Jesus or have tried to interpret them as to have some meaning other than their simplest import. Bousset held that the whole section has the flavor of incipient church dogmatics, that it reflects the theology of the church, not the words of Jesus.<sup>14</sup> According to this viewpoint, the church retold the stories of Jesus in terms of its own situation. It was natural then that words which really more precisely described the church's opposition to and by orthodox Judaism would have come to be attributed to Jesus.<sup>15</sup> With these presuppositions it is understandable that

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<sup>14</sup> Bousset, *op. cit.*, pp. 35, 81.

<sup>15</sup> Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word*. Louise Pettibone Smith and Erminie Huntress Lantero. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 125. (trans).

one could directly deny that Jesus proclaimed his own lordship.<sup>16</sup>

But the other side of the coin must be considered too. There is no inherent reason that these words could not have been spoken by Jesus. In fact they can hardly credibly be assigned to anyone but him.<sup>17</sup>

Their setting is very much like the other conflict-stories in the gospels, only it would appear that the opening question was lost in the oral tradition period.<sup>18</sup> The type of argument that Jesus presents is in keeping with his other encounters with rabbinic authorities. Here he employs a haggadic antinomy in which two seemingly contradictory ideas are debated.<sup>19</sup> Then there is the fact that the whole argument is deliberately allusive. The whole argument fits easily into the idea of the Messianic secret as developed in Mark's gospel. This allusive statement half-reveals and half-conceals the true identity of Jesus.<sup>20</sup> Finally, unless Jesus himself spoke these words how else can one account for the fundamental place they occupy in the early church's

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<sup>16</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus—God and Man*. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Pribe (trans.). (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), p. 365.

<sup>17</sup> Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*. (London: MacMillan and Co., Limited, 1969), p. 493.

<sup>18</sup> C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*. (Cambridge: University Press, 1966), p. 381.

<sup>19</sup> Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*. John Bowden (trans.). (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971). p. 259.

<sup>20</sup> Taylor, *loc. cit.*

preaching?<sup>21</sup> Psalm 110:1, quoted here by Jesus, is the Old Testament text most often quoted in the New Testament. What other authority but the very voice of Jesus could have so influenced the church as to make this text its favorite testimony to his lordship? Surely the confession "Jesus is Lord" is based on Jesus' own claim.

What shall we say of the implication of these words? Their impact is obvious. Jesus' imperative demands, his dominical instructions, his own claim to lordship imply that we owe him full obedience. No command of his is optional. If we confess him as Lord, it inevitably follows that our wills must be completely surrendered to his. Jesus' penetrating question still pricks: "Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?" (Lk. 6:46).

Still, as our study has already hinted, there is more to say. To confess "Jesus is Lord" means that

### JESUS IS THE DISCIPLE'S GOD

The seed of recognition that Jesus was divine was being sown every time the word "lord" was used. Granted that at first it may not have carried that full theological weight, the fact remains that this was pre-eminently God's own title.

You are already familiar with the datum that the God of Israel is known in the Old Testament by name. In com-

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<sup>21</sup> C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, Limited, 1963), p. 15.

missioning Moses to deliver the Israelites from Egyptian slavery God revealed his name (Ex. 6:1ff.). We have it in our Hebrew Bible as four letters, YHWH. Probably the correct vocalization is Yahweh. This was God's covenant name in Israel. That name occurs 5,321 times in the Old Testament.<sup>22</sup>

It is also generally known that Judaism developed the notion that Yahweh was too sacred to be pronounced. In superstitious reverence for the word itself, they refused to say it. Instead, when they came upon YHWH in their Bibles they regularly substituted another Hebrew word, *adonay*, which is normally translated as "lord." This practice is preserved in most of our English Old Testament translations. Both the King James Version and the Revised Standard Version normally use "the LORD" every time the name Yahweh occurs.

In Jesus' day, therefore, the Jews had been long accustomed to calling their God by the title "Lord." This becomes even more significant for the New Testament when one remembers that the main Bible of Jesus' day was not the Hebrew text, but the Greek version normally known as the Septuagint. In the Septuagint, wherever YHWH occurs, the translators used the Greek word *kurios*. Some 6,156 times the Greek Old Testament calls Yahweh *kurios*.<sup>23</sup> When a first-century Jew heard the word "lord" he would have thought instinctively of Israel's God. Against this Old Testament background Jesus was called "Lord."

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<sup>22</sup> Foerster, *op. cit.*, p. 1067.

<sup>23</sup> Foerster, *op. cit.*, p. 1059.

This rather apparent fact has also been denied in liberal circles. Bousset held that Jesus came to be called "Lord" in the context of Christian worship. As the community came to worship Jesus they began to acknowledge him as Lord. Of course he argued that this transition occurred only in Hellenistic communities. These Greek-speaking churches called Jesus "Lord," not in imitation of the Old Testament but in imitation of the Hellenistic religious sects who called their gods "lords."<sup>24</sup>

It is unnecessary to deny that the Hellenistic vocabulary was influential in the early church. Christian evangelists freely used its terminology, filled with new meaning, to communicate their gospel. The word "lord" was ready-made to describe what Christians believed about Jesus. But they got the word from reading their own Bible, not from the mystery religions around them.<sup>25</sup>

Whatever ambiguity there may have been in the disciples' calling Jesus "Lord" during his earthly ministry, all that was forever settled by the unique event of the resurrection. It "designated (him) Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 1:4).

Tied closely to the resurrection in early Christian preaching was Jesus' exaltation—his ascension to the right

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<sup>24</sup> Bousset, *op. cit.*, 134, 136, 146, 147.

Cf. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, I, p. 124.

<sup>25</sup> James S. Stewart, *A Man in Christ*. (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, n.d.), p. 74.

hand of the Father, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Because of these intimately related events Peter could say on Pentecost "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36). It was all part of a package: Jesus had performed divine deeds during his earthly ministry, and had spoken in lordly fashion. Now God had raised him from the dead, exalted him to glory, and poured out the Holy Spirit. What else could sensible men do but say "Jesus is Lord?" He is divine!

All this is magnificently focused in one of the New Testament's sublimest passages, Philippians 2:5-11. Here Paul uses gloriously familiar words to recount the salvation history revealed in Jesus.<sup>26</sup>

This is not the place for a detailed exposition of this classic text. However three significant points should be briefly noted.

(1) Jesus shared equality with God in his pre-existent state. He was in the very form of God, on an equality with God. The Jewish leaders had understood his claim. They had accused him of blasphemously making himself equal with God by calling God his Father (Jn. 5:18).

(2) Jesus willingly sacrificed the advantages of his Godhood by becoming a man, and living a life of faithful obedience even to death by crucifixion. This does not mean

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<sup>26</sup> For a thorough discussion of the view that Paul is quoting a Christian hymn, see Ralph P. Martin, *Carmen Christi*. (Cambridge: University Press, 1967), pp. 17-62.

that the incarnate Jesus stopped being God. Rather he refused to exploit his divine mode of being; he voluntarily changed his mode of being while the divine essence remained within his human form.<sup>27</sup>

(3) Because of this self-humiliation God has super-exalted Jesus. He has bestowed on him the name above all others to which every spirit in the cosmos must ultimately bow. Of course, bestowing the title implies conferring the full authority that goes with it.<sup>28</sup> What is that supreme title of total power which God has conferred on the man Christ Jesus? It can only be the title "Lord." It is the highest name because God's very essence is in it. God has given Jesus his own name.<sup>29</sup> For all practical purposes Jesus is now identified with Yahweh. He shares the very glory of God.<sup>30</sup> For this reason New Testament writers do not hesitate to

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<sup>27</sup> Albrecht Oepke, "Kenoō," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, III, p. 661.

For theological critiques of kenotic theories of the incarnation see

Donald M. Baillie, *God Was in Christ* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), pp. 94-132.

P. T. Forsyth, *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, n.d.), pp. 293-320.

<sup>28</sup> F. W. Beare, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians*. (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1969), p. 86.

<sup>29</sup> Hans Bietenhard, "Onoma," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, V, p. 273.

<sup>30</sup> Bruce, *op. cit.*, pp. 35, 36.

lavish on Jesus the very attributes of God.<sup>31</sup> The sincere acknowledgment of Jesus as Lord is to say with the believing Thomas "My Lord and my God!" (Jn. 20:28).

What does all this mean to us? What are its practical applications to life? At least two simple but profound things.

The Lord Jesus is worthy of our worship. One with the Father, he deserves our devoted praise.

The early Christian confessions . . . in short formulae for confession of faith or sermon, in hymns and prayers . . . all give this Jesus of Nazareth a name of honour: Christ (Messiah), Son of David, Son of God, Son of man, Lord, and call him in this way the bringer of eternal salvation.<sup>32</sup>

What was true for first-century Christians should be no less true for twentieth-century Christians. We owe our Lord the adoring homage of our whole self. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name!" (Ps. 103:1).

Also, the Lord Jesus is worthy of our discipleship. He deserves to be followed. It is almost impertinent glibly to say "Follow Jesus" in the context of Philippians 2! "Follow Jesus" who was so humble, so serving, so obedient? That indeed is the summons. We are to show by our dealings with

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<sup>31</sup> They especially quote OT texts referring them to Jesus. See Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 33 and Cullmann, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

<sup>32</sup> Gunther Bornkamm, *Jesus of Nazareth*. Irene and Fraser McLuskey with James M. Robinson (trans.). (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1960), pp. 188, 189.

each other that we are in fact living in Christ Jesus.<sup>33</sup> Dare we call Jesus our Lord unless we wear his towel of service, bear his cross of obedience?

One thing remains to be said. The confession that Jesus is Lord means

### JESUS IS THE DISCIPLE'S KING

We have noted the use of "lord" in Old Testament monotheism and Hellenistic polytheism. One other background of the title sheds light on Jesus' sovereignty over us.

"Lord" became even by the end of the first century a title for the Roman emperor. Apparently the practice began in Greek-speaking Egypt during the first century B.C. From there it spread. Augustus, Herod the Great, and Herod Agrippa I and II are called *kurios*. From the time of Nero it was increasingly used by the Roman Caesar (cf. Acts 25:26). By the close of the first century A.D., Domitian was requiring the address *dominus et deus noster*, "our lord and god."<sup>34</sup>

Caesar or Christ? Who was Lord? The Christians knew, and there could be no compromise. They had "another king, Jesus" (Acts 17:7). Their confession of Jesus as Lord

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<sup>33</sup> Fred B. Craddock, *The Pre-Existence of Christ in the New Testament*. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968, p. 110.

<sup>34</sup> Foerster, *op. cit.*, pp. 1049-1057.

acknowledged that the whole created order was subject to their King (Phil. 2:10, 11; cf. Col. 1:16; 2:15; 1 Cor. 15:24, 25).

Recognizing as they did the full lordship of Jesus Christ, the early Christians realized that the church was the center of his operations. Spatially and temporally, the church is coextensive with the kingly reign of Christ. Through the church God's rule is extended to all the world.<sup>35</sup>

So mission becomes a prime concern of God's people. If Jesus is Lord, and the church is the agency that extends his rule, the church must announce his lordship over all creation.<sup>36</sup> The manifold wisdom of God exhibited in the despoiling of heavenly principalities and powers by Jesus' resurrection and exaltation (Eph. 3:10) must continually be witnessed by the church. Jesus the Lord has broken the back of all the demonic powers that would fetter men. The church has the high task of letting men know that they have been liberated from slavery to blind fate and evil powers by their Lord.<sup>37</sup>

Committed to the sole lordship of Jesus Christ, it is inevitable that Christians come into conflict with the powers of this age. The early church faced that conflict in the form

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<sup>35</sup> Oscar Cullmann, *Christ and Time*. Floyd V. Filson (trans.). (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 2964), pp. 151, 186.

<sup>36</sup> *Loc. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>37</sup> Eduard Schweizer, *Lordship and Discipleship*. (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1960), p. 105.

of state-required emperor worship. This struggle is reflected in the book of Revelation. Not satisfied to fulfil its God-ordained role of preserving ordered justice (cf. Rom. 13:1ff.), the state became totalitarian. It claimed absolute loyalty; it usurped lordship. Any state that makes religious claims demanding unquestioning submission has become demonic. It has exceeded its proper bounds by seeking to rule the souls of its subjects.<sup>38</sup> A dictatorial state need not claim the full allegiance of its citizens, and even a democratic state may! No state can take God's place in our lives. Obviously the Roman Empire has not been the last government to try. Just as surely as Jesus' lordship obligates us to proclaim his sovereign rule, even so it requires that we remain wary of every human loyalty. Always we must be prepared to say to any worldly state that we have a higher allegiance. God's people must remain free to say, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Like Polycarp, our loyalty to King Jesus demands that we say "Jesus is Lord" even if it costs our life.<sup>39</sup>

What, then, is the conclusion of the matter? Let us resolve afresh to make Jesus our Lord. Let us obey him, worship him, and be faithful to him. Thus we shall follow in the train of that Conqueror whose name is King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16). And we shall reign with him for ever and ever (Rev. 21:5). "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

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<sup>38</sup> Oscar Cullmann, *The State in the New Testament*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), pp. 75, 78.

<sup>39</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, IV, xv.

## THE COMMITTED LIFE

John C. Whitley

**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:** John C. Whitley, 1920 Briarwood, Abilene, Texas 673-3188; ACC Station, Box 8200, 677-1911, Ext. 504.

**BORN:** Fort Smith, Arkansas, September 27, 1934

**PARENTS:** Father, Lee N. Whitley, Mother, Bessie Whitley

**BAPTIZED:** 1947 by Brother F. L. Thompson

**SCHOOLS:** Howard Elementary, graduate of: Lincoln High, Fort Smith, 1953; Southwestern Christian College, Terrell, Texas 1956; George Pepperdine University, Los Angeles, 1958 (B.A. in religion), 1958; Post Graduate Study, Baylor University, Waco, Texas, 1964; University of Houston, 1966; Graduate Study, Abilene Christian College—Present



**CHURCHES SERVED:** Allen Avenue Church of Christ with Brother G. E. Steward as Associate Minister, Educational Director, Minister of Music, Personal Work Director, 1958-1961; Hood Street Church of Christ, 1961-1965, Waco, Texas; Fifth Ward Church of Christ, Feb. 1965, Houston, Texas; Treadaway Church of Christ, Sept. 1971—Sept. 1972; San Angelo, part time Sept. 1972.

**GOSPEL MEETINGS:**  
Arkansas: Russellville  
Indiana: Indianapolis (Kingsley Terrace); also taught singing school.

Louisiana: Sulphur, conducted successful meeting for White congregation, June, 1969.

Texas: Temple, Rosebud, McGregor, Gladewater; Houston: Fifth Ward, Trinity Gardens, Fidelity, Highland Heights, Baytown.

New Mexico: Carlsbad, Fox and Lake.

Campaign Speaker: Edmonton, Alberta Canada, Aug. 1972.

### **ORGANIZES AND CONDUCTS TEACHERS' WORKSHOPS**

Fort Worth and Jax—Teacher Training, Jan. 1973.

**SPECIAL LECTURES:** Southwestern Christian College, taught classes several sessions.

Missions: Seminar: Harding Christian College, Searcy, Arkansas, 1967.

Abilene Christian College, Abilene, Texas 1968.

National Lectureship: Indianapolis, Newark, New Jersey.

Program Chairman for 25th National Annual Lectureship, Houston, Texas at South Union Church of Christ.

Lubbock Christian Lectures, 1972.

**EDITOR OF BIBLICAL ANSWERS TO PRESENT DAY ISSUES**, a book of lectures at 25th National Annual Lectureship.

Contribute Articles to: *THE CHRISTIAN ECHO* and *POWER FOR TODAY*.

Instrumental in organizing communication workshop on Race Relations Among Churches of Christ in city of Houston.

Joined Bible Faculty of Abilene Christian College, Aug. 1971, began full-time Sept. 1973.

**MARRIED:** Bessie Faye Garrett in 1959. Three Children: John C. II (born, Dec. 5, 1961), James Amecio (born June 12, 1962), Jan Charisse (born Dec. 12, 1964).

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History is full of challenging stories of men and women committed to a task. So enthralled were they in their desire and ambitions, they thought about few other matters. The reader is asked to take time to read the life of Job and his commitment to God even though he lost his children and riches, and even his wife was not certain of his course, urging him to "curse God and die." You will find comfort in Job's attitude, "though he slay me yet will I trust him." The reader will also find a timely challenge in *A Message to Garcia* by Elbert Hubbard. Committed to a task, the courier did not take time to ask a number of questions or directions, but did the job. The burning desire to be of service to others and share a bit of the glory is found in each of us. But the difference is, some are willing to pay the price. With too many, it is so easy to complain and, like the river, travel the course of least resistance.

It is the conviction of this writer that we must challenge our fellow Christians, students and children to set a standard, a goal for their lives, and regardless of the demands be willing to endure to the end. If the goal is noble and the standards are honest, keep working. We are desperately in need of lives committed to the Lord and His service. We need men and women who are committed to do a job and do it well. Yes, we need committed souls in various areas of life. I shall treat only three: (1) Business; (2) The Home; (3) The church of our Lord, with emphasis on preaching the word.

### COMMITTED CHRISTIAN BUSINESSMEN

It is not the concern of your speaker at this time to make any attempt to specify certain types of businesses, but to say the area must be noble, with standards which are

honest, based on the principles of holy scripture. Too many are attempting to follow the road which leads to instant riches and security without realizing the snares and sorrows soon to come.

I am certain that many of you have known brethren to engage in a business transaction only to realize too late they were not trustworthy. Our community needs businessmen who will commit themselves to honest practices, set the wheels in motion to reverse the direction of our business world, challenge those who are leaders to warn their employees and co-workers to follow the best course. It is sad that we have come to this point in our history where we read of prominent, professional, tenured men who are indicted for infractions of the law. Does the end justify the means? No. We need committed men in business—men who would rather lose a dollar than sacrifice value and a customer, and their souls.

I am appalled at the wheeling and dealing done by some in the name of business, when they know it is neither noble, nor a good standard by which to operate. We need men and women who are committed to Christ and Christianity and will not tolerate any practice which reflects upon the beautiful name of Jesus.

### COMMITTED TO A GODLY HOME

Our Christian colleges at one time could boast of their record of marriage among students who met and married on their campuses—there had been no divorces. In a Bible faculty meeting in October, 1973, we were reminded this is no longer true. Another record has been broken. Of this one

we are *not* proud! A challenge goes forth. We must stand firm, plead with parents and faculty to teach our young to take their time and begin their homelife on the right foot and make every effort to adjust over a period of a lifetime. We have something which will help them to do this if they will only use it—God’s pattern!

We must strive to return to a solid foundation for the home. It has not worked, it will not work when we teach and preach that it is permissible for our daughters to become independent of the husband and father; to allow them to believe that because we are going through change in our community and country, we can change at will the commands of scripture. The scriptures still give the foundation for the home and if our homes are going to be strong, dedicated ones, we must, though painful, begin anew teaching the rightful place of our girls—that they might be feminine and attractive and willing to permit their husbands to rule over them in a godly manner (Gen. 3:16).

No man should be allowed to mistreat his wife, regardless of his background, for it violates the will of the Father. Listen to the word of God with reference to the home and how sweet it is to our culture today:

“Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.” (Gen. 2:24)

“To the woman he said, I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you.” (Gen. 3:16)

“Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands.” (Eph. 5:21-24)

With conviction I say we have permitted a course far more destructive than all the wars in which we have engaged. When we take the time and energy to allow the home to be perverted and turned away from the pattern set by God, something is wrong. Yes, we need committed wives in the home who are willing to settle in their place and not attempt to compete in any fashion with the ego or place of the man, to willingly allow him to be head—not so much because he demands it, but because *Christ commands* it. Our homes will be much better if the wives will become more devoted mothers and rock the cradle and rear the children with tender, loving affection based on the words of the Master, instead of striving for a “Master” in some field which drives them from the home. It is certainly a challenge to live in a world where one is not able to look with warmth on the women and mothers of our communities and the church. In a recent article from the experts who answer questions, a situation was presented where the man of the house did not like getting out to go to work, the lady did not like staying home, cleaning the house and taking care of the children, and asked if it would be all right for the two to switch roles. The columnist said it would be fine. I am not sure but that the parents of both contributed to the imbalance of that home.

Likewise, you men ought to be men and guide the family, or a stronger statement would be, rule the house as God would have it. In listening to many men, they have no more intention of ruling their home and their children than

anything else. No wonder many of them work on two and three jobs. They are not willing to accept the challenge and responsibility that God has given. Brethren, we are to be the example. We are to provide guidance and protection for our families. We should demonstrate to our families that we love them, "Not in word, but in deed and truth" (I John 3:18).

Listen to the words of the Lord to all who are men:

"Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, . . . He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church. (Eph. 5:25, 28).

Likewise you husbands, live considerately with your wives, bestowing honor on the woman as the weaker sex, since you are joint heirs of the grace of life, in order that your prayers may not be hindered." (I Pet. 3:7).

Gentlemen, we have a tremendous responsibility to love and honor our wives. I realize we have tremendous odds to fight, but it is no less a burden than that of our wives when they are being encouraged by men and women to break out of "bondage," the home, and go the way of equality. I am not intentionally fighting our women. I am saying that we must all be committed in the home to make our marriage work and stop contributing to the divorce statistics of our county, state and nation. We must settle back in our recliners and bring out some of the old expressions which made this nation what she was, and what the church has been for all these years of toil and suffering. But the old people suffered together. They did not run to an efficiency apartment, or go get a job just to prove that they could survive without one another. I realize they did not have efficiency apartments, and the kind of job

they would run to was the same kind they ran from, but the point is they were *taught* and were committed to live together and stay together based on the word of the Lord. The marriage vow to our forefathers meant something to them and it should mean something to us.

I hope you appreciate this. I love to share this illustration. Nolan Alexander, one of the elders at Fifth Ward in Houston, a steel worker and a very quiet man, often said to the congregation on this subject, "I told Mrs. Alexander if she ever decides to leave, get a place large enough for two because I am coming!" Oh, for the dedication to make our marriage work and our homes happy. Brethren, if you love her, treat her right, and if she leaves, find her. But better yet, love her and never let her go.

Solomon says, "Children are an heritage of the Lord" (Ps. 127:3). I plead with every young couple with small children, and even to parents with college-age young adults. It is never really too late to try to correct some wrongs that were done early in life. It would be well for the parents to stop and reassess their values and try to give more of themselves to the little ones they brought into this world and whom God holds responsible for their destiny (2 Cor. 12:14).

Many parents are beginning to react and say now that the children are grown we can go our separate ways and it will not affect the lives of the college students. Please hear me. It does affect their lives. It affects them emotionally. It interferes with their studies, their social lives, and even their plans for a beautiful home of their own. You see, they will be wondering if my parents did not make it, would it be the same with my family. A beautiful young lady stayed fol-

lowing class one day, after we had given some time to the plan God had for the home, to express her fears in giving of herself freely to the man she knew she loved. When she was younger her parents did not get along too well, and later they were divorced. She wants to be sure that her marriage will not turn out that way. She is working on it so hard, that I am fearful that she may choose not to get married at all, which is one way of solving the problem. Parents, it does effect your child!

I feel qualified to say what I am about to say based on my understanding of the scriptures and, secondly, because during my years as a minister I have been thrown into situations where I had to do what is called "crisis counseling" and has been proven in professional cases. If the line of communication is left open, many homes can be saved, the children will grow up to appreciate the love and devotion of their parents and will one day return to say thank you.

Children are a heritage of the Lord. I often wonder why parents will not accept the challenge of training their children. I am not interested in an argument on what is meant by the word training and the fact that he will not depart from it. I do believe it! But let me give this illustration and if it works in this fashion, it should work in the rearing of an intelligent creature of God.

I visited a friend of mine a few years ago and he had a German Shepherd, a beautiful, handsome dog. Thor was old enough to attend obedience school. One day, to demonstrate the power of the master's voice and the submissiveness of the dog, my friend told Thor to sit. "Thor, sit!" He asked his wife to call him and see if he would move. She called, but

Thor sat. The wife called again, but Thor sat! My friend finally stopped and made the comment, "We should not do him that way because he has been trained to obey both of us, but the first command is usually what he obeys." My, what a lesson!

Yes, I know our children are not dogs. I know they have minds of their own. But I also know they can be trained and to train them takes time and consistency. It means we must be diligent. Take every opportunity to teach them the way of the Lord. It becomes very tiresome, and you often want to give up, but you can't if you want your child to be trained.

The Jewish fathers were instructed:

"and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." (Deut. 6:7-9)

The apostle Paul, by inspiration, charges the fathers:

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4)

And, again: "Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged" (Col. 3:21).

Children are a heritage of the Lord, but we have an entrusted responsibility to care for them and give the best direction possible by using the word of God and assistances

of godly men and women. Are you as parents and grandparents committed to the task of disciplining your offspring? May God help you.

### COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH OF OUR LORD AND PREACHING THE WORD

Those of us who preach must be committed. We, of all men, must present the message with conviction and power. We must refrain from the fear of causing people to feel guilty. If the message of Christ has that effect we should not be apologetic. If we preach and the listener is aware of his or her needs, they will respond. When they fall, we should be there to catch them. The gospel of Christ must be preached in such a manner the listener will not have to guess about what is said. It should be preached so they will not have to worry about whether you love them. They will know it because you have the word, and God has spoken. We need committed preachers who love the Lord and His kingdom, and will not allow his personal misgivings to disturb the hearts and minds of the public. It is thrilling to hear men present Christ and Him crucified, motivating men and women to *want* to come to the Lord. Committed preachers are needed who will serve in the army of the Lord with little or no additional cares.

I join many of our elders and preachers who have spoken for benefits for our older ministers, who have served for years on the battlefield of the Lord and when time comes for them to stick their sword in the sand, to do battle no more, no longer able to go in and out to preach the word, they become a forgotten minority. Collections have to be taken to pay

their hospital bills, to purchase medicine, and even to bury them. Church, this is sad. I regret that we have elders who are to care for the needs of the members but do not take the lead and support the preachers as they should; who often express that they have the desire and would not mind, but "you know how the people are," and they start giving every reason under heaven for not helping to change the situation and continue to allow such a condition to persist from year to year, preacher after preacher, and always saying, "One day it will be better."

Because of this, many younger preachers are not willing to fight a losing battle. Young men are abandoning the idea of preaching even before they get their feet wet. They are getting set up where they become independent and will preach if they want to preach and where they want to preach. Maybe that works well for some, but I am yet convinced that we need preachers who are so dedicated to preaching the gospel of Christ that they will not be too anxious to place the material before the spiritual. When you haven't had anything you don't miss it. But when you are exposed to some of the finer things of life, you get to the place that this should always be. Forgive me, please, if I come down too hard in this area. Brethren, fellow preachers, let us quit complaining and start teaching as God instructs and work very closely with the brethren that they might be motivated to improve in this area. And if you are so sensitive that you don't want to mention your needs to the brethren and feel that it is better to get out of the ministry and go into other areas where you will make more money and be secure and have time with your family, please tell it like it is. Sure preaching is rough. Paul told you it would be before you entered if you took the time to read the book. Listen.

“I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths. As for you, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.” (II Tim. 4:1-5)

Paul told his son, Timothy, to endure suffering. He did not say for us to rationalize and give up the great calling of preaching the gospel of Christ because the brethren were not understanding and because the members of the congregation always want you to come and hold their hands, and because the preacher is expected to be the “spark plug” of the endeavors, and because you are asked to perform weddings, preach funerals, give various speeches, and engage in numerous other activities. Instead of abandoning the great calling of the ministry, why don't you accept the responsibility of training and developing brethren and watch your fruit grow in the Lord's vineyard. We need dedicated preachers. Yes, I want to preach more than anything else in the world. My involvement in higher education affords me the opportunity to preach three and four times each week, plus the number of meetings granted, and souls are being exposed to the gospel of Christ. We need men who are committed to preaching the gospel of Christ and to the Lord's church.

Times change and people make adjustments, but the need of man to know about the kingdom is always the same. Jesus built only one church and when we continue to preach

the same message with fervency and conviction and reason as did Philip concerning the "name of Jesus and the Kingdom" (Acts 8:12), you will see more and more men and women coming to a better understanding toward the importance of the body of Christ. I plead with each man who preaches to allow the Word of God to come forth and present the proof men need.

Brethren we must still fight against sin and division. We must fight against denominationalism. To do this we need men who are undaunted and unafraid to preach the word even in the face of physical abuse and death. It was our Master who said, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

The apostle Paul was told not to go to Jerusalem because he would be imprisoned. His reply was, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13). What dedication, what commitment!

Addressing the elders at Miletus, as he was about to depart and had asked that they be careful, said:

"But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that all you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will see my face no more. Therefore, I testify to all this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God." (Acts 20:24-26).

We need committed men to preach the gospel of Christ and who love the cause of Christ and His kingdom.

A story was related in chapel which illustrates the demands for a committed life. A group of believers were worshipping underground. A soldier broke the door down with gun in hand, told all there who did not really believe in Jesus to leave because the true believers would be shot. After most had gone, the committed souls stayed ready to die. The soldier then threw his gun down and said, "Now I can worship my Lord with my fellow-believers."

Friends, we need strong, dedicated Christians in every area of life—business, government, home, and especially spiritual leaders. A poem by Josiah Gilbert Holland (1819-1881) says it well:

#### WANTED

From 'The Complete Poetical Writings of Dr. J. G. Holland.' Copyright 1879, by Charles Scribner's Sons<sup>1</sup>

God give us men! A time like this demands  
 Strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready  
 hands;  
 Men whom the lust of office does not kill;  
 Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;  
 Men who possess opinions and a will;  
 Men who have honor, men who will not lie;  
 Men who can stand before a demagogue,  
 And damn his treacherous atteries without winking!

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<sup>1</sup> Warner, Charles Dudley, Editor, *Library of the World's Best Literature*, Vol. 19; J. A. Hill and Company, New York; Copyright 1902; p. 7454.

Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog  
In public duty and in private thinking:  
For while the rabble, with their thumb-worn creeds,  
Their large professions and their little deeds,  
Mingle in selfish strife,—lo! Freedom weeps,  
Wrong rules the land, and waiting Justice sleeps!

### CONCLUSION

America is not what she used to be.

The earthly church is not what she used to be.

Individual courage is not what it used to be.

Moral standards aren't what they used to be.

But they can be. More, they will be when you, and you, and you will say with Jesus, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit." Jesus said to John, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give you a crown of life." We must say with Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and with Paul:

"For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing." (II Tim. 4:6-8)

Ladies and gentlemen, we have seen standards lowered, confidences betrayed, sin magnified, the body of Christ divided, homes torn assunder and the righteous belittled. Many have chosen to give up because of the suffering they have been subjected to. "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

Are you committed? Prove it. Live it! Spread it! Die for it. Be committed—He calls those who are willing to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Him. Amen!

## THE DISCIPLE AND THE WORD (John 8:31)

### Frank Worgan

Frank Worgan is a native British preacher. Born on July 13, 1922, he obeyed the gospel when he was 14 years of age. His first sermon was preached when he was 16. After accepting preaching appointments in various parts of the country, he was encouraged by the elders of his home congregation at Hindley, Lanchashire, to prepare himself for full-time evangelistic work. He spent some time in Scotland studying under the personal tuition of Walter Crosthwaite, one of the best-known and most capable evangelists and teachers the British churches have known in this century.

Worgan then became involved in evangelistic work throughout the British Isles until 1954, when he was invited to serve as a missionary in Holland. He remained there for seven years, based mainly in Haarlem and Amsterdam, but also holding meetings in various parts of Holland.



During this time he prepared a song-book for the Dutch churches.

He has preached extensively in Western Europe and Scandinavia and has visited the United States to hold gospel meetings on six occasions. In this country, he served congregations in about 28 states. He has also been involved in five public debates in Holland and the British Isles. At the request of the church in Northern Ireland, he travelled to Belfast to debate Dr. D. P. Kingdon, Principal of the Irish Baptist College.

Upon his return to England, he hopes to engage in

a debate in Birmingham with Dr. Alfred Norris of the Christadelphians on the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He has written for magazines on both sides of the Atlantic and is a staff writer for "Truth for Today."

In 1944 he married Isobel Irene Slater of Scotland, and they have three children, Peter, Susan and Stephen.

Mr. Worgan has enjoyed an exceptionally fine relationship with the church of Christ at 6th and Jackson, Odessa, Texas, by whom he has been supported in mission and evangelistic work for 20 years.

For the last 7 years, he has lived in Corby, Northamptonshire, where a new congregation has been established. This church, which commenced in December, 1966, with five members, now has a membership of approaching 100 and, thanks to the practical interest of the church in Odessa, Texas, occupies its own building and is probably one of the most successful works in Europe.

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No matter how frequently one has read a particular passage of scripture, there will come a time when, looking at it again, it will suddenly flash with renewed brilliance. This, I freely confess, has been my experience with my assigned text.

It suddenly occurred to me that I was looking at a statement of breath-taking majesty and boldness. Were such words to come from anyone else, philosopher or educator, no matter how highly esteemed he might be, we should dismiss them as a piece of sheer impertinence. But we do not treat this text in that way. We are compelled to stop and listen, because we recognize that the speaker is without peer and without a successful imitator, and his words have a ring of

authority which we may not ignore. Listen: "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

*Context.* Although these words occur as early as the eighth chapter in a book containing twenty-one chapters, they belong to the final phase of the Lord's ministry. Chapter seven marks the commencement of that phase with his decision to return to Jerusalem, although he knows that the Jewish leaders are awaiting an opportunity to kill him. Verse 14 shows that he soon became involved in controversy with them, which continues in a spasmodic fashion to the close of chapter ten. Then the Lord withdraws again beyond the Jordan.

Yet, even during this period, in spite of official opposition, it appears that his ministry was not without some success. John 8:30 records that many believed on him. But this success was more apparent than real. The faith of these Jewish hearers was superficial and Jesus knew it. Therefore, he said to the Jews who believed, "If you abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples . . ." And how well he had read their hearts is seen from the fact that, when he continues to mention "freedom," there is an instantaneous and angry reaction. They vehemently declare that they have never been in slavery. And the passage closes, significantly, with them taking up stones to stone him.

To summarize the text, then, let us say that the Lord teaches us that real discipleship is more than an emotional response to an undeniably attractive personality.

It requires a determination to abide—continue—in his teaching. He does not say, "If you admire—or revere—or

analyze my word.” Nor does he ask us to discuss it, or argue about it, much less fight about it. He says “Abide” in it.

*Real and Superficial Discipleship.* Clearly then, there is both a real and a superficial discipleship. Some are disciples in name, but not in fact. Other events in the life of Jesus testify to this. In John 6:66 we read of many who went back and walked no more with him. Here were followers who had been delighted by certain aspects of his teaching; and it is not difficult to understand why. After all, they were tired and he offered them rest. They were groping in hopeless uncertainty and he offered them Truth. They were desperately hungry and thirsty and he offered them the bread of life and the water of life. So, they saw him as the one who was able to meet the clamant cry of need which arose from their hearts and give them what they were seeking.

But, when he spoke of self-denial and of gaining eternal life, this was too much for them. Their enthusiasm waned and they turned back.

Look at John 12:42. Here were Jewish leaders who believed on him and yet, out of unworthy considerations, they made no open confession of faith in him.

But perhaps the most striking example of this superficial discipleship is in John 2:23-25, where we read that many believed on his name, but Jesus “did not trust himself to them, for he knew all men.”

Notice that these people believed—trusted—on his name and yet Jesus did not trust himself to them. The verb is the same in both instances. Now, why was this? It could only be

that the one who knew men thoroughly was aware of the shallowness of this profession and saw that it would not come to anything. There was no real commitment on their part and therefore he could not commit himself to them.

Discipleship is more than profession. It involves commitment. To abide in the word means more than the embracing of a particular set of doctrines. It means a life; a living union with Christ.

Will you recall the time when you became a Christian? You then put on Christ in your baptism and became a new creation in Christ Jesus. The old life should have passed away, when you arose to stand upon the threshold of a life that was new. As you have received Christ Jesus as Lord, so walk in him. This is discipleship, a commitment on your part which makes it possible for the Lord to commit himself to you. “. . . then are ye truly my disciples,” he says.

*Meaning of “Abide.”* Users of the R. S. V. will have observed that whilst that version speaks of “continuing” in the word, I have repeatedly used the word “abide,” which is the rendering of my English Revised Version. The word which concerns us is the word “meno,” which, in the Greek New Testament, occurs 119 times, of which 68 are found in the writing of John alone.

The primary meaning of “meno” is undoubtedly “to remain, dwell or abide.” This is why, in the King James Version of 1611, it was translated “continue” only 11 times, whilst the other words—“dwell, remain, abide”—were preferred no fewer than 91 times. However, the translators of the R. S. V. followed this version of 1611 and used

“continue” in our text; although when they reached the epistles of John, they deserted that version almost completely and elected to use the word “abide.”

Well, I shall be using the word “abide” a great deal. Partly because I am familiar with this rendering; partly because I like this good, old Anglo-Saxon word; and partly because it conveys the essential thought of stability, durability and faithfulness. It is a word which, like the Greek word it represents, suggests a location, a condition, or a relationship. Jesus says, “Abide in my word . . . . . and ye shall know the truth . . . . .” Thus he points to the fact that when one abides in the word, his life is governed by it and there follows an ever-enlarging capacity for truth and an ever-growing apprehension of truth.

I stress this growing capacity for and awareness of truth because, in spite of what I have said about the meaning of the word “abide,” it must also be stated that this “abiding” is much more than the passive maintenance of a location or condition. It involves practical obedience; that is, obedience which fulfils the purpose for which one has been placed in that location, state or relationship. Again, when used in connection with the word of Christ, it means that something enters our hearts, establishes itself there and begins to exercise its power in our lives.

Thus, when Jesus said, “Abide in my word,” this was no casual or accidental choice of words. He might have said “keep my word,” or “follow my word” and this, too, would have been commendable and worthwhile. But no! “ABIDE!” This is the disposition which the true disciple must reveal.

*Reason for Spiritual Weakness.* Sometimes Christians pass through a period of spiritual depression. You lose interest—and you lose ground! The intensity of your love for the Lord diminishes. Your zeal becomes dim, dampened, perhaps by discouragement. And as your love declines, you discover that other interests creep in and other attractions beckon for your attention. It may be that prayer becomes an effort, even to the point of ceasing, because disappointments and doubts have arisen.

John Newton, who wrote the hymn “Amazing Grace,” once wrote:

“Alas, my experience abounds with complaints! He is my Sun, but clouds and sometimes walls intercept him from my view. He is my Friend, but on my part there is such coldness as no other friend would bear! He is my Strength, and yet I am prone to lean on reeds! Oh for a warmer heart, a more simple dependence and a more active zeal!”

I think we know exactly the anguish which Newton expressed. We have walked down that road ourselves. We too have prayed, “Oh for a warmer heart!” But that prayer will never be answered if we neglect the word of the Lord. This is why so many of us miss the mark. We *want* to follow Christ faithfully, but find ourselves failing disappointingly because we often try to live like Jesus without possessing the only power that will enable us to do so—the Power which comes through abiding in his word and having his word abiding in us.

Indeed to abide in the word is to abide in Christ. This is what is so wonderful about that word “abide.” Listen:

“As for you, let that abide in you which ye heard from the beginning; if that which ye heard from the beginning abide in you, ye shall also abide in the Son, and in the Father” (1 John 2:24).

And, again; “If a man love me, he will keep my word:

and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23).

Do you see the richness of this relationship? The word in us and we in the word. Abiding in the Father and the Son, and the Son and the Father abiding in us. This is the secret to the serviceable and satisfied Christian life.

It is the key to *power in prayer*: “If ye abide in me and my words abide in you . . . ye shall ask whatsoever ye will” (John 15:7). It is the key to the *life which overcomes sin*: “whosoever abideth in him sinneth not” (literally, does not keep on sinning) (1 John 3:6). It is the *source of fruitfulness* in Christian service. “He that abideth in me . . . . . the same beareth much fruit” (John 15:5). Finally, remember that “he that goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son” (2 John 9).

Did you notice how often we encounter the word “in” as we go through these passages? Westcott once said that the whole force of revelation is contained in two letters in the preposition “en.” In Christ; in the word.

This is where all the blessings are to be found. Relationship, hope, security, truth and liberty are only to be enjoyed as one continues *in* the word.

*The Importance of the Word.* I am well aware that if you speak too often as I am speaking today, of the importance of the word, you are likely to find yourself branded a "bibliolater."

Well, I do not worship the book; nor, I am sure, do my brethren. But we do revere the word and say with David:

"My heart stands in awe of thy word" (Psa. 119:161).

It is fashionable, in some supposedly erudite quarters, to regard with an amused tolerance, those who insist on keeping to the word. One such man told me, "You may throw away that book because I do not need it! I have the inner witness of the Holy Spirit in my heart!" This sounds very fine. But ask yourself how much we know about salvation, or the church, or the Saviour, or even the Spirit himself, apart from what is revealed to us through the word? Take away the word, and you do not know that the Spirit even exists, for it is the very Lord whose words some treat so disparagingly who revealed and promised and sent the Spirit into the world.

It is a sad thing to me to see promising young men under the influence of those who have so little regard for the word of Christ. And it is also sad that so-called leaders are in such haste to spread their second-hand and warmed-over iconoclastic theories among younger, less mature members of the church.

Fairly recently I heard of one young man who informed a group of young Christians that we cannot be sure that we have the truth because we cannot "know" anything with certainty.

I am sure it is not necessary for me to explain how subtle, pernicious and dangerous this attitude is. Once this piece of sophistry is accepted the gates are thrown wide open to anything and everything in religion. This is the modern agnosticism which parades as knowledge. It is the ignorance which thinks it is education. One thing I am prepared to tell that young man—and others of his ilk—is this; You have a controversy with the Saviour, my friend! HE said, "If ye abide in my word . . . . . ye shall know the truth . . ." If you are unsure and feel that you do not know the truth, let me commend you to the Saviour!

Oh that Christians would make themselves familiar with the word! This is the crying need of our age. We need men and women of the word. Men and women who, because they know the word, know the truth and its Author.

"We search the world for Truth;  
We cull the pure, the good, the beautiful,  
From all old flower-fields of the soul;  
And, weary seekers of the best,  
We come back laden from our quest,  
To find that all the sages said,  
Is in the Book our mother's read."

During the last year or two we have heard a great deal about the "Jesus Movement." (And this is a tree in whose branches birds of a wide variety of plumages have found shelter). We have been urged to have faith in a person, not in a system. The watchword has been "Back to Jesus!" and we are to separate the person of Christ from the confusion of dogma and doctrine which has grown up around him.

“A Person—not a Plea!” “A Christ—not a Church!” “A Saviour—not a System!” These are just a few of the religious clichés with which we have been bombarded, and Christendom has broken out in a rash of red stickers, telling us that “Jesus is the Real Thing.”

But what a vague, nebulous, unsubstantial figure this Jesus is, whom we are offered! He is one whose mild doctrine of love and the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man falls so soothingly and pleasantly upon sophisticated 20th century ears.

Well, certainly we want Jesus; providing it is Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. And of course, we need to go back to Christ! But there is nothing new in this plea! Some of us were brought up on the plea, “Back to the Bible! Back to Christ!” No serious disciple of the Lord will quarrel with it. But remember this; when we go back to Christ, it must be back to the Christ of the word. And to the word of the Christ. We must accept him at his word and believe what he has to say about himself. We must submit to *his* conditions of discipleship. “If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples.”

After all, all that is normative and creative in our faith depends upon him. His word is our authority and unless our thoughts and ideas are prompted and controlled by the one who claimed to be the Truth, our religious life will be a complete failure and a disappointment.

What is this that I hold in my hand? You say that it is a Bible. But it has another name. The Word. And what is a word? It is a means of communication. It is the expression of a thought. If this, then, is the word of the Lord, which he

himself commends to us, is it a word without a message? Or is it a word which is unreliable, untrustworthy and vague? It is a trumpet which speaks with uncertain voice?

Jesus says "Abide in my word." Now if a man considers himself to be so well-informed that he is no longer sure which *are* the words of Christ, or to what extent his word is reliable, let me suggest that his first duty is to keep his doubts to himself, for doubts have never saved a single soul. You cannot feed faith on doubt. Furthermore, I would say, kindly yet firmly, that he should not presume to call himself a true disciple of Christ since he has no claim to the title. You cannot follow that which you do not believe; nor can you commit yourself wholeheartedly to that which you do not think is trustworthy.

The cure for doubt and uncertainty is a knowledge of the word. Far too often we read what men have written about the word, rather than the word itself. We feel it is necessary for us to keep abreast of what we fondly imagine is the latest thinking in theology and biblical criticism, and if we have not devoured the most recent publication from the pen of the latest star in the theological heavens, we feel inferior! Indeed, there is so much emphasis, in some quarters, on biblical criticism and so little real study of the word, that we have religious leaders who do not know where they are going!

I heard the story of a young preacher who seems to have looked upon himself as God's latest gift to the church. (We should not be too hard on him, for I think that there is a time—usually at the beginning—when most preachers flirt with the same thought. It is those who outgrow the idea who

survive and become useful). But, this young man had chosen as his text John 10:27, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me:" and although he had mounted the pulpit very evidently conscious of his own importance, he was making heavy going of the sermon. At last, one old Christian who had seen preachers come and go, could stand it no longer. In a stage whisper he said, "Come on down, son, and just be a sheep!" Learn to follow! Learn to trust! Just be a sheep! This is what true discipleship is all about. It means listening to what the Good Shepherd has to say, and obeying him.

I stress the hearing and the obeying because it is one thing to *hear* and something quite different to *obey*. Or, as they say in Scotland to "heed." I knew an old couple in the North of Scotland some years ago. I recall how, one day I heard the wife calling for her husband, "John! John!"

But although I knew that John was within earshot, he did not reply. She continued to call his name until finally a note of petulance and irritation crept into her tone, "John! John! Are ye hearing me?" And John broke his long silence with the words, "Aye! I'm hearing ye; *but I'm no' heeding ye!*" A true disciple both hears and heeds the word.

*The Authority of the Word.* Behind the word of Christ stands the sanction and authority of the Father himself. Consider these statements, all taken from the Gospel according to John.

"He who receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. For he whom God has sent utters the words of God" (John 3:33-34).

“He who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father who sent him. Truly, truly I say unto you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life” (John 5:22-24).

“My teaching is not mine; if any man’s will is to do his will, he shall know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority” (John 7:16).

“I have not spoken on my own authority; the Father who sent me has himself given me commandment what to say and what to speak. . . . . What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has bidden me” (John 12:49-50).

Other passages such as John 8:26-28, 14:10, 15:15, 16:15 and 17:8 all teach the same truth. Examine them carefully and you must be struck by the fact that the Lord invariably supported his position and his assertions by insisting that the very words he spoke were words received from the Father. For this reason, any denial of the word of Christ amounts to a denial of God. There is no ambiguity about the statement in 2 John 9. “He who does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God.” There may be some difference of opinion as to whether the “teaching of Christ” in this text refers to teaching *given by* Christ, or teaching *concerning* Christ.

But really, this is a distinction without a difference, since the context makes it plain that if one continues in the teaching given by Christ, he continues in what Christ has taught about himself and about his word.

The word of Christ is the only source of light and liberty that is available to us in spiritual matters. “Whereunto ye do

well that ye take heed as unto a lamp shining in a squalid place; until the day dawns and the daystar arise in your hearts" (2 Peter 1:19).

You have heard of Diogenes, the philosopher who is said to have spent a great deal of his time living in a tub? Well, it is reported that once, when Alexander the Great came to visit him at the Isthmian Games, where Diogenes used to lecture, the shadow of the world's conqueror fell across the entrance to the tub and Diogenes called from within, "Who is there?" The answer came, "I am Alexander. What can I do for you?" And the philosopher replied, "Get out of my sunlight!"

And when any modern Alexander comes between you and the light of the word, just you tell him to get out of *your* sunlight.

As a disciple of the Lord, then, what *kind* of disciple are you? When did you last have a worth-while interview with the Saviour? For instance, how was it when you prayed today? If you find it difficult to pray, or are not praying as often as you should, this in itself is a commentary on the state of your discipleship. And what happened when you last opened the word in private meditation and study? How did you come before the Lord? Was it with a heart tender and pliant and yielding, waiting for him to help you to understand what he has to say in the word? Or, did you feel, even though you did not say so in so many words, "Well, I have read all this before. There is nothing new for me here!" Please forgive me for being so personal, but what I am trying to ask is this: Are you continuing in the word? Or are you lagging behind, spiritually?

Recently a young preacher spoke to me about the tiredness which he felt was settling upon him. He found preaching difficult and felt he had little to say. I asked him, "What about your study of the word?" He confessed that he found it difficult to study. I said, "What about your prayer-life?" Here again he said, "I find it very hard to pray."

Even as I was preparing these words, my wife and I were visited late one night by a lady who was passing through a period of deep spiritual depression. One significant remark that she made was this. "I feel spiritually dead. I have not prayed in a long time." Well, now, how does a person get into that condition?

Of course, there may be many contributing factors. But of one thing I am sure; behind all of them is the failure to keep close to the Saviour. The only safeguard that I know against this kind of thing is to keep in touch with him, no matter what may be the experience through which we are passing.

If you are falling behind so that you no longer see the Lord as clearly as when you first became a disciple; if he now appears to you as a vague, misty figure, disappearing from you in the distance, will you not make a determined effort to catch up with him? Perhaps today?

Or if, like my young preacher-friend, you realize that the joy of a conscious daily walk with Christ is something which you are in danger of losing completely, and you long sincerely to recapture the freshness and sweetness and closeness to Jesus that you once knew, let me encourage you to speak to him about it. Certainly, do not go to sleep

tonight without having established just where you mean to stand with regards to him.

At the heart of true discipleship is the willingness to dedicate one's whole being to the Master, and it is my prayer that, during this lectureship, we shall all be able to settle our priorities in life and hear more clearly the call to a closer walk with the Lord.

As these services unfold, be absolutely honest with him. Find the opportunity, even with so many people about you, and so much happening, of spending time with him. Take his word and quietly and obediently listen to what he is saying.

The success or failure of this 1974 lectureship will depend upon what happens between Christ and you. This can be the opportunity of meeting the Lord anew so that we are presented with a challenge to spiritual renewal and rededication as his disciples. But it will depend to a large extent upon your approach and your attitude.

Be very sure that Satan will also be here. I do not believe he has ever missed a lectureship! Whenever his personal interests are involved and his influence threatened he is never far away. And he will try to prevent you from being blessed by the word you hear.

He just loves to point out the mannerisms of the preachers and criticize the sermons. (It would not surprise me at all if he has not been at work whilst I have been speaking, making sly remarks about my English accent!).

As though he were an American with a good American accent! And he will seek to distract you by drawing attention to trivialities.

But if you approach this theme in the right frame of mind and with the disposition which says, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—what you hear in Abilene this week may well affect your life for eternal good.

As a disciple, be serious as you approach him. Settle once and for all the place he is to occupy in your life and how, from this day onwards, you mean to regard his word in the light of his challenge;

"If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Let us grasp the fact that our discipleship is meant by the Lord, to be much more than a blessing to ourselves.

We are to be of service to him in the task of bringing others to know him.

"O Master, let me walk with thee  
In lowly paths of service free;  
Tell me thy secret; help me bear  
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

Help me the slow of heart to move  
By some clear, winning word of love;  
Teach me the wayward feet to stay,  
And guide them in the homeward way.

Teach me thy patience; still with thee  
In closer, dearer company,  
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,  
In trust that triumphs over wrong,

In hope that sends a shining ray  
Far down the future's broadening way;  
In peace that only thou canst give,  
With thee, O Master, let me live."

## DISCIPLESHIP IN THE HOME

Mack Wayne Craig

**Born:** Obion, Tennessee, May 13, 1925; son of Mr. and Mrs. Guy Craig.

**Married:** Miss Dorothy Anne Discher, Wheeling, West Virginia, August 28, 1946, who died November 15, 1959. Their three children are Larry, David, and Marnie.

**Education:** Andrew Jackson High School, Jacksonville, Florida; David Lipscomb College, Nashville, Tennessee; Vanderbilt University; George Peabody College, Nashville—M.A. degree, 1948; Ph.D. degree, 1958.

**Evangelistic Experience:** Evangelist for churches of Christ since 1939, having served in St. Augustine, Florida, 1942-1943; Reid Avenue church of Christ, Nashville, 1943-1949; Whites Creek church of



Christ, 1949-1955; Charlotte Avenue church of Christ, Nashville, 1955-1968; Vultee church of Christ, Nashville, 1968-

**Experience as Christian Educator:** Instructor in history, Latin and Bible, David Lipscomb High School, 1945-1949; principal, David Lipscomb High School, 1949-1957; dean of David Lipscomb College, 1957-

**Special Interests:** Middle Tennessee history, with special emphasis on people and places. Bought the Pinewood Mansion in

Hickman County, Tennessee, in 1968, which has been restored and opened to public. European travel—takes groups to Europe in summers, with special attention to history and antiques.

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When God had flung this planet into existence, "His power throughout the universe displayed"; when he had seen "everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good"; he brought creation to its crowning glory in the establishment of the first home. Our Father looked upon the perfection of Eden, was satisfied with all that his wisdom had planned and his power had executed, and yet saw that it was incomplete. The Bible tells us that when God saw that it was not good that man should be alone, he "caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."<sup>1</sup>

To speak of discipleship in the home is to remind us that being God's people calls for a sharing of God's purposes and plans in the home as in all else. We could spend limitless time speaking of the problems man has created by his failure to practice discipleship in the home but these problems are

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 2:21-24.

obvious. Surely no one who lives in our time can fail to be disheartened by the tremendous increase in divorce and similar home problems, not only on the part of those who make no pretensions of being the people of God, but even more alarmingly among many who are attempting to be followers of Jesus Christ. The purpose of this particular lesson therefore is simply to ask, What does following God's will require in the home?

It is, of course, possible to examine the issue of discipleship in the home from many different standpoints, and undoubtedly to arrive at many helpful considerations. For the purpose of this lesson, however, an attempt will be made to examine the home which God built in an effort to see those areas which he understood to be important in the establishment of the first home, and so to identify to those of us who would follow his will today the concerns which God expects of us and the ways in which we are to prove ourselves worthy disciples in following his will.

Since discipleship as it has been studied during this lectureship involves a great deal more than the act of becoming a Christian, but is related to every experience of life, it becomes clear that if we are to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in the home, this necessarily involves every aspect of this relationship. For this reason our examination of the record in the second chapter of Genesis should enable us to be impressed anew with the varied aspects of the home and family relationship as God brought them into existence, and to determine the extent to which we are being worthy disciples as we strive to concern ourselves with these same matters in the home today.

It seems to me essential as we begin this consideration that we understand that the home came into existence because God saw that man was lonely. It was not an effort to satisfy man's need for food, or any other physical desire, but rather because "God saw that it was not good for man to be alone" that woman was created. Practicing discipleship in the home means first of all that there must be an understanding on the part of all those who are involved that the basic nature of the home is sharing, and that two people who are to build a successful marriage must do so on the basis of a willingness to be genuinely companions to one another.

This principle is particularly important in view of the tremendous over-emphasis of recent times on the physical aspects of marriage. We have been led to believe that marriage is undertaken primarily for the satisfaction of man's physical desire, and that when this desire is gratified, it will automatically follow that the marriage be successful. It should be striking to all of us that the establishment of the first home by God was not because the man and woman who composed that home "loved" each other, but rather because God saw the need for Adam's loneliness to be satisfied. Because we allow young people to grow up today supposing that when there is a strong emotional attraction to some person this is evidence of love and therefore proof that they are ready to marry, we fail to instill in their minds the essential understanding that practicing discipleship in the home means first of all the ability and the will to share with each other the things that are important in the lives of both.

Our failures in this respect even within Christian homes are astounding. Shortly after marriage the time and attention of the wife is taken up almost exclusively with the needs of her children. During the same period the concerns of the

husband center in his business, which he justifies with the explanation to himself that it is essential that he provide for the material needs of his family. While there is certainly something commendable about the efforts of both, it is also true that the net result many times is that husbands and wives become total strangers to each other because of the primary concerns which they have allowed to crowd into their lives. It is no denial of the needs of children to say that the primary responsibility of the wife is not to her children but to her husband, for this is what God has said; and neither is it a denial of the husband's responsibility to provide for his family to say that first of all he owes allegiance to his wife with whom he has become one. Unless those who compose marriage are willing to make a genuine effort to share with each other it is not possible to practice discipleship within the marriage.

It is a failure here that contributes to the rapidly increasing number of divorces even among those who are members of the church. Young people date for a few months, have a pleasant time, are emotionally attracted to each other, decide to marry, and enter into that relationship without much actual discussion of those things that are really important to either or much understanding of the other's ideas and values. Because this is true, sometime after marriage they discover that they are actually strangers living together, with little or no ability to share anything really vital. Discipleship in the establishment and maintenance of the home requires first of all an honesty in facing up to the question, What effort are we making to serve the purpose which led God to call the home into existence in providing genuine companionship for those who compose it?

It is important also to recognize in studying the second

chapter of Genesis that in preparation for his home God made provision for the physical needs of Adam and Eve. The record says, "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food."<sup>2</sup>

God understood that man as a physical being would have to have his hunger supplied, and therefore caused the trees to produce their fruit without any effort on man's part. It is amazing to find how often young people enter into marriage without any conception of the fact that being a Christian involves the ability and the will to handle the financial needs of the marriage, and that it is just as much a part of being Christian for a man to provide for his family, and for a wife in industry and concern to fill the role of a worthy woman described in Proverbs 31 as it is for them to pray to God. It may seem to us a far cry from spiritual matters to be concerned about a family budget, and yet it is so important to God that he said, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."<sup>3</sup> If it is this important to the Almighty that a man recognize his responsibility to provide for the material needs of his family, it should certainly become clear to us that this is a part of Christian discipleship.

Often those of us who are parents fail our children by failing to help them understand what is involved in the finan-

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<sup>2</sup> Genesis 2:9

<sup>3</sup> 1 Timothy 5:8.

cial needs of a family. We suppose that we are providing for them by buying everything which they want and by hiding from them the financial struggle which we may be having. This is not to say that there are not times when it would be inappropriate to discuss with children whatever the family's financial circumstances may be; at the same time, however, part of the responsibility of parents in helping children grow up to accept their role in God's purpose for the family is surely to acquaint them with the financial realities which they must face. To allow them to suppose that by some magic process their wants and needs will all continue to be supplied as they have been during childhood is to do them a great disservice.

By the same token for those who are planning marriage to fail to make every possible effort to understand what will be involved financially and to see the means by which they will be able to provide the necessary funds means that they have not seriously thought of their Christian responsibility. It is particularly significant that a Christian young man who must face God and answer for the way in which he has provided for the needs of those dependent on him must give a great deal of attention to his own preparation for such a life and to his serious willingness to pay the price in order to accomplish these purposes. There is no way to talk seriously of discipleship when a husband refuses to do what he can to take care of his family or a wife refuses to be of help by her own industry and care in the spending of the money provided.

It is particularly sobering to note that of all the cases of divorce on record in our country, the one reason most often alleged for the problem in the marriage has to do with financial matters. Although it may well be true that sometimes

this explanation is only an excuse for a deeper problem, it should go without saying that when homes are breaking down at the rate of almost 800,000 a year in our country and in a majority of cases the explanation offered has to do with some financial problem, those of us who are concerned about serving God need to give serious attention to this matter.

A third impressive truth which becomes plain in the home that God created is the fact that that home was surrounded by law, divinely given, and divinely required. There was first a fundamental law given when woman was created and presented to Adam, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."<sup>4</sup> It is the only law known to me in the Bible which was given by God in the beginning, is repeated by Jesus in Matthew 19:5, and again by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 5:31. Here is a law given by the voice of God himself, repeated by Jesus, and confirmed by the Holy Spirit through the apostle which makes it clear that God's law governing marriage is that a man and woman live together until separated by death. It is amazing to find that many of us find no problem with divorce as long as there is no remarriage. While the particular purpose of this study is not the subject of divorce and remarriage, it is significant to point out that the law which God gave governing marriage is the law that a man and woman shall forsake all others and live together. Discipleship again requires that we do everything within our power to emphasize for those not yet married that they are entering into a permanent relationship for which God offers only death as the honorable exit. In the case of

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<sup>4</sup> Genesis 2:24.

divorce caused by unfaithfulness, it must be admitted that failure has been made in spite of the fact that God does recognize divorce on such grounds.<sup>5</sup> The crucial issue here is that the home is a relationship bound by the law of God, and all of the emotional reaction which we might have to God's law and all of our personal involvement in some particularly painful problem does not change the law which God has established. Discipleship in the home obviously requires the acceptance of that law.

It is true also that God established a law governing the food which Adam and Eve might eat when he said, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."<sup>6</sup> Here is a matter which undoubtedly made no sense to Adam and Eve if they stopped to think of it. And certainly, when Satan tempted them to disobey God's law by eating this fruit, they could see no logical reason as to why they should be forbidden its use. The principle which is established, however, is the principle that God's laws as they pertain to marriage, to the relationship between parents and children, husbands and wives, or any other aspect of marriage, must be obeyed if we are to be his followers. The husband who excuses his failure in marriage because he no longer loves his wife is in fact explaining that he has chosen not to obey God, since he has been specifically commanded by God: "husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."<sup>7</sup> The wife who is unwilling to be submissive to her

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<sup>5</sup> Matthew 19:9

<sup>6</sup> Genesis 2:16-17.

<sup>7</sup> Ephesians 5:25.

husband and who becomes so enamored of "women's liberation" that she is convinced that she ought to be equal in the decision making process in the home is in fact saying that she is not willing to obey God who said, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord."<sup>8</sup> It is not a matter of seeing the logic in God's requirements, but rather the fact that the home is surrounded by law which God established and those who would follow him must be willing to accept that law. When fathers are commanded to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, it is a commandment which cannot be set aside with the explanation that the wives tend to the spiritual training of children; and children who are unwilling to be obedient to parents on the grounds that they simply don't understand current problems are themselves refusing to obey the requirement which God makes. Every marriage relationship is restricted by the laws which God has established and must operate within those laws if we are truly to be his disciples.

It was always puzzling to me as I read the record in Genesis during childhood that God commanded Adam to dress and tend the trees of the garden. Since all things were made by God's power and it was obvious that during that early period the earth did not need man's cultivation, since it had not yet been cursed because of man's sin, it was hard to understand why God should make this requirement of man. Reflection during later years has suggested what seems to me to be a very important truth: God made man to need to feel wanted and needed by those around him. He therefore gave responsibility to Adam so that he might satisfy that need,

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<sup>8</sup> Ephesians 5:22.

that he might know that what he was doing was making a contribution not only to his wife but even to the purpose of God himself. I would suggest therefore that discipleship in the home includes also the responsibility to serve the needs of others rather than to develop the feeling that others ought to serve me. It is extremely dangerous when children are allowed to feel that they are the center of the home, and that the needs or wishes of parents or anyone else make no difference when they want something for themselves. In spite of the difficulties of our modern age in this respect, children need to be taught to accept their responsibilities in the home so that they can in turn feel the satisfaction that comes of knowing that they are needed and wanted. All of the Bible is built on the fundamental principle of our responsibility to one another and so to God. Even love for God is dependent on loving each other and proving that love by the service which we render. If we would be his disciples in the home there must be a genuine willingness cultivated to serve the needs of each other and to teach children growing up in the family the necessity of this way of life.

It seems to me especially impressive that when God established this first home he placed Adam and Eve in the midst of a beautiful garden "eastward in Eden." It would of course have been possible for God to locate them in the middle of the Sahara Desert or on some rocky crag, but instead he chose the beauty of such a place. Surely there must be a reason. It is tragic to find how many of us fail to recognize the tremendous impact which the surroundings of which we are a part have on those who operate within those surroundings.

I learned this principle first in teaching high school when

I discovered that a group of students could come into a classroom that was in disarray, with the chairs scattered in every direction and the blackboard scribbled upon, and those students would misbehave badly; I could let the same group of students come into the same classroom with the chairs neat and in orderly arrangement, the blackboard tidy, the bulletin board attractive, and they would be easy to control. It began to dawn on me that we do respond to the place in which we operate. I have had occasion many times through the years to visit in homes even of Christian families where there were problems and must confess that I have often not been surprised when wives have told me that their husbands seemed not to want to come home. To finish a day at work by going to a house that is obviously untidy and disheveled, where it is clear that no attempt has been made to make the place attractive or appealing would hardly encourage any man to feel thrilled and excited about going there. This is not to justify the failures of a husband, but it does suggest that discipleship in the home involves some attention to surrounding ourselves with the beauty with which the earth is filled.

To accomplish this purpose it is not essential to spend a great deal of money, for in the marvelous world in which we live it is possible to have the finest expressions of man's creative talent as God has given it for mere pennies. What it says even more is the fact that there is need to show that we care about those who make up the family unit and to make it clear from the things that we do that we are thankful to have the opportunity of spending time together. Surely God's arrangement of the home within the garden would suggest to us that this is a part of his expectations.

And finally, the voice of the Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and Eve shared with the Almighty a wonderful relationship until they violated it by sin. This must suggest to us the fact that if the home is to be the kind of home that God intended, it must be shared with him every day that we live. This is in fact the only possible guarantee for a successful home, for when two people share a commitment to God as their first loyalty, every problem can be resolved within this framework.

Sharing life with God requires more than a mere profession of Christianity or incidental church attendance. It means that the life of each individual will center in God, that every decision will be made in the light of God's will as set forth in his word. Parents will guide their children to the best of their ability into a realization of the fullness of life in Christ. Success will be measured by the degree of Christian character achieved, and not by ball games won or the outcome of class elections. When every aspect of life is shared with God in a genuine effort to accomplish the purposes he intended, a family will truly walk with him. It is when this is true that there will in truth be discipleship in the home.

## THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE DISCIPLES

Harvey Porter

Harvey Porter graduated in 1952 from Abilene Christian College with a major in Bible and a minor in Greek. He is married to the former Sue Gibson, 1950 graduate of ACC and older daughter of Dr. and Mrs. J. P. Gibson of Abilene. They have four children: Paula, Carla, Joel, and Sammy. He preached 2½ years in Tyler, Texas. He preached 2 years in Georgetown, Texas. He began in 1956 preaching in Albuquerque, New Mexico, at the San Pedro Church of Christ (first preacher there) with 30 members. After 9 years, sold all this property and moved to present location of the Montgomery Boulevard Church of Christ in 1965. He has been in Albuquerque for 17 years with the same congregation; present membership is 740. In 1968 made a study trip to British Museum in London, England. Also visited Oxford and Edinburgh, Scotland. During this trip slides were made of Biblical artifacts significant to archeology. In 1965 made a trip to London, Rome, Egypt,



Greece and Bible Lands. Photographed sights and artifacts of Biblical significance. In 1969 a study trip was made to the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago. Slides were made of more artifacts, especially from Assyria and Babylon. In that same year a study trip was made to the University of Pennsylvania. Slides were made of artifacts from ancient Sumer, Babylon and Persia. In 1971 a study trip was made to Rome and Cairo with special permission to photograph in the Egyptian Museum. Presentations of this series has been presented to several of our Christian colleges on lecture programs, and to many congregations in a study series. Was

tour guide for Holy Land trips in summers of 1972 and 1973. He is member of ACC Advisory Board. He is member of Chancellor's Counsel for Pepperdine University. The bulletin of the church, *The Exhorter*, which he writes, won the *20th Century Christian* "bulletin of the year" award in 1972. He has served on Lectureship Committee at Lubbock Christian College the last 4 years. He usually holds four Gospel Meetings per year. He has written publications for The Firm Foundation, *20th Century Christian*, and *Power for Today*.

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## OUTLINE

- I. Definition of terms
  1. Disciple
  2. Fellowship
- II. What Jesus and the disciples shared
  1. What Jesus shared with the Father
  2. Flesh and blood—suffering and death
- III. The New Fuller Fellowship for the Disciples
  1. The Ascended Christ
  2. Real elements of fellowship still present
  3. Paul on fellowship
  4. John on fellowship

The term "disciple" is consistently used in the four Gospels to describe the relationship between Jesus and His followers. It continues in the Acts of the Apostles, but here it ends. It is nowhere found in the rest of the New Testament. In fact, there may be the beginning of the transition in that familiar passage, Acts 11:26, "And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." Two other terms that were most frequently used were "believer" and "brethren."

It is surprising that our word "fellowship" never appears in the Gospels and only two times in Acts. Our main emphasis on "fellowship" in Christianity today is that of believer to believer. "Who can be in the fellowship?" We never use the word "disciple" to describe Christians today. We have almost completely moved to "brethren" and "Christian." Have we lost something by not putting these two great terms, "disciple" and "fellowship" together? Let us define these two words and look at their meanings and usage in New Testament times.

### DEFINITION

Our word "disciple" comes from the Greek word *mathetes*, which means "a learner or a student." J. M. Furness says that the verb *manthenein* meant to learn by experience or practice. He adds that the related adjective, *mathematicos*, fond of learning, gives us our word "mathematics."<sup>1</sup> *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* defines the word as a "pupil in contrast to a master or teacher" (see Matt. 10:24; Luke 6:40). "In all cases it implies that the person not only accepts the views of the teacher, but that he is also in practice an adherent."<sup>2</sup> Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* adds, "It is not in place when the reference is not merely to an external connection with the goal of picking up certain information or aptitudes under expert direction, but to a materially grounded fellow-

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<sup>1</sup> See Furness, J. M., *Vital Words of the Bible*, (Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1966) p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> *The International Bible Encyclopaedia*, (Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1949) Vol II, p. 851.

ship which arises under a goal which is certainly directed by an individual, but towards which all who participate are equally striving.”<sup>3</sup>

G. Campbell Morgan writes,

“The word itself (mathetes) signifies a taught or trained one, and gives us the ideal of relationship. Jesus is the Teacher. He has all knowledge of the ultimate purposes of God for man, of the will of God concerning man, of the laws of God that mark for man the path of his progress and final crowning.”<sup>4</sup>

It may be in this idea that we see the true meaning of discipleship—they had come to a person and attached themselves to him to learn the lessons that only he could teach. They ate with him, slept with him, walked and talked with him every day. Jesus was more than a teacher who put out a few lessons that they could take or leave. When they came to Him as His disciples they were taking upon themselves His way of life. Character and eternal destiny were being formed by this teacher. He became the center of their whole existence. What He loved, they loved. Where He went, they went. What He gave up, they would give up. With this in mind, we can appreciate the demands He made on them and consequently on us: “If any man cometh unto Me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and

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<sup>3</sup> Kittel, Gerhard, editor, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), Vol. 4, p. 817.

<sup>4</sup> Morgan, G. Campbell, *Discipleship*, (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1973) p. 12.

children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26). “Whosoever does not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:27). “Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33).

Two hundred and fifty times this beautiful word “disciple” is used in our Testament and it is confined mainly to that time our Lord was here upon earth, to the time of personal encounter, when He “called them unto Himself” and “they came unto Him.” That personal attachment to the teacher must not be lost in this century either, for we must remember that they who knew Him best were to “go and make *disciples* of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, *teaching* them . . . and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world” (Matt. 28:19, 20). We, too, have become His disciples by His teaching and know that He is with us personally unto the end.

We now define the beautiful word “fellowship.” Keep in mind that often we use several English words to define one Greek word. The basic term, translated sometimes as “communion,” “fellowship,” “communicate,” “partake,” “contribution,” and “common” stems from the Greek root *koin*. “There are two adjectives, *koinos* (found 10 times) and *synkoinonos* (found four times), which are used as nouns also; and two verbs *koinoneo* (eight times) and *synkoinoneo* (three times); and the noun *koinonia* (twenty times).”<sup>5</sup> The

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<sup>5</sup> Martin, R. P., *The New Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas, (Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1962) p. 245.

fundamental idea in the root of all these words is that of sharing in something with someone. "The important thing is that these words (belonging to the *koin* family) refer primarily, though not invariably, to participation in something rather than to association with others: and there is often a genitive to indicate that in which one participates or shares," states A. R. George in *Communion With God in the New Testament*, page 133.

Friedrich Hauck states that *koinonia* is an abstract term from *koinonos* (fellow, participant) and *koinoneo* ("to share with someone in something which he has . . . to take part"). It expresses a two-sided relation; emphasis may be on either the giving or the receiving. It means (1) participation, (2) impartation, (3) fellowship.<sup>6</sup>

Hauck further adds, "In the Old Testament we never find *koinonia* for the relationship between God and man."<sup>7</sup> The righteous man of the Old Testament regards himself as in a relationship of dependence upon God and of belonging to him.<sup>8</sup> He continues, "The sacrificial meal was regarded as a sacral fellowship between God and man. In Israel, too, the common meal implies a close relationship which binds the participants to one another."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Hauck, Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Gerhard Kittel, editor, (Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), Vol. III, p. 798.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, Vol. III, p. 801.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 801.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 801.

From these definitions we can see that the disciples who had attached themselves to Jesus as learners would in fellowship share with Him, have in common, give and receive, become spiritual partners with Him. What He brought from heaven they would share in and what they had upon earth He would partake of, too.

### TEACHER AND DISCIPLES, SHARERS TOGETHER

We would do well to remind ourselves of what this heaven-sent teacher had to offer. He was in constant fellowship with the Father. They knew each other completely. They loved each other with unbounded love. They worked together to accomplish the same work. They were "with" one another constantly. Notice some of Jesus' statements concerning the Father and Himself.

"For I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me" (John 8:16). "He that loveth me not keepeth not my words: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's who sent me" (John 14:24). "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father. I came out from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father" (John 16:27, 28). "Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing: for what things soever he doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner. For the Father loveth the Son and showeth him all things that himself doeth: and greater works than these will he show him, that ye may marvel" (John 5:19, 20). "That ye may know and understand that the Father is in me,

and I in the Father” (John 10:38). “Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me” (John 16:32).

These passages make it apparent to us that anyone who had complete fellowship with Jesus would have the same with God. To know Jesus was to know the Father. To do the work of Jesus was to do the work of the Father. To listen to the words of Jesus was to listen to God. What He shared with God He shared with His disciples.

The author of the Hebrew epistle declares that sinful man needed two things most in his relation to God—*access* and *acceptability*. Man could not come near God while in his sinful condition. The priest went for him with a sacrifice to atone for his sins to make him acceptable. There was no closeness of fellowship. But Jesus would not change all of that. Those attached to Him as disciples would not only know and love and share with Him; they would know and love and share with God Himself. The way (access) was now opened by Jesus. “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father but by me” (John 14:6). Acceptability was now secured by the sacrifice that He made—His own life. Fellowship with Jesus meant fellowship with the Eternal One, God Himself.

But what did the disciples have to share with Jesus when He came? Bodies of flesh and blood that were plagued with pain and suffering and finally ended in death were the chief elements that we had to offer Him. He became a sharer with us. “Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of

death . . .” (Heb. 2:14). The fellowship of the disciples became complete—He shared with them what He had and they shared with Him what they had.

The death, burial and the resurrection of Jesus now make available for the first time full fellowship for sinful man with the Holy Father. His resurrected body will ascend to the Father, but He will send the Holy Spirit to animate His new “body” the church, which will extend this privilege of fellowship to all in every nation who want to be His disciples (Matt. 28:18-20). The word “disciple” will move over to share place with the word “believer” (one attached to the Teacher because they accept His word and message) and “brethren,” describing the family of all who are sharing in the blessings of this new “body.” Let us look at

#### THE NEW FULLER FELLOWSHIP OF THE DISCIPLES

Archibald Hunter expressed it very well when he wrote,

“There are still those among us who imagine that the Christian life is a kind of harking-back to the first century in the endeavour to follow Christ as the first disciples did in Galilee. They need to learn from Paul that the essence of being a Christian lies in fellowship with a *contemporary* Christ, a Christ no longer cramped and confined as in ‘the days of his flesh’ but ‘let loose in the world,’ by the Resurrection and the coming of the Spirit, to be a ubiquitous and universal Saviour. Further, for Paul, this fellowship with Christ was not something felt by only a few people in hours of special exaltation; it was ordinary Christian experience, something to be shared by all God’s people.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Hunter, Archibald M., *The Gospel According to St. Paul*, (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1966) p. 101.

Every student of Paul has noted the frequency of the phrase "in Christ" in his letters. If we count the by-forms like "in him," the phrase occurs some 200 times. In Galatians 3:27, he says, "For as many as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." When one was baptized into Christ he came into His possession, became "in Him." Hunter states, "Whatever else it means, 'in Christ' must mean 'in communion with Christ.'"<sup>11</sup>

Paul continues his emphasis on the Christian's fellowship with Christ by his constant use of the Greek prefix *sun* or *sum* on key words of the Scripture. *Sum* means "with" and adds an emphasis to the word to which it is joined. In Romans 6:8, he puts *suzan*, *live with Him*. Romans 8:17, has *sumpaskein*, *suffer with Him*. Both, Romans 6:6, and Galatians 2:19, have *sumtaurousthai*, *crucified with Him*. II Corinthians 7:3, has *sunapothanein*, *to die together with Him*. Romans 6:4, and Colossians 2:12, record *sunthaptein*, *buried with Him*. *Raised with Him*, *sunegeipein*, appears in Colossians 2:12; 3:1; and Ephesians 2:6. *Suzoopoiein* is "make alive together with Him" and is found in Colossians 2:13 and Ephesians 2:5. Romans 8:17 record *sundoexazein*, which is *glorified with Him*. And II Timothy 2:12 gives *sumbasileuein*, *shall reign with Him*. We might well say with Paul that every important aspect of Christianity is in one way or another "with Him."

Of the twenty times our word for "fellowship," *koinonia*, appears in the New Testament, Paul uses it fifteen times, Luke one time, and John four times. Paul makes the

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, p. 33.

“death, burial and resurrection of Jesus” the very heart of the Good News message (see I Cor. 15:1-4). In our faith and obedience in baptism we are “united with Him” in the likeness of His death, burial, and resurrection. The Lord’s Supper also speaks of the death, burial, and resurrection. Again, we “take it with” Him and “partake” of His body and His blood. Coming into God’s family is “with Him,” and sitting at God’s table in the fellowship of worship and adoration is “with Him.”

We now turn to the Apostle John for the last usage of “fellowship” in our New Testament. In many ways his three verses are the richest of all its occurrences.

John begins his epistle by saying that he and the rest of the apostles saw Jesus from the very beginning and handled Him. Jesus was with the Father and was manifested or opened up and shown unto them, the apostles, who were His disciples. In verse 3, he says, “that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” Here it is: the connecting link! What John and the rest had as disciples (learners) of Jesus in that fellowship they are now going to declare unto us that we, too, may have fellowship with them as His disciples and with the Father and the Son also. This complements Matthew’s record that these disciples were to go and make more disciples by teaching the word of Jesus and by baptizing them into that fellowship with Jesus and the Father and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20).

John R. W. Stott writes,

“The fellowship created by Christ in the days of His flesh within the apostolic band, and deepened by the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost, was not to be limited to them. It was to extend to the next generation (that ye also may have fellowship with us), and so on down the ages. ‘The last of the apostles points to the unbroken succession of the heritage of Faith’ (Westcott).”<sup>12</sup>

John continues, “If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (I John 1:6, 7). Anyone who has fellowship with Jesus does not walk in darkness, but in light. And he has fellowship with all the other disciples who are walking in the light. And they all together have fellowship with God and the Son. This reminds us of the prayer of Jesus in John 17, where He says, “Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us” (verses 20, 21). Notice that others who receive their word (the apostles’ message which John here says we declare unto you) will all be one in this fellowship of walking in light, and as Jesus has always been one with the Father, we being one with Him will be one with God. This is the whole aim of heaven’s fellowship—we as disciples are one with Christ and hence one with God the Father.

John in this first epistle tells us that the very nature of

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<sup>12</sup> Stott, John R. W., *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, The Epistles of John*, ed. R. V. G. Tasker, (Grand Rapids, W. B. Eerdmans, 1971) p. 63.

God is to be found in three descriptive words—light, life, and love. Anyone who shares together with God will participate in these three. John emphatically states that “God is light” and anyone who has fellowship with Him will walk in light (verse 6). Light is always associated with truth, the revelation of God. “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” (Psalms 119: 105). Robert Law in his classic commentary wrote, “The single meeting-place of the Holy God and sinful men is, to begin with, the Truth; the only medium of their fellowship, a common view of spiritual realities.” Jesus’ great utterance concerning truth complements this when He said, “If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31, 32). The true (real, genuine) disciples (learners) come to Jesus to be enlightened by Him concerning God who is light and “dwells in light unapproachable” (I Timothy 6:16). John continues this train of thought in his epistle by saying, he that knows God must keep His commandments (2:4); we know that we are in Him (3:5); he that abides in Him walks as He walks (2:6); ye know the Father (2:14); those who love are begotten of God and know God (4:7) and the Son has come and given us an understanding, that we know Him that is true (5:20). The disciple of Jesus knows the truth and walks in it as his light.

God is life and the giver and sustainer of life. Anyone who is a partaker of God or in fellowship with Him will have life. John states that Jesus is that “Word of Life” from God (verse 1). Near the close of this first epistle he writes, “And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life” (5:11, 12).

John completes the triad by saying simply "God is love" (4:8, 16). That great force that Paul calls "the more excellent way" (I Cor. 12:31) becomes also the nature and way of life for those who have fellowship with Jesus and the Father. It would seem that Jesus said it all concerning fellowship for His disciples with Him and with the Father, when he declared, "I am the way (could it be the more excellent way of love?), the truth (light), and the life (eternal as God is), and no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

We have endeavored in these few passages to look at the fellowship of the disciples of Jesus, to know the rich meaning of these two words. We have tried to see what Jesus had in common with His disciples during His earthly visit. We learn especially through Paul and John that the partnership those disciples had with Jesus was to be ours, too. John has declared unto us that this fellowship with the Godhead might best be described as light, life, and love. We have not dealt with the fact that disciples may "go back and walk no more with Him" (John 6:66). They can break the fellowship. A positive approach to this great subject necessitates some limitations.

It is the aim of the Heavenly Father to invite every poor sinner into fellowship with Him through the sacrificial blood of His Son. Jesus uses the last book of heaven's message to state for the last time His wonderful invitation of fellowship: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I *will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me*" (Rev. 3:20). Then with Him at the Father's table in glory can we truly say, "It is enough for the disciple to be as his Master" (Matthew 10:25).

## THE DISCIPLE'S JOY

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Birth—Franklin, Kentucky, on June 16, 1921

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Married Betty Bergner on July 20, 1943, and they have two children,

MariLynn, 24, and Mark, 20

Churches served—Sheridan, Arkansas, 1942-1946; Isabell, Kansas, 1947; Locust Grove, Kentucky, 1948-1952; Grace Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee, 1952-1956; West End, Nashville, Tennessee, 1956-

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Joy is simple, yet complex. It's a possession of countless thousands, yet elusive of those millions who make it their chief end. Words from "U. S. News & World Report", August 27, 1973, state:

"In an era of rising affluence and leisure time, Americans are finding happiness more elusive than ever before.

"On the surface, their well-being goes beyond anything the nation's founders might have foreseen in 1776 while proclaiming the pursuit of happiness to be an 'unalienable right.'

"Never have so many citizens of any society, past or present, achieved lifetime dreams once limited to the few—their own homes, wide-ranging travel and college educations.

"Never have as many spent as much money—an estimated 115 billion dollars this year—on recreation and leisure activities ranging from quadrasonic sound to back-yard swimming pools and professional football games.

*"Massive miseries.* Yet for many Americans, the best of times is beginning to seem the worst of times.

"Technology, while showering an abundance of goods on U. S. consumers, also is conferring a wide range of new miseries such as massive air and water pollution, power blackouts, traffic congestion and spiraling inflation.

"Consumer products themselves are bringing bad news as well as good.

"Recently, Chairman Lewis Engman of the Federal Trade Commission complained as follows about products that don't work, aren't delivered or won't stay together:

"What is the consumer's recourse when he finds himself stuck with a \$10 toaster which burns his bread to a crisp, and the store manager tells him his warranty is invalid . . . when he continues to be billed for goods he never bought, and all the computer will do is add on monthly interest charges and spew out letters threatening a lawsuit?

"The simple fact is that for vast and increasing numbers of consumers with valid complaints there is nothing to be done . . . other than to kick the dog, yell at his children and

curse his wife.'

"The American Medical Association's annual convention recently was told that probably 10 million persons in this country need treatment for depression.

"Between 1965 and 1971, the number of children under 18 getting psychiatric treatment at established mental-health facilities rose by nearly two-thirds—a growth attributed by experts in the field to increasing stress in families, uncertainty about values and, according to one psychiatrist, 'a more automated, less personal society.'

"Suicide rates have inched upward slightly during the past decade, and the increase is marked for women and the young. Neurotics Anonymous, whose members are or have been emotionally disturbed, came into being in 1964 and now has chapters in more than 200 cities.

"Disappearing from sight are the Utopian dreams of the 1960's—the Camelot of John F. Kennedy's admirers or the Aquarian age of harmony celebrated by young rebels as they turned to drugs and demonstrations.

"An off-Broadway hit play this year has been National Lampoon's 'Lemmings,' which portrays the last decade as a self-destructive plunge over the cliff. High point of the play is 'The Woodshuck Festival of Love, Peace and Death'—depicted as a mass suicide."

"Roseto, a small community of Italo-Americans near the slate quarries of eastern Pennsylvania, a town of about 1,600, became known as a 'miracle town' when medical researchers, in 1961, discovered no one under 50 had suffered a fatal heart attack in records going back to 1955. Heart-attack fatalities among older people were far below the national average.

"Yet when the researchers returned in 1971, they found that two men in their early 40's had died of heart attacks that year, and the over-all rate of heart-attack fatalities had been rising sharply over a period of several years.

"Why? Said one of the researchers, Dr. John G. Bruhn, a sociologist from the University of Texas medical branch in Galveston:

'Too much had happened in 10 years. People who had been living pretty much as they had for decades—close-knit families with men working in the quarries and women in the blouse mills—suddenly began changing.

'The men began commuting to better-paying jobs 20 to 30 miles away. They spent money on new furniture and new automobiles, and sent their kids away to colleges. The pace of living stepped up, and they had no time left to talk over their worries and satisfactions with each other. Instead, they wanted to outdo each other.

'Food became richer—in cost and cholesterol. In short, they became Americanized.'

"The pastor of a Roman Catholic church in Roseto put it another way: 'We have joined the rat race.'"

"Today, happiness—or the search for it—is being exploited in the marketplace far and wide as never before.

"A television jingle tells of a car manufacturer's desire 'to make you happy.' A California tourist poster proclaims: 'Happiness Is California'—while nationwide, the yellow and moonfaced 'Smile' badges and stickers beam from countless windshields and T-shirts. The August issue of a major magazine banners a feature article: 'The Art of Being Happy.'

"A Boston firm is offering programmed studies in behavioral controls to 'a limited group of men and women who seriously want to achieve happiness.' Women are achieving it, in name, at least, with a new hair-coloring called, simply, 'Happiness.'"

"In 'Facing Westward From California's Shores,' Walt Whitman—the poet laureate of American energy and thrust—wrote this epilogue to the nation's westward march: 'Where is what I started for so long ago? And why is it yet unfound?'"

Joy is daily employed by you who take it for granted, yet it puzzles and mystifies those who find it absent. Look for it—it's not there. Pursue your duty and you will find you have it! Joy is the serendipity of service.

Thus joy, for the disciple, is intelligent. It comes as the result of pursuit of a prescribed course. Naturally this makes joy selective and variant, its acquisition is predicated on the choices made by you in day to day living. To be sure, it comes on a graduated scale; both in amount and sustainment. Some joys and pleasures are but "for a season" (Hebrews 11:25) because they are based on that which cannot last or permanently profit. But oh the disciple's joy! It goes on forever!

It begins here as a result of what happens. A case in point is Philip's preaching:

"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city" (Acts 8:5-8).

The gospel is *good news*. Jesus went into "every city and village preaching and showing the *glad tidings* of the Kingdom of God" (Luke 8:1). It's according to the eternal principle—God is good for man—Jesus came that you might have life (John 10:10), for eternally established is the fact, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalms 16:11). It's ever been so that God is the fountain of joy—"For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit" (Ecclesiastes 2:26).

One now is moved to see why John wrote as he did: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (III John 4). This Kingdom Jesus came preaching has in it unmistakable features, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 14:17). Paul listed it this way to the Galatians, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith" (Galatians 5:22). No wonder a deacon at West End wrote, "We preach happiness, we practice despair. We preach the joy of Christ and throw up our hands in horror at the slightest discomfort. Is the joy and happiness of daily living seen in me? If not, then how will others see Jesus?" John Ruskin said, "He only is advancing in life whose heart is getting softer, whose blood is getting warmer, whose brain quicker, and whose spirit is entering into living peace." Jesus imparts rejoicing "with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (I Peter 1:8). No wonder centuries ago the Psalmist prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit" (Psalms 51:12).

Though joy is the disciple's, can every day be a "fun day"? Doesn't he have his rough spots? Really now, should the disciple expect less than his Lord who "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2). The saint will suffer, but it will not erase his joy:

"And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame

for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:40-42).

He knows "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psalms 30:5). He continues in service to God, for the promise is "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" (Psalms 126:5).

The saint sees the Big Picture. He witnesses both "tree and forest" without losing sight of the end so marvelous. Jesus promises that oft prayed for "welcome plaudit" (second only to "ready recollection" in public prayerful popularity) "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matthew 25:21). Paul persevered with a firm dismissal of annoyances, trials and setbacks as he said, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24). His faith was supreme in his God who was secure, thus his joy was eternal as in Jude's words the benediction: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever" (Jude 24-25). Truly, you can sing, "Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice", for the Holy Spirit commands, "Rejoice evermore" (I Thess. 5:16). MacCartney logically asks, "Where is happiness found?" and worked out this formula:

*"NOT IN UNBELIEF*—Voltaire was an infidel and of the most pronounced type. He wrote: 'I wish I had never been born.'

“*NOT IN PLEASURE*—Lord Byron lived a life of pleasure, if anyone did. He wrote: ‘The worm, the canker and the grief are mine alone.’

“*NOT IN MONEY*—Jay Gould, the American millionaire, had plenty of that. When dying, he said: ‘I suppose I am the most miserable man on earth.’

“*NOT IN POSSESSION OR FAME*—Lord Beaconsfield enjoyed more than his share of both. He wrote: ‘Youth is a mistake, manhood a struggle, old age a regret.’

“*NOT IN MILITARY GLORY*—Alexander the Great conquered the known world of his day. Having done so, he wept in his tent because, he said, ‘There are no more worlds to conquer.’

“*WHERE, THEN?* The simple answer: ‘In Christ alone.’ He said, ‘I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you’” (John 16:22).

Now from the positive fact that the Lord intends for His disciples to have joy, move to an account that tells its actual employment in the lives of His followers. It’s the Ascension story as told by Luke in Luke 24:50-52 and Acts 1:9-11. This is the way he wrote it: “And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy” (Luke 24:50-52).

“And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:9-11).

From these words, seven reasons are cited for you as to why the disciples had joy. Though, except by faith, you do not witness the ascension; these reasons for their joy are still just as real for you and your joy. The same truths of their discovery are precisely the same for your possession this very hour.

Why could they be happy?:

- (1) The Lord who led them, taught the beatitudes while here, is still *alive*, He *continues* to speak (Mark 16:19) and many infallible proofs attest the resurrection.
- (2) Though Jesus is so powerful death cannot hold Him, He is still so tender that He blesses (Acts 1:3).
- (3) Jesus is vindicated, every word He spoke is true, He's back home in Heaven at the right hand of God who accepts His vicarious sacrifice (Mark 16:19).
- (4) Both Heaven and Earth acclaim Him worthy of worship, praise and blessings continuously.
- (5) They then possessed the promise as you do the participation in the Kingdom.
- (6) He gave them a world-sweeping missionary challenge and called for earth's partnership with Heaven's command post.
- (7) Lastly, the planet earth is to be visited again—*Jesus* will return.

Now study the combined accounts.

In His last day on earth, Jesus led the disciples "out as far as to Bethany." Two miles or so east of Jerusalem He came to one of His favorite cities. Friends like Martha, Mary, Lazarus lived there. Their home had been His. It was a glorious day. Barclay well observed that it would be

unthinkable the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus would grow fewer and fewer until they played out. Sometime it had to end and this was it. But the phasing out of this redemptive chapter gives way to another illustrious one. And so they came to what Barnes called "the eastern declivity of the Mount of Olives."

On the side of that mountain reminiscent of the priestly blessing Judaism knew the everliving and loving Lord "lifted up His hands and blessed them" (Luke 24: 50). No one today knows what He said in that blessing. His last earthly words Luke records as He answered a question,

"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:6-8).

The ascension blessing was not completed—hasn't been yet—Jesus is still blessing His folk even this very hour. He blessed them as He talked, as He arose, and He blesses with a "blessed assurance" even this good moment. Unending are the blessings of Jesus for those that are His! As the Jewish priest on the completion of his sacrifice lifted his hands over the people he was dismissing (Lev. 9:22), so the resurrected Lord who'd proclaimed from Calvary's cross "It is finished" raised His hands to bless a denied world. To be sure, the blessing brought joy! You had a right to accept it, for earlier of him it said, "When Jesus knew that his hour was come that

he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (John 13:1). And love them to the end He did; and unendingly He does!

The word "while" has some strange occurrences in your Bible: Peter's speech is interrupted at mount of transfiguration (Matt. 17:5), while the Emmaus hikers communed together, Jesus joined them (Luke 24:15), and even Jesus' invitation, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest a while" (Mark 6:31) has been altered in today's rat race to "come ye apart period!" There is no while as unusual as the interruption of the ascension blessing, While He was blessing them, He departed!! He gloriously was "taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9). Literally, He was "received under"—no visible agent lifted Him, simply a cloud came under Him and when it disappeared, He had!

And don't you like his "direction"? He went "up"! Jesus gives the upward thrust to all. What a difference a preposition makes—not "down," or "over," or "beyond," or "away," but up! God dwells on high. He came from the Father; He returns to Him. His work is victoriously completed. While He spake and while they looked, He went up. As Jesus rises, so all that He touches does.

Balance was there. Heaven does its part, it challenges man to do his. The Wesleyan work says the Kingdom today suffers from two things: (1) lack of a heavenly grace and thus no manward responsibility—man neither hears nor sees anything and therefore does nothing, and (2) disproportionate sense of manward responsibility without the

heavenly gaze. Like the carpenter's square, in the religion of Jesus one arm points to God and one to man.

Jesus was carried to Heaven. He, as Robert Oglesby preaches, came to share your earth, He now calls you to come share His Heaven.

What were the disciples to do after witnessing such a breathtaking event? What they did was so real—"they worshipped him" (Luke 24:52). Though worship didn't always denote religious homage (Luke 14:10), surely here it does. The Savior's absent, but the adoration is present. This was the first homage paid Jesus after He left the earthly. It's surely apostolic to worship the physically absent Lord today. Man must be aroused from his attitude of helpless nothing—nothing can do this quite like the worship of the Worthy Lamb.

Finally, they "returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Luke 24:52). Everybody's got to come down from the mountain! Worship is joyful, but so's work. He challenged them to "be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). (The width of this commission a bit unlike a sign in a Volkswagen factory that said, "Think big and you're fired.") They've a task to do—nothing can stop them.

Joy? Certainly, as Luke would say! Joy because nothing can separate them from Jesus; Joy because the friend of earth is also now a friend in Heaven; Joy because redemption is assured; Joy because the news is too great to contain—carry it world-wide; Joy because frustration is now realization, God's better plan has unfolded; Joy because the Holy Spirit was to come, even as there is joy today because Jesus is to come—

“Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Matt. 26:64), or “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11); Joy because His promises give peace; Joy because His faith in man gives him a task.

Christ is that answer—Jesus is the cause, for to you He said, “Rejoice and be exceeding glad” (Matt. 5:12).

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.

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 Savior of mankind!

O Hope of ev'ry contrite heart!  
O Joy of all the meek!  
To those who fail, 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.

# PANELS



## ETHICAL PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN IN BUSINESS

Homer O. Gainer

- Born April 28, 1922—Eden, Texas
- Baptized September 1936
- Graduate of Eden High School, Eden, Texas
- Graduate of Texas A&M University—BS Degree, May 1943
- Postgraduate work—University of Houston, 1954-55
- Married Betty Marlar, Melvin, Texas, December 11, 1943
- Two daughters and one son:



Mrs. Billy M. Kilgore, Jr.  
(Dell Anne)  
Mrs. Vernon H. Berry, Jr.  
(Lucy)  
both attended Abilene Christian College  
Joe Marlar Gainer—attends  
Dallas Christian High School

- Received Army commission during World War II and attained rank of Lt. Colonel, U.S. Army Reserve.
- Served as deacon at the MacGregor Park and Southwest congregations, Houston, Texas. Served as deacon and later as elder at Carrollton Avenue congregation, New Orleans, Louisiana. Presently serving as elder at Skillman Avenue, Dallas, Texas.

- Chairman of Board of Trustees—Christian Schools, Inc., Dallas, Texas;  
Vice-Chairman of Advisory Board of Trustees, Abilene Christian College.
  - Member of Board of Directors—Boles Children's Home, Quinlan, Texas.
  - Employed as Employee Relations Coordinator, Exxon Company, U.S.A., Dallas, Texas.
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Several years ago I was amused while watching a television program featuring Sid Caesar, a comedian. The program was a situation comedy and Caesar had somehow come into the possession of a mink coat, though it was never explained how he obtained the coat. He had determined that he would give the coat to his wife. His problem was one of explaining to her where the coat came from. Finally he discussed his problem with a close friend. His confidant came forth with this penetrating question "Why don't you tell the truth?" Then came Caesar's tragic reply "You know, I never thought of that!"

Is the matter of honesty an ethical problem facing Christians? Is it a particular problem to the Christian in business? Perhaps not, but there are situations which do arise which involve ethics and which need to be discussed.

There are at least three statements which need to preface a discussion of ethical problems.

1. That which is unethical in some instances may be legal.
2. Disciples have an obligation to comply with both the letter and the spirit of the law.
3. A disciple's motives must be aboveboard.

In all matters the disciple must apply the principle set forth in the Golden Rule.

Perhaps a definition of ethics should be given. Ethics is defined as the discipline dealing with what is good and bad or right and wrong or with a moral duty and obligation. It is a group of moral principles or set of values. Ethics involves the principles of conduct governing an individual or a profession. It sets forth standards of behavior.

The word ethical means being in accord with approved standards of behavior or a socially or professionally accepted code. It concerns itself with involving or expressing moral approval or disapproval. It means conforming to professionally endorsed principles and practices.

What are some ethical problems which face the Christian in business? A disciple may be either an employer or an employee. As an employer he faces countless ethical problems. Consider this laundry list of situations which a Christian employer faces.

#### *1. Governmental regulations.*

There are a tremendous number of executive orders, decrees, rules, regulations, policies, and ordinances to be obeyed. There is a mountain of paper work. A businessman is required to complete all manner of forms, reports, documents, and questionnaires. He is asked to answer countless questions and use valuable time while he is visited by inspectors, compliance review officers, wage-hour and OSHA administrators, and various other governmental agents. Faced with these problems he may be tempted to ignore or skim over some of these matters. Though it is unethical, he may comply for a less than

honorable motive. For example, the businessman is required to prepare an Affirmative Action Plan if he wishes to gain or retain a government contract. The AAP is a requirement of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Is there an unethical action if minorities and females are employed for the sake of a profitable contract?

### 2. *Corporate citizenship.*

What is an employer's responsibility in the community where he does business?

Is he obligated to participate in the various fundraising activities? What are his motives for participating? An ethical problem may arise if he is solicited for a gift for the United Way by a citizen who happens to be a member of the tax equalization board or perhaps a member of the local planning commission. Is there a tendency to make a more generous gift in the year in which he plans to ask for a commercial rezoning of his property? This brings up the question of being a "joiner" of clubs and fraternities. A Christian businessman must seriously question his motives.

### 3. *Office situation.*

All employers are familiar with the Fair Labor Standards Act. They are aware of wage-hour laws and rules which govern overtime. Yet there are countless instances of a non-exempt salaried employee being asked to work a few extra minutes to finish a letter or complete a report. No thought is given to overtime payments. Is an employer being ethical when this infringement becomes a habit and practice? What about an employer who has no active salary policy for merit or

promotional increases? At what point has he become unethical in failing to pay for services received?

#### 4. *Collusion.*

This is an action by companies which violates anti-trust laws. It involves acting in concert with competitors. Even if no laws are broken an ethical question arises. How near to a candle may a miller moth fly before singeing his wings? To what extent may corporate information be exchanged? The following statement from one of the nation's largest corporations states emphatically that "honesty is the policy." It reads thusly:

"The policy of this company is one of strict observance of all laws which may be applicable to its business.

"Our policy does not stop there. Even where the law is permissive, we pursue the course of the highest integrity. Local customs, traditions, and mores differ from place to place, and this must be allowed for. But honesty is not subject to criticism in any culture. Shades of dishonesty simply invite demoralizing and reprehensible judgments. A well-founded reputation for scrupulous dealing is itself a priceless company asset.

"An overly-ambitious manager, who is not aware of our policy and our views, might have the mistaken idea that we do not care how results are obtained, as long as he gets results. He might think it best not to tell higher management all that he is doing, not to record all transactions accurately in his books and records, and to deceive the company's internal and external auditors. He would be wrong on all counts.

"First, we *do* care how we get results. We expect compliance with our standard of integrity throughout the organization. We will not reward a manager who achieves results at the cost of violation of laws or unscrupulous

dealing. By the same token, we will support, and we expect you to support, a manager who passes up an opportunity or advantage which can only be secured at the sacrifice of principle.

“Second, and equally important, we expect candor from managers at all levels, and compliance with accounting rules and controls. Our system of management will not work without honest bookkeeping, honest budget proposals, honest economic evaluation of projects. We don’t want liars for managers, whether they are lying in a mistaken effort to protect us or to make themselves look good.

“One of the kinds of harm which results when a manager conceals information from higher management is that subordinates within his organization think they are being given a signal that company policies and rules, including accounting and control rules, can be ignored whenever inconvenient. The result can be fast-spreading corruption and demoralization of an entire organization.”

##### 5. *Salesmanship.*

A matter of ethics is involved in attempts to oversell a product. I recall a cartoon which pictured an owner returning his recently purchased car to the dealer’s lot. The caption was somewhat along this line: “I don’t want to trade this car back in. I just want you to give me the same spiel you gave me before I bought the car.”

Can we as Christians agree to avoid “hard-sell” practices? This includes such cases as the early-day lightning rod salesmen who would wait until a hot summer afternoon to make his call on a rural farmhouse. He would start his sales pitch about the time a noisy thundercloud appeared. The salesman would then ask the family to kneel with him while he offered a petition

that lightning wouldn't strike before rods were installed. Sometimes he made a sale. It's common knowledge that higher priced caskets are placed in strategically well lighted areas, whereas the less expensive offerings are down-played. Then too you may recall how the Kingfish insisted that Andy would rest more peacefully over by the lake of white swans in contrast to a cheaper cemetery lot over by the loud railroad track. One more time we need to speak out against those of our brethren who are forever offering us golden opportunities to participate in "get rich quick" schemes.

Another selling practice is known as the bait and switch. This involves the tactic of offering a costly item at a low price. After the prospective buyer has taken the bait he is shown progressively more expensive items until he has switched from the advertised item. In some instances the advertiser doesn't have the low-priced item in stock. Of course we recognize this as an unethical practice. The familiar dictum "caveat emptor" (let the buyer beware) continues to be an unethical business practice. But what about baiting with loss leaders? Is it ethical to sell an item at a loss for the purpose of obtaining sales on other items? What about the practice of a profession which is required by law to post the prices of their top 100 sales items? I'm told these 100 items are made to become loss leaders with plans to make larger profits from the items not posted. Can we conclude this is an unethical business practice?

#### 6. *Advertising.*

In an advertising department how much plays upon the consumer fears, or status, or sexuality? What about the mascara ad which promises to make a person irresist-

ible? Or the exotic, daring terms and names given to perfumes? Is the use of illusions and inferences to sell cosmetics a question of ethics? One major corporation published this policy statement.

“It is important that we watch closely what we say and how we say and illustrate things in our advertising. We must be prepared to provide thorough documentation of any and all product claims. It is important we strive to be honest and straight-forward in the wording of our copy.”

### *7. Personnel Administration.*

In his book *Ethics and Business* William A. Spurrier questions the calculated use of the Dale Carnegie methods of personnel administration. It is the psychological technique of the firm handshake, the pleasant smile and a question about the wife and kiddoes. It is the gimmick of buttering an employee's ego by letting him talk, then flattering him, and then when he's ripe you can "sell" him or fire him or transfer him or almost anything. Spurrier states there is the frequent fraud of praising the man and telling him he's doing so well that he is being transferred to another department more in keeping with his great abilities. Actually this hypocrisy fools no one. It is an unethical treatment of a demotion.

Now to the matter of the Christian employee in the business world. What ethical problems exist? I believe they are numerous.

#### *1. The degree of diligence on the job.*

I believe many Christians are guilty of being slothful in business. They are not nearly so productive as they should be. They do not work hard. In fact they may have provoked the comment that sometime between

coming to work and going home, allowing for coffee breaks, shopping, visiting the next office, discussing sports and the coming weekend and after telling a few jokes and making several personal calls on the telephone, there should be a period known as work time.

2. *Absenteeism*. This is a universal problem in business and industry. The absentee rate is alarming. Christian employees are among the group of employees who are guilty of missing work for reasons not completely valid. The all-time basketball great Jerry West made the statement that if he's in pain, he plays; but that if he's injured he doesn't play. Perhaps our brethren should adopt this practice.

3. *Corporate Loyalty*. Many employees are not willing to promote the interests of their industry or of their employer's business. It is my opinion that an employee owes much to his employer. Is an employee unethical if he "knocks" his boss or bites the hand that feeds him? It seems to me that an employee is morally obligated to be supportive of his employer.

4. *Petty theft*. There seems to be an unwritten law that pilfering is somehow legitimate. Corporate losses resulting from employee theft is conceded to be a major problem which affects many profit and loss statements. Surveys indicate that staggering losses result from employee theft. Such pilferage is costing American business \$3 billion a year, a figure that has trebled since 1960, says Robert Parremore, an official of the Surety Association of America. Parremore said the kind of corruption that recently was uncovered in government is rampant in American business.

At the present rate of increases, Parremore said, the pilferage toll could double again in a few years. The electronic computer alone gives clever thieves a way to steal huge amounts. Crooked programmers can cause the computer to spew out unauthorized checks and unordered deliveries of valuable merchandise that are difficult to trace.

Parremore and Robert Keller, secretary of Zurich American Insurance Co., which does a lot of bonding and writes burglary insurance, say most of the embezzling and pilferage is by employees in their mid-30's. Regardless of age, the embezzlers have one thing in common. They are living beyond their means, either because of extravagance, large hospital bills, gambling or illicit love affairs. What is the Christian employee's position; We know the answer. None of us is entitled to take that which is not rightfully ours.

5. *Expense accounts.* This is an ethical problem for many Christians. Reports from the Internal Revenue Service would indicate this to be a serious temptation in the lives of countless citizens. Let us forcefully urge the need for strict accounting and honest reporting of expense accounts.

What is the conclusion of this matter? The following comments seem appropriate:

1. We must not seek verification of our actions by trusting our feelings.
2. We must avoid the rationalization that "everybody else is doing it."
3. We must not subscribe to the practice of "doing our own thing."

4. Instead, we must be guided by the Christian ethic set forth by Paul in I Corinthians 13. When, oh, when, will we learn to "rejoice in the truth?" May every Christian employer and Christian employee be constantly aware of Colossians 4:17, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

We have been exposed in recent years to situation ethics. We have observed a loss of faith in fundamental values with no immediately obvious ethic to replace it. There have been groups who have been ideologically naked.

A ray of hope appears. Our youth seeks honesty. They will become ethical businessmen. I detect across campuses I visit a desire to improve society.

I have an abiding faith in this generation. If they live up to the standards I expect of them, then the problems of the Christian in business will eventually be minimized. I believe they will be more concerned with business ethics than the generation before them. This is my prayer.

## ETHICAL PROBLEMS OF THE CHRISTIAN IN BUSINESS

Gene Hancock

Gene Hancock was born in Slick, Oklahoma on April 19, 1921. His parents are faithful Christians and he has been taught the principles of Christ all of his life. In September, 1939, he enrolled in Harding College; he began preaching for a small congregation outside Wichita in June, 1940. Since that time he has preached for several congregations. Hancock preached for the Northside Church of Christ for six years. In January of 1957, he was asked to serve as president of York College in York, Nebraska. He held this position until June of 1960 when he and his family moved to Abilene, Texas, and Hancock began operating an automobile salvage business.

While in Wichita, Kansas, he was the owner of a large contracting firm that built in excess of 200 buildings in the area. He has served as an elder of the Hillcrest congregation since 1961 except for a four year



period from 1968 until April, 1972, when he was preaching for the Oakland Drive church in Abilene. He was selected as an elder for Hillcrest again in the fall of 1972 and serves in that capacity at the present time. He received his B.A. from Nebraska Wesleyan University. He married Marjorie Harwood of Searcy, Arkansas, in May, 1943. They have six children, the oldest is 29 and the youngest is 8.

The assignment that has been given to me is, "The Ethical Problems of the Disciple in Business." I have tried several different activities and professions since beginning my career in the middle thirties. However, each time I find myself coming back to some type of business. Perhaps my earliest business adventures consisted of repairing bicycles for the neighborhood children and delivering groceries on my own bicycle. During my college days I worked at everything from repairing radios and automobiles to contracting photography assignments. After leaving college I went to Stilwell, Oklahoma, to preach for the local congregation. Before long it was decided by the group that we should build a building. In view of this, I purchased an agriculture lime truck and began delivering and spreading lime on the property of the farmers of the local community. By doing this I was able to donate my total salary from the church. After about three years in Stilwell, my wife and I moved to Wichita, Kansas, where I continued to preach and also started a general contracting company. Since that time I have been engaged in major business activities except for a four-year tenure at York College at York, Nebraska. Perhaps this background gives me some perspective in relation to the subject that has been assigned to me. For the past fourteen years I have been the owner of an automobile salvage yard that consists of purchasing late model automobile wrecks that have been damaged to such an extent that it is not profitable for the insurance company to repair them. We purchase these wrecked automobiles and remove all of the parts that have not been damaged and place them on the market for resale. In other words, our primary business activity is selling used automobile parts, both to the retail public and to the garages and new car dealerships. This type of business causes me to have intricate business dealings with all of the insurance companies of this area as well as dealing with the people who

cannot afford to go to a new parts store. In addition to dealing with these customers, we also have a number of opportunities to serve the people who are considered very well-to-do. Sometimes those who can afford the very best of everything do not realize they are getting used parts from a wrecking yard, but nevertheless, they are. Every new car dealer in the area, including all of the small towns surrounding Abilene, are our customers. We sell used parts to every one of the new car dealers.

I am giving you some of the background of my present business in order for you to see that we deal with every type of person and all facets of the business community. The ethical problems that I will be discussing will not necessarily be unique to my business; most of them will be very general and most any business man would say that they are a problem to him. However, there will probably be a few that will be distinct to my type of business.

In order to be a Christian, whether it is a Christian business man or a Christian that is preaching for a large congregation of the Lord's people, we must first of all develop a philosophy that is "Christ Like." This philosophy must be the guiding rule in every transaction of our daily life, whether it be noon or midnight; Sunday or Wednesday. With this philosophy constantly guiding our life, then we can meet these problems head on regardless of the type of business in which we are engaged. The answer then becomes automatic because we are Christians. That is, we are "Christ like."

Many times the business man is taken advantage of. In most cases the business man realizes that he is simply "turning the other cheek." Sometimes the customer will leave and brag about the fact that he has been able to get

something for nothing from a Christian business man. But still the Christian must continue to be "Christ like." It is in a case like this that the Christian philosophy becomes the guiding factor.

And now some of the ethical problems of the disciple in business. First of all, in our company we guarantee our parts to satisfy the customer, with some very few exceptions. Most all businesses, I notice, do guarantee their services and product to satisfy their customers. In our business we have a real problem in deciding if the customer has received a part that is defective or if he has literally abused it. We have had customers bring back their old worn out part and stand with a sober face while telling us that they have returned the part that we sold to them and they want their money back. When we suspect that one of our customers is that type of person we mark the item that we are selling in such a way that it would be difficult for him to duplicate the mark. Then when he returns the part it must have the mark that we have placed upon it before we make the refund.

In other cases we sell something to a customer and guarantee it. He then takes it out and obviously abuses it, literally tears it up. A good example of this is a standard transmission. If this type of transmission is really abused, it can be totally destroyed in a matter of a few blocks, or even a few feet. However, on the other hand, the ordinary normal person can drive the car with a standard transmission for many thousands of miles. We find it very difficult to make a decision about how far we should go in guaranteeing transmissions. This also holds true with motors, rear ends, and with most anything we sell. Guarantees are a major problem with us. We must decide if fraud is involved, yet we must be sure that in every case we have given the benefit of the doubt.

Another problem that confronts us in our business could be termed "kick backs." We don't have much of this any more because during the fourteen years we have been in business in Abilene we have pretty well established the type of philosophy that we operate by. When we first started it was not at all unusual for an adjuster to ask for some small thing he could use on his personal auto. He would never ask for money to be paid to him in return for his favors in awarding his salvage to us, but rather he would ask for something like a set of tires or a fancy tape deck or radio that would fit his personal car. These are small items, not involving very many dollars at the most, but still an ethical problem is involved. The Christian business man must make a decision. On the one hand, he does not want to invoke the wrath of the adjuster, and on the other, it would be a violation of his predetermined guiding philosophy if he should grant the adjuster's request.

In our business it is not unusual for young men to come in wanting to sell us automobile accessories that we consider to have a doubtful origin. These items usually consist of things like expensive hub caps, tape decks, mag wheels and other such items. In most cases we could buy them at a very low price and sell them the same day for a very good price. Keep in mind that we do not know that the items have been stolen, and in every case the seller has a good story to tell. We could reason that it is not our place to attempt to be a detective in every transaction. Also we know that if we turn the deal down, one of our competitors will buy the items. In view of these facts, what should we do? Our over all philosophy guides us in this problem also. We tell the seller that in most cases we do not buy individual parts, but only complete wrecked automobiles. In the few cases that we do buy individual parts, we insist that the seller show us his identifica-

tion, and then he must sign a receipt for the transaction. In this way we have his name and address for our records. Several times in the last few years we have had men refuse to complete the transaction when we told them of our requirement.

Along the same line as the problem we have just noted, we will occasionally have a person attempt to purchase an automobile title from us. This is very rare, but we had a man approach us and try to buy a title about three weeks ago. He actually came to one of my sons and asked for a title that would match the car he was going to use it with. It doesn't take much principle for us to turn down this kind of request since the state of Texas has a law which makes the selling of a title a felony!

There are many more problems that continually come up in the business world. It is very difficult to make an equitable policy in regard to pricing. Most all businesses give some kind of discount to certain people who are engaged in the reselling of the purchased products. But how do you make a fair policy in regard to discounts to your every day customers? I once asked a dentist the price of some particular type of his service and he answered, "All the traffic will bear." This does not seem to be a fair way of pricing, yet there are some real problems in reference to pricing. I once purchased some shirts for the price of three for ten dollars and the next day there was an advertisement in the paper offering the identical shirts at the price of four for ten dollars. In our business we maintain the same price for any customer. We assume that the retail customer is going to install the part himself and is therefore entitled to the same price as the garage owner.

Advertising always presents an ethical problem to a business man who is trying to be a Christian. Too many of us take liberty of the "salesman's license" when we prepare our copy for the medium. It is very difficult to advertise a product and really be fair while at the same time get the attention of the buying public. We are bombarded constantly by all kinds of claims for various products, many of which are outright non-truths. The Christian business man must compete in this kind of market for the attention of the potential buying public.

Gifts during the holiday season presents a problem to the ethical person. Too many times this season is used to "buy" the favors of those who can turn certain business your way. This is done by lavishing expensive gifts on such people as bankers, adjusters, purchasing agents, managers, etc.

Perhaps the greatest ethical problem facing any business man is the practice of using other people's money by delaying payment of routine accounts. It seems to be normal practice for the under-capitalized business to keep several thousand dollars in use that really belongs to his suppliers.

The business world is a fascinating, challenging world. Something new is happening every day and every hour. It is a lot like a great fishing or hunting vacation. Just as you expect to catch the biggest fish any minute while on a fishing trip, so do you always look eagerly to the next day or the next hour when you are running a business. I believe that you must want to run a business; you must want it to be your hobby; it must be your very life. With that outlook the business will be a success. There are many "little games" that the business man must play, but they are no more than all of us play in our life. I believe that the business man can be honest—he can

be a Christian—and still run a successful business. The Christian business man will always feel that he has fallen short of the goal that is in Christ, but the fact that he is in business does not mean that he must sacrifice his Christian principles. I have been in the pulpit and operating some kind of business for the past thirty-four years and I find that it is just as easy for me to be honest with my customers as it is for me to be honest with the brethren when I am preaching. Whether preaching or operating a business it takes a conscientious effort on my part to live by the principles of Christ.

I have had many opportunities to serve as a Christian that would not have come to me by any other avenue. During my time in Abilene my wife and I have had the privilege of helping about fourteen unwed mothers during their most difficult times. Many of these girls were referred to me because of my business connections and not because of preaching experience. Some of them came to me not knowing that I had anything at all to do with the church.

Remember the poem that says, "I want to live in a house by the side of the road and be a friend to man"? I believe a Christian business man can do just that—be a friend to man. Every day at our business we see poverty and misery in a land of affluence. We meet the black man and the brown man and the white man on his level. Sometimes that level is at the top of the economic bracket, but more often it is on the lowest part of the economic scale. He has come to us and we have the golden opportunity to help him.

I am thankful to the Lord for my opportunities to serve him. There are a half a dozen Christian doctors and just as many lawyers here in Abilene that I can call upon at any time to help with opportunities that arise. In addition to these

there are innumerable faithful Christians that I have called upon in the past with these problems.

Ethical problems of the Christian in business—yes—but each can and must be a challenge to the Christian to let Christ be known in his community.

## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

James D. Stephens

- Born:** September 14, 1930, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Stephens, Birmingham, Alabama.
- Education:** Cecil High School, 1948, Pittsburgh, Pa.  
Duquesne University: graduated 1958 with B.A. in Psychology  
Pepperdine University: graduated 1961, M.A. in Religion (Counseling)  
Point Park College, graduate studies
- Married:** Former Myrtle Dean Roberson of Lawrenceburg, Tenn., June 16, 1962; one daughter, Addrianna Dean Stephens



### Preaching Experience:

served as minister of the following congregations: Eielson, Alaska, Church of Christ; Riverside, California; Homewood Church of Christ, Pittsburgh, Pa.; East Capitol St. Church of Christ, Washington, D.C.; 16th & Decatur Church of Christ, Washington, D.C.; Stony Island Church of Christ, Chicago, Ill.

Mr. Stephens' background includes radio and television preaching and social work experience, having served as junior counselor for Juvenile Court while a student in Duquesne University, and was director of the "Homewood

Brushton Improvement," a poverty program. He also served two years on the Board of Trustees of Mid-Western Children's Home in Cincinnati, Ohio, and conducted a tutoring program and Saturday School in the Washington, D.C., area. He conducted a two weeks gospel meeting in Aruba, Netherlands Antilles, as well as establishing the Homewood Church of Christ. His sermon, "Enthusiasm," was entered in the "Congressional Record" by Congressman Joe L. Evins of Tennessee, and he has preached at the House of Representative Prayer Breakfast.

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As we have become increasingly aware of the dynamic nature of society today, ecumenical social thinking has focused on *rapid social change*. Technology has emerged as the central factor, in a close and unusual relationship with other elements. The technological revolution developed in the West as a consequence of a fundamental change in man's understanding of reality and of the social order. "There's a new world a comin'," sings Mamma Cass Elliott. "This one's comin' to an end." Written by one of America's modern prophets, this popular song speaks to a political and social scene filled with violent upheaval and change. By implication the song also has something to say to the church, namely, "There are new ways coming for dealing with our social problems; the old ways are coming to an end.

Many members of the church deplore today's revolutionary changes. They assume that the way things have been is the way they should be, and, therefore, they sincerely insist that stability, tranquility, and order are God's intention for mankind. It may come as a shock for such people to discover that God frequently works through revolutions, both the peaceful variety and the violent kind. The witness of both the Old and New Testaments is quite clear that revo-

lutionary changes in society and history are often the intention of God. The seven last words of the Church are, "WE NEVER DID IT THAT WAY BEFORE!"

The Bible speaks to the issues generated by change. As we read it, we discover how men and women of faith have seen God active through change and have responded to the challenges which the great shifts of history have posed. Through their experience we can gain help in dealing constructively with the new situations brought about by present-day change.

If Thomas Paine had been a prophet it might well have been this day in our national life to which he was referring when he penned, "These are the times which try men's souls." A terse judgment of another day and another people appears in Isaiah 1:5: "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint." It fits our day and our society. Another contemporary dimension is added in II Timothy 4:4: "And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

Christians must demonstrate their presence in the revolutionary process by a concern for the integrity of men. They must refuse to allow themselves to be manipulated and used as mere instruments when in reality they are the object and end of the whole process of social transformation. The demolition of dehumanizing structures in society is plagued with contradictions and frustrations, which in turn tend to dehumanize and destroy its own victims. The Christian, in his concern for human integrity, must be as the salt of the earth and as the leaven of the mass. Society **MUST** not lead God's people!

If I properly understand what the Bible says, and if I see rightly what the modern world needs from Christianity, it is *not* defense and debate over doctrine, but it is ACTION: DOING, LIVING CHRISTIANITY in terms of Christ's own words:

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.  
and

Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these  
My brethren you have done it unto me.

### BIBLICAL BASIS OF THE DEMANDS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

The eighth century B.C. prophet Amos gives us insight into how God dealt with social injustice in his day. About the religious ceremonies of Israel, which were apparently quite orthodox and dedicated to God, Amos says in the name of God:

I hate, I despise your feast days [pot-luck suppers?] and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts.

Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.—Amos 5:21-24

A piety and a ceremonialism that neglect justice are an offense to the Lord of Israel. Are we guilty of having the right worship, right doctrine and wrong attitude toward our brother? Bob Dylan had a song called "Blowin' in the Wind." Its theme was a sad lament for man's inhumanity to man.

How many years must a mountain exist before it's washed to the sea? And how many years must some people exist before they're allowed to be free? To these questions he can only reply cryptically that the answer is "blowin' in the wind."

A Christian university student has written another version of this ballad:

"How many miles will a people tread  
Before they lift up their eyes?  
How many tears will they shed as they go  
Before they turn to their Christ?  
How many deaths will they die alone,  
Before they find new life?  
The Spirit of God is blowin' in the wind!"

The apostle Paul spoke of having right form and denying the power in 2 Timothy 3:5: "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn." God says in Amos, "take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." Preaching is not an end in itself. A beautiful worship service is not an end in itself. Wonderful Gospel singing is not an end in itself. All these should be designed to enable people to stand the stress and strain of life and to enable us to do our bit to contribute to a solution of our social ills. Today our congregations will be relevant in proportion as we cast our lot with the people farthest down—the underemployed, the unemployed, and those who live in slums and ghettos, on the brink of poverty—launch programs aimed at motivating youth to aspire nobly, helping to eliminate the use of drugs and stopping people from killing themselves.

Micah expresses the same demand of Yahweh for human justice when he declares:

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good;  
and what doth the Lord require of thee,  
but do justly, and to love mercy,  
and to walk humbly with thy God?

Micah 6:8

“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” (Psalm 11:3) “The righteous” may be a class or a group of people, but “righteousness,” “right standing,” or “right living” is an individual, most personal matter. Each of us is personally responsible for his own reactions. We are individually accountable to God. Each of us is personally responsible for maintaining the kind of life worthy of a follower of Jesus.

We must urge our preachers to preach for conversion within the church. The greatest need, says Elton Trueblood, is for conversion of church members. This means we have to get at the ministers. I do not know how we can do this. We all have a tendency to be defensive, and the minute we think someone is attacking us, our position, or our work, we leap to the defensive. I do not know exactly what the approach must be, but somehow we must get to our ministers. We must call our people to become the New Testament Church, so that we may speak with conviction the gospel of God, who has come to us in Christ, who has redeemed us, and who has made us new creatures. Micah says we must do justly, and love mercy and walk humbly with God!

We are not just anybody; we are Christ's people. And that makes all the difference! We are speaking to each other in God's house, not ours; in His holy presence. Besides, we

have come to listen as well as to speak. What we hear are not only words of comfort and encouragement. They are words that remind us that, in God's economy, there is neither Jew nor Greek, white nor black. And however we twist the words, however we squirm and pretend, there simply is no way of reconciling our proud little systems of caste and class with God's eternal and unremitting conditions for living with His children in His world. The sword of Christ cuts cleanly across our practices of discrimination and segregation.

To preach Christ is to teach a message that speaks to the social issues as well as the evils of our day, it is to engage ourselves in any way possible as Christians to carry out the mission of our Lord Jesus.

The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has annointed me;  
He has sent me to announce good news to the poor,  
To proclaim release for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind;  
To let the broken victims go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.—Luke 4:18-19

Isaiah of Jerusalem pictures Yahweh as saying to the rulers and people of Judah:

Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth:  
They are a trouble unto me;  
I am weary to hear them.  
And when ye spread forth your hands,  
I will hide mine eyes from you;  
yea when ye make many prayers,  
I will not hear:  
Your hands are full of blood.  
Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed,  
judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.—Isaiah 1:14-17

Never have I been so torn in my mind as I am today, because I read the same Bible, and I preach the same Gospel, but people aren't interested any more, because the church has failed to do what it says so well it is called to do. Here in America the greatest need for revival and renewal in the life of the church faces the leaders of the church with a great challenge to see that the indwelling takes place in people's life. It is certainly dramatized in the presence of racism in the church.

Every member of the kingdom of God must realize, "we are no longer strangers and foreigners but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19). All men are made in the image of God. The lofty view of man expressed in Genesis 1:26, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," is so indelibly stamped on Western culture that the "imagehood" survived. Isaiah could see the mountain of the house of the Lord established as the highest of mountains with all the nations flowing into it, "and many people shall come and say: 'Come let us go to the mountain of the Lord . . . that He shall teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths'" (Isaiah 2:2, 3).

#### THE PSYCHODYNAMICS OF RACISM

In the quietness of the hour let's take a look at the race problem in the United States of America.

The roots of racism are imbedded deep within the life history of mankind. The term *psychodynamics* refers to the systematized knowledge and theory of human behavior and its motivations. Psychodynamics contends that a person's total makeup and probable reaction at any given moment are the product of past interaction between his specific genetic endowment and the environment, both animate and

inanimate, in which he has been living from the time of his conception.

A child is born as free of racial prejudice as of political preference. The significant activities and needs of a human being are not determined by the amount of melanin in his skin. While the black man's and white man's experience in this society differs, the principle of physiological and psychological functions is the same. As William H. Grier and Price M. Cobb write,

There is nothing reported in the literature or in the experience of any clinician known to the authors that suggests that black people *function* differently psychologically from anyone else. Black man's mental functioning is governed by the same rules as that of any other group of men. Psychological principles understood first in the study of white men are true no matter what the man's color.<sup>1</sup>

To understand the behavior pattern of racism we must dig below the surface. The influence of early thought patterns of the child stains his life-long perspective of his fellow human being in ways of which he may not be conscious. Many white Bible-believing, evangelical Christians find it impossible to accept a black man into fellowship with them. Why?

In the short time we have, we shall examine how the emotional effects, attitudes, and concepts of color lead to racial prejudice.

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<sup>1</sup> See Cobb, Price & Grier, William H. *Black Rage*, (New York: Basic Books, 1968), page 129.

As the child's external sensory apparatus of sight and hearing develops, he is developing also the internal psychic mechanism. He does this through reflex behavior, associations, assimilations, and various psychic defense mechanisms—processes that enable him to interpret the various images and concepts that are to be a part of his life. The significant adults in the child's life convey not only thought patterns but their own anxieties. There is an intermingling of concrete and abstract stimuli, and emotional and intellectual responses are formed.

At approximately the age of three or four, the child is becoming familiar with the color spectrum. While his eyes are interpreting and distinguishing colors, his ears are picking up various phrases. "Pure and white," "black as sin," "yellow coward," "savage redskins"—these are emotionally flavored word concepts that portray color as abstract qualities. Such phrases in the primitive thought patterns of the child's mind become emotionally charged by the various methods of reinforcing present in the child's environment.

One of those methods of reinforcement is fear, which may be used to control the child's behavior. The child may be told that "if you're bad the big black boogiemán will get you." In this way the color black can become "phobogenic." Phobia is the term used to describe the process in which a fear becomes attached to objects or situations that objectively are not a source of danger. The object or circumstance selected to be feared is something that can be avoided. The child may fear his parents but is unable to avoid them. If he is told about the "big black boogiemán," he is given an object of fear that he can avoid and repulse. This "black object" can later become the first black boy he meets in kindergarten.

My daughter came home from kindergarten reciting the first poem she learned from a little white girl, while skipping rope:

God made the nigger;  
He made him in the night,  
He made him in a hurry,  
He forgot to paint him white.

The five-year-old white girl who recited this poem to my child had already been programmed to have a racist view of a fellow human being. To this child, at the age of five, color had become a measure of a person's worth, and in her deception she attempted to make my black daughter an inferior creature of God.

The fantasy of white-good, black-bad, white-superior, black-inferior, has been maintained and preserved by our society with all the resources at its command. In the past, both Christians and non-Christians used pseudo-scientific articles to perpetuate the fantasy.

Lawrence Lucas gives us a good definition of racism worthy of our discussion:

"When a belief in group superiority and the right to rule is joined to a sense of duty to control the supposedly less endowed group and to rule them for their own good, it does not matter how much one does for the other, he is still a racist. A person may love Negroes dearly and work harder than Martin Luther King, Jr., did. But if in his dealings with black people, he finds he always and easily assumes that he is automatically better qualified to lead and make decisions while the black man follows and obeys orders; that he must always speak for or at least approve of what the black man may say; that he must be doing for the black man and never

working with him for both; that it's impossible for him to work under a black man: then, in spite of any good he may do, he is a racist.<sup>2</sup>

The black man as a minority lives in a white dominated world and for good or for ill this white dominated world determines to a great degree our destiny. Let me illustrate. The black man *can not* integrate anything. It must be the white man, who has the money to flee the city. The black man inherited an environment that placed a handicap upon him which he can hardly overcome. It is very difficult, virtually impossible, for a group to overcome three and a half centuries of disabilities. What has been done to the minds, hearts and souls of black people in the three and a half centuries just referred to can never be undone. Let us build bridges to a better means of communicating with our brothers in Christ. Remember the words of the Rubaiyat:

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,  
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit  
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,  
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.

The church must put its arms around these young black people and these frustrated people, and help them to know that separatism is not the way. We must tell them that Black is beautiful and it is beautiful to be Black, but Black and white together are even more beautiful. We must teach them that violence never permanently solves any problem. We must

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<sup>2</sup> See Lucas, Lawrence, *Black Priest White Church*, (New York: Random House, 1970) page 57.

teach them that there is still a voice that's crying out in this universe, "Not by might nor by power but by my spirit," saith the Lord of Hosts. Not by White Might nor by Black Power. It is by the Spirit of God that the races will find peace together. The philosophy of an eye for an eye, or a tooth for a tooth, if followed to its ultimate conclusion, will end up with a blind society and a toothless generation. Can't you hear Jesus saying right now to every repenting Peter, "Put your sword back into its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword"?

We are committed to a ministry of renewal. It should be a source of encouragement to note what God says in His Word, "Behold, I make all things new." It is God who will turn our brokenness into the celebrations of life. It is God who will change the nature of the Lamb and the Lion so that they can lie down together. It is God who turns our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks. It is God who causes justice to flow down like water and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

As you and I face the future, let us vow that we'll cross the cataracts of time and learn to live with discontinuity, being committed to Jesus Christ, who though He leads us into the green pastures and beside still waters, will also lead us into the valley of the shadow. But even here we need not be afraid, for God, in a revolutionary way, promises to make all things new.

It is possible for the conditions of life to enrich the quality and depth of one's faith. This, of course, is not an inviolable law, just a possibility, but a strong possibility. Benjamin Mays said over forty years ago in a speech:

. . . . there is some virtue in being identified with the underprivileged. It is usually more likely that the man farthest down will advocate complete justice for all than the man farthest up will. It is impossible for the most privileged to be as sensitive to the injustices, the restrictions, and the limitations imposed on the weak as it is for the weak themselves; or for him to feel these wrongs with the same degree of intensity as they are felt by the underprivileged. They who sit in the seat of the mighty, or those who are . . . . identified with the ruling class, are more likely to feel that they have too much to lose if they begin to champion too ardently the cause of the man farthest down.

In the years ahead, we see a new leadership in the Lord's church with a new vision and with a new motive and new aim in binding the wounds of the races in the churches of Christ all over this land. James Weldon Johnson did not whimper but shouted:

Lift ev'ry voice and sing  
'Til earth and heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of liberty:  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the list'ning skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on till victory is won.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Johnson, James Weldon, "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing!"

## THE DISCIPLE'S FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY

### Clifton Rogers

CLIFTON ROGERS, minister of the Edgefield Church of Christ in Dallas, Texas, since February 1, 1972, following many years in Houston and the Houston area. Moved to Dallas from eight and a half years ministry in Lake Jackson, Texas.

Native of Fayetteville, Texas, he graduated from Abilene Christian College in 1940. Wife, nee Dorothy Buster of Stamford, Texas, and their two sons are also graduates of A. C. C. For 15 years he has been a member of the Advisory Board of his alma mater.

Has preached in gospel meetings and other special services for 275 congregations throughout the nation and in several foreign lands, has delivered lessons on the annual Bible lectureship programs of seven Christian colleges, and often serves as instructor for Bible school



teachers' workshops. Special preparation has been made for lessons on "The Happy Christian Home."

Active in mission work and in encouraging missions, he has preached in campaigns in several states, as well as at Seremban, Malaysia. During 1974 he will do the preaching in the Salisbury, Rhodesia, campaign (month of March) and in Edinburgh, Scotland (two weeks in July).

Personally interested in young people. Teaches a College & Professional class on Sunday morning and a junior training class on Wednesday evening. One week each summer he attends youth camp.

Often speaks to groups of public school teachers and students, to parents groups, civic clubs, and has spoken to student groups of 27 colleges and universities in 8 states.

Editorially, he is a staff writer for two brotherhood publications—Firm Foundation and Power for Today.

Is an active member of the Rotary Club, holding Senior Active membership and serving as a director in the Oak Cliff club in Dallas. He is also on the District Governor's speakers-list.

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A happy Christian home is truly the nearest thing to heaven that can be experienced on earth. Here in life's closest relationships can be found opportunities for the most profound expression of Christian character, and here reside the grandest possibilities for the development of the Christ-like personality. Where can the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control (Galatians 5:22, 23)—mean more or be more fully developed than in the home? Where more needed and rewarding are virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love (2 Peter 1:5-7)? What setting could be better suited to putting on a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering (Colossians 3:12)? In what "school" will one better learn the beatitudes and their continuing application (Matthew 5:3-16)? Where can the principles of faith and hope and love (1 Corinthians 13:13) so effectively be made part of the real person as in the Christian home? So, too, sanctification and service.

But all of these, and much, much more, are possible only when the home is truly Christian. This is why "Being a Chris-

tian at home, too" has often been raised as a reminder of personal responsibilities to every disciple. Amazingly, some disciples do better in "living the Christian life" in settings and circumstances away from home than they do at home. That isn't really true, though, except in appearances, for valid Christian character expresses itself in all of life's experiences.

Let us remind ourselves further that any one of us may be the only disciple in a given home, or others in the family may have become lukewarm or disinterested, rebellious and sinful. Even so, this one disciple has Christian responsibilities. Christ-like attitudes and conduct are the way of life in that home for the disciple, not because other members of the family deserve them, but because true discipleship demands as much and makes it all possible in loving sincerity.

Let us now consider some of the disciple's family responsibilities in the various relationships of the home—a husband, a wife, a father, a mother, a child, a brother or sister. (If time permitted, there should be a study also of responsibilities to grandparents, etc., as per 1 Timothy 5:4ff). Believing with all our hearts that God created us and instituted the family, we also believe that he knows what best relates to the happiness and security, strength and continuity of that family. The Bible directives, then, are not viewed as simply good advice, but as God's revealed will. The heaven-sent principles for the earthly-home have blessed families through the centuries, and there are many of us here today who are quite willing to testify to their blessedness in our own families.

### The Husband

Here is the God-established order: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3). God—Christ—husband—wife. Hear this, husbands: "Dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, as being also joint-heirs of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Timothy 5:7). And this: "Love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it . . . . Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies . . . . for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church" (Ephesians 5:25-29).

You, as a husband, are to love your wife. And let me add, **AND HAVE HER KNOW SHE IS LOVED**. If you think the latter is not neglected, or if you think working hard to provide "things" and "security" for your family provides convincing proof of your love for your wife, or if you think that she doesn't need continuing assurance, it must be that you have not had counseling sessions with wives who feel empty and unfulfilled in their homes because their husbands do not have them feel they are loved and appreciated. And if she doesn't feel that she is loved, the inner results are the same as if she is not loved. True, love is expressed in ways more important than verbally saying, "I love you" (see 1 Corinthians 13:4-7). But surely we tongue-tied husbands should have learned something from that oft-repeated question, "Honey, do you love me?" One unhappy wife said in consultation, "My husband thinks I'm asking for information when I say, 'Honey, do you love me?'"

"Husband, love your wife" means more than making love to your wife. Time and again have I heard the voice of resignation saying, "Too much love-making and not enough love." Somewhere along the way something happened that distinguished between the two. As a good reminder to each one of us, consider this little statement heard on Radio Station KRLD in Dallas recently, "The difference between a truly happy and successful marriage and one that isn't may be as simple as a few words left unspoken each day." Perhaps those are words that should have been left unspoken, but probably those are words that should have been spoken and weren't. No wonder that the wife all-too-often comes to this point: "How can I be responsive to a man who isn't attentive to me!"

Knowing how common and serious this is, I have made it a practice for several years to try to teach men *how* to say, "I love you" to their wives. The busy American man, occupied with all the demands of job and recreation, of city and church, of neighborhood and home, can so easily lose his once known capacity for expressing his love and appreciation to his wife. Perhaps he is "charmed out" by the time he arrives home at the close of the day, or perhaps he feels that he has "already said it all." In any event, learn how—counting it off on the fingers of one hand:

FIVE Words: "I love you very much." See, that isn't hard. "I love you very much." You might even use her question at times, "Honey, do you love me?"

FOUR Words: "What is your opinion?" or "What do you think?" That evidence of respect and esteem, that recognition of her as a person of knowledge and wisdom, will be "I love you" to the hearer—when spoken in all sincerity.

THREE Words: "I like you" or "You are beautiful." Each of us wants to be liked. Love is stronger and surer than *like*, for love is patient, long-suffering, forbearing, forgiving. But pretty soon this almost implies that you love her in spite of what she is, rather than because of what she is. Ah, the capacity to make her know she is that special person, that one-and-only, has her know you love *her*. When you have her know that you feel you are married to the most beautiful woman in all the world, she is indeed beautiful. She feels beautiful because the man she loves feels she is beautiful.

TWO WORDS: "Thank You" or "Excuse me" or "I'm sorry." Love is not discourteous. These and other expressions say sweetly, thoughtfully, "I love you."

ONE WORD: "We," "Us," "Ours,"—not "I," "Me," "Mine."

Agree with Larry Christenson when he says,

"Where a wife's submission becomes a harsh demand from the husband, God's Order has been thrown overboard, and a mere human authority remains. But where a husband fulfills also his role in God's order—which is to 'love his wife, and not be harsh with her' (Colossians 3:19)—then a wife's submission to him becomes a fountain of mutual love and devotion, a thing of surpassing moral and spiritual beauty."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Christenson, Larry, *The Christian Family*, (Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1970), p. 34.

### The Wife

Here is the way the Lord wants and requires the wife to be: "Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything" (Ephesians 5:22-24). "Whose adorning . . . . . let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner aforetime the holy women also, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose children ye now are, if ye do well, and are not put in fear by any terror" (1 Peter 3:1-6). "Train the young women to love their husbands" (Titus 2:4).

Here are some thoughts on "submission" that are worthy of the most careful study:

"To be submissive means to yield humble and intelligent obedience to an ordained power or authority. The example He gives is that of the Church being submissive to the rule of Christ. Far from being degrading, this is the Church's glory!"<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Christenson, Larry, *The Christian Family*, (Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1970) p. 32-33.

"The woman is not afraid of the toil, but desires the rule. The continual self-denial of her own will is her heaviest trial."<sup>3</sup>

"Submission is much more than an outer form; it is an inner attitude. It is more than a veiled head; it is a heart veiled with honor and reverence for the husband."<sup>4</sup>

"Submission does not mean that one remains piously silent, 'leaving everything in the husband's hands.' . . . . it is important to distinguish between *submissiveness* and *servility*. A wife who sees that her husband's judgment is wrong should tell him so—with all respect, but freely and honestly. The judgment, wisdom, and opinion of a loving wife is one of man's greatest assets. . . . . she must tell him her thoughts fully and make her case as strongly as she can, never laying aside her respect, but never concealing her honest doubts about a particular decision. When she has done this, *then* she must let the decision rest with her husband."<sup>5</sup>

Much was said earlier to the husband about his giving thought and sincere attention to the conveying of the fact of his love to his wife. Let that now be said to the wife as well. Of the TEN COMMANDMENTS TO WIVES, three have particular power here: (1) Thou shalt seek well to please thy husband; (2) Remember that the frank approval of thy husband is worth more to thee than the sidelong glances of many strangers; (3) Thou shalt not nag.

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<sup>3</sup> p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> p. 42.

The average wife appears to have tremendously strong drives toward remaking the man she married. What a challenge! Often this leads to her being in a big hurry about it!! Ah, there is real danger that she will destroy some things very important in him and to their happiness while she means only to change his bad habits or annoying ways. Dear Wife, be careful, be patient. You may shatter his self-esteem when you only mean to curb his egotism. You may have him feel you don't like him and desire him, when all you are trying to do is refine his personality. One discouraged husband was heard to say, "My wife keeps me deflated by her 'constructive' criticism." Those disciplinary measures—nagging, the "silent treatment," the withholding of self emotionally even though not bodily—can be counterproductive. Have him know he is loved, appreciated, admired. And, if he is neglectful or inept in verbally expressing his love, learn to read and accept his clumsy attempts. That nudge, or pinch, or that bear-hug that messes up your new hair style may be sincere love expressing itself. Reject these playful expressions often enough and the longed for tender verbal expressions may be bottled up, too.

Mother, do remember that *first* you are a wife. I urge this because of the obvious import of this conclusion from a study conducted over a five-year period by a team of University of Michigan sociologists and social psychologists: "Children, far from bringing married couples closer together, are the major cause of a loss of satisfaction in each other's companionship and love." This is no recommendation for childless homes. It is rather a strong reminder that the husband and wife can focus their lives and emotions on their children to such an extent that they do not richly and fully share their love and lives with each other.

There is much, much more to be said about the disciple's responsibility to the husband or wife in marriage, but consider at least this one further admonition: "The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be by consent for a season, that ye may give yourselves unto prayer, and may be together again, that Satan tempt you not because of your incontinency" (I Corinthians 7:4, 5).

### Parents

What a marvellous privilege and awful responsibility to be the parents of a child! Demanding, yes, but your heart will actually ache with the joy of it. And knowing how very much the home environment and training have to do with the personality and future of each child, there will be a never-ending sense of awe over the importance of what is being done "right now."

To begin with, here are two conclusions that will help parents as they view their responsibilities to their children:

1. In recent years various psychologists have been saying something about like this, "The one thing above all others that contributes to the stability and emotional security of a child is a home in which daddy and mother like each other, enjoy each other."
2. A publication by V. I. P. (Volunteer Inspirational Personality), a project of the Dallas County (Texas) Juvenile Department, quotes Judge George Edwards as having said: "The lack of an inspirational adult personality in the life of the youthful offenders is not *a* cause of delinquency, it is *the* cause."

*Discipline.* Now let's listen to the inspired word of God as parents are told how to rear their children: "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4); "Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged" (Colossians 3:21). That's how. Nurture them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (R.S.V.). Seems simple enough. Discipline and instruction. But the HOW, especially as viewed from the standpoint of the individual needs of children, keeps it from being either simple or easy.

The permissiveness of a Dr. Spock has demonstrated itself to be foolish and destructive of more than good manners—as many Bible believers knew it would. I urge that you purchase and read, digest and use the best parts of the following four books:

1. **DARE TO DISCIPLINE** by Dr. James Dobson, Tyndale House Publishers, 1970.
2. **BETWEEN PARENT & CHILD** by Dr. Haim G. Ginott, Macmillan Company, 1965.
3. **HOW TO PARENT** by Dr. Fitzhugh Dodson, Nash Publishing, 1970.
4. **THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY** by Larry Christenson, Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1970.

(Most of these can be secured in paper-back from other publishers at a very nominal cost)

As you, Christian parent, consider the responsibilities of discipline, you readily recognize that this is not optional with you. True discipleship recognizes and accepts that responsibility. Recognition of authority is not an inherited quality with a child. This is definitely something to be learned. Properly handled—begun early enough and being constant enough—obedience will become a blessed part of your child's feeling and thought.

“Discipline” is not as limited as “corrective measures,” but let us view for a while the latter. “Withhold not correction from the child” (Proverbs 23:13); “Correct thy son, and he will give thee rest” (Proverbs 29:7); “He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes” (Proverbs 13:24)—these surely tell us that disciplinary measures are employed to produce change for the better. The New Testament carries the same message: “We had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence . . . . All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness” (Hebrews 12:9, 11). So this is your view as a Christian parent.

Here are some quotes that remind anew just how important full cooperation between the dad and mother is in the development of a well-disciplined family:

“One reason I love my mother so is because my father did. He set the pace for us six children. Even when he did not agree with her (and often bucked her openly) he held her in such high esteem, treated her so tenderly, loved her so implicitly, respected her so unquestionably, that we followed suit.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Nance, Dot, *The Brazosport Facts*, May 12, 1968.

"A mother should not have to ask, much less battle, for respect from the children. This robs her of the poise which enables her to maintain a spirit of calm and dignity for the whole household. It is the husband's responsibility to protect his wife from any abuse which the children might mount against her. Should the father overhear the slightest hint of disrespect toward the mother, or the least lapse of obedience to her word, he should put a stop to it at once and firmly."<sup>7</sup>

"If we find a house full of disobedient children, we may suspect that the mother is accustomed to contradict the father, to despise his authority, or to make it void behind his back. She then has to pay the penalty that her children are disobedient to her, as she is to her husband . . . . The mother, therefore, must consider it a fundamental law of the family not to contradict the father in the presence of the children. . . . Just . . . so it is the sacred duty of a husband to leave the authority of his wife unassailed in the presence of the children. If he is obliged to overrule her objections in a serious matter, he must do so in a tender and kindly manner."<sup>8</sup>

*Love.* Nurturing each child in the discipline and instruction of the Lord can never really be successful unless the family atmosphere is one of genuine love. What a mistake it is for a child to hear, "When you do that, I don't love you." Of course you love your child. You may not like or appreciate

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<sup>7</sup> Christenson, Larry, *The Christian Family*, (Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1970) p. 35.

<sup>8</sup> p. 110.

what he has done or has failed to do, but you love him. How important that each boy and girl grow up knowing the certainty and warmth of parental love. This means that the child is freely given love and appreciation, and it means that there is freedom and encouragement to express love for the parents. If a child *feels* unloved, the results are the same as if he *is* unloved. How often do social workers counsel with teenagers who are in trouble simply because their earlier childhood years did not provide the whole sense of belonging. Many sex problems result from emotional emptiness rather than from biological passions. Many early marriages result from the need to love and to be loved and accepted, rather than from love itself (the involved persons can't tell the difference).

Thus you, as a parent, give of yourself—your love is expressed in “loving,” in concern and time, in companionship and discipline. Like this:

Lucy: “My Dad can hit a golf ball farther than your Dad.”

Charlie Brown: “I know . . . my Dad still cuts across his tee shots.”

Lucy: “My Dad can bowl better than your Dad.”

Charlie Brown: “I know . . . my Dad still hasn't learned to give that ball any real lift.”

Lucy: “My Dad can . . . .”

Charlie Brown: “Wait a minute . . . Don't say any more . . . just come with me . . . I want to show you something . . . See this? This is my Dad's barber shop . . . he works there all day long . . . He has to deal with all sorts of people . . . Some of them get kind of crabby . . . but you know what? . . . I can go in there any time, and no matter how busy he is, he'll always stop and give me a big smile . . . and you know WHY? . . . Because he likes me, that's WHY!”

Dr. Haim G. Ginott, who wrote the bestsellers *Between Parent & Child*, *Between Parent & Teenager*, and *Teacher and Child* (Macmillan, 1965, 1969, 1972), also wrote an article "How to Drive Your Child Sane" (Life Magazine, October 10, 1972). Here are some excerpts:

"Make sure your responses convey caring, not rejection. To the child this difference is fateful. How we talk to him affects his self-esteem, self-worth and self-image.

"Our 'normal' talk drives children crazy: the blaming and shaming, preaching and moralizing, accusing and guilt-giving, ridiculing and belittling, threatening and bribing, evaluating and labeling. We have to eliminate critical comments that enrage children and block communication: "How many times have I told you . . . When will you learn . . . Where in heaven's name . . . What's the matter with you . . . Didn't you hear me . . . Are you deaf . . . If I've told you once . . . Do you mean to tell me that . . . ."

"When angry, describe what you see, what you feel, what you expect. Say nothing to the child about himself. Learn to express anger without doing damage. Even if provoked, do not insult or humiliate your children. Do not attack a child's character, offend his personality or assault his dignity. Protect him against this by using 'I' messages. 'I am annoyed, I am dismayed, I am angry, I am furious.' These are safer than 'You are an idiot. Look what you have done. What is the matter with you.'"

*Responsibility and Trust.* One of the most highly successful "homes for boys" in the States has four basic principles by which the lives of delinquent boys are transformed—Love, Discipline, Responsibility, Trust. Time does not permit in this present study even a preliminary development of the latter two, but I do want to urge their importance for both parents and children. You will be able to make practical applications, all the while comingled with Discipline and Love.

### Children

How wonderful it is when parents have so reared their children that it is easy for the children to be obedient to their parents! But whether or not this is the case, the child, as a disciple of Christ, is to be obedient to his parents. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6:1-3); "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord" (Colossians 3:20). Disobedience to parents is more than that, it is also disobedience to the Lord. Obviously, human nature being what it is, the child will not always agree with the parents—but this does not remove the necessity for obedience. Fallible parents will make mistakes in judgment and will not always be "at their best," but something as important as the child's obedience in recognition of parental authority cannot be left to depend upon his own evaluations of the correctness of his parents' decisions. There must be respect for guidance even while there is growing independence in discharging personal responsibilities. "Honor your father and mother" is truly well-pleasing to your Lord.

### The Christian Family

"Being a Christian at home" has been the theme of this study as emphasis has been given to the responsibilities of each member to every other member of the family. With each making the God-intended and God-directed contributions to the home, what a real foretaste of heaven the Christian home can be. Thought and planning should also go into the work and influence of this home—as a unit and also individual

members in their various spheres—in the church, in the community, and even in distant places. These serious, stimulating, challenging thoughts by Dr. Heartsill Wilson can be helpful to each of us: “This is the beginning of a new day. God has given me this day to use as I will. I can waste it—or use it for good, but what I do today is important, because I am exchanging a day of my life for it! When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever, leaving in its place something that I have traded for it. I want it to be gain, and not loss; good, and not evil; success, and not failure; in order that I shall not regret the price I have paid for it.”

