

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLVI, March, 1952)

THE LARGER PRAYER

At first I prayed for Light:
Could I but see the way,
How safely, swiftly would I walk
To everlasting day!

And Next I prayed for Strength
That I might tread the road
With firm, unfaltering feet, and win
The heaven's serene abode.

And then I asked for Faith;
Could I but trust my God,
I'd live enfolded in His peace,
Though foes were all aboard.

But now I pray for Love,
Deep love to God and man;
A living love that will not fail,
However dark His plan.

And Light and Strength and Faith
Are opening everywhere!
God only waited for me till
I prayed the larger prayer.

—*Author Unknown*

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

"THAT BLESSED HOPE"

"Looking for the blessed hope." The first half of the teaching of the grace of God—namely, that we should live soberly and righteously in this present world—is well understood, and there is much honest endeavor to practice it. But not so with the latter half, which says: "Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:11-13.) We have missed our hope considerably. Death can hardly be said to be it; for whatever good we may hope for beyond, from death itself we shrink. And well may we; for, though robbed of his terror and sting by Jesus our Lord, Death is an "enemy." That is not our hope. Then it is to be feared that in our appreciation of heaven, we have

missed the true object of our hope, and have exchanged the Person in whom all our hope is bound up for a place. "God our Savior, and Christ Jesus our hope." (1 Tim. 1:1.) But God has set Him before us that His coming again should be the cynosure of our hope. And even so, when we admit this, we are still apt to be wrong. For hope is made up of desire and expectation. Plainly, then, we cannot say that the appearing of the Lord is our "blessed hope," unless we steadfastly expect it and desire it. And it is just possible that we do neither; neither expect Him in any practical sense, for in the peculiar teaching of our day the event of His coming has been set afar off into the dim, distant, impracticable future, beyond some millennium, and we are no longer "like men looking for their Lord"; nor do we desire it, for even to those who believe that Jesus may likely come to-day, his return is surrounded with terrors as bad as those of Sinai, and nothing would so thoroughly frighten them as the announcement, "Jesus is coming now." Thus we have lost the hope. And hope is a vital thing. It is a mainspring in our lives. Anything that affects our hope affects our life and conduct. Other things being equal, the Christian life that has the true God-appointed hope back of it will be the higher and truer and more joyful.

WAITING FOR JESUS

To the apostles and early Christians the coming of the Lord was a joy, a comfort, and a hope. It is evident, then, seeing they were men of like passions with us, that they saw something in that teaching which we by some chance have missed or misunderstood; else how could they have looked forward to it so constantly and with such joyful anticipation? It may be that we tremble to meet His appearing, both on our own account, lest we be condemned, and for the sake of those around us, whom we conceive to be the subjects of immediate and eternal punishment. We ourselves fear Him, and our hearts are filled with pity and dread for our fellow-men. It is out of this sentiment, partly, and the crude conception of the sequence of events, which turned the hope into dread, and the comfort into anxiety, and the joy into dismay, that the doctrine of the postmillennial advent sprang. For it were certainly more comfortable to put such a dreadful event as that as far off into the future as possible, and let the whole world be converted beforehand. But the word of God does not encourage that view of it. No. Jesus is coming, and we may as well set about to expect him, for we know not the day nor the hour. If we feel concerned for mankind, and our friends and loved ones, then let our endeavors to save them be redoubled. And we may trust Him to deal with all men in goodness and wisdom, for He doeth all things well, and will work no injustice toward any man. But as for us, let us set our hope on Jesus' coming. How that may be done will be seen in the next paragraph.

A SQUARE PROMISE

The church at Corinth was in an incredibly bad condition; so that some of our worst congregations might feel a little self-satisfaction at the contemplation of it. But God did not tell us about its corruptness that we might be encouraged in our negligence and

sin; but that we may realize that even though we were in a like state, there is a hope and chance for us if we now turn to God. And every word of hope and encouragement, and every assurance of privilege in Christ Jesus given to Corinth, must necessarily strike us, for we are no weaker nor worse than they were. So let us see how God set forth the coming of Jesus as a hope even to the church at Corinth. "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye be unreprouvable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, through whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. 1:7-9.) If we could have the assurance that we shall be "unreprouvable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ," it would certainly rob that occasion of its terror. We could then with good courage begin to work for Jesus, knowing that our labor would not be vain in the Lord. The coming of Jesus would then become something to look forward to with joy. But that is exactly the thing Paul assures the Christians of, and he pledges God's faithfulness as security that it shall be even so. Christ *will* confirm you, and that unto the end, and you *shall* be unreprouvable in that day; for God is faithful. "But there are conditions," you say. Conditions? There is just one condition, and that is that you just believe this just as it stands and never turn this faith loose. For if your heart takes hold of that promise by faith, it will not have the effect that some of us may fear—namely, of making us careless, but the opposite. If the faith be whole-souled and honest, the man who believes this will spring up into joyful activity for his faithful Lord, and his hope so well secured shall abound unto an abundance of gladsome fruit. And if he have slipped, the assurance of this hope will set him on his feet again.

COD'S INSURANCE

We all have, I think, a sense of our own imperfection. It is well that we should have, if only it will lead us to Jesus, and to commit our difficult case into the adequate hands of our Savior. But if, instead, our sense of sin and sinfulness drives us away from God, to hide with Adam in the thickets from the eyes of Jehovah, and to doubt his good word concerning us, it is a calamity. We must flee to God, not from Him. With Him is abundant healing and help and forgiveness; and the blood of Jesus is always sufficient to cover our failure. But as long as our Christian life is a series of sudden changes from hot to cold and cold to hot, it may well seem to be a game of chance or luck whether we shall ever be saved; and when we begin to look at it from that point of view, we lose courage and hope, and the result is a state of indifference. "For how shall I know I shall ever be saved? And if Jesus may come at any time, seeing I fail so frequently, the chances may be that He will find me at a time when I am in a wrong attitude toward him." Admirable reason this for endeavoring to always be right. But that in itself is not sufficient to inspire us. For there is always a chance of our getting off the track, and always a chance that Jesus' coming may find us so. And when men are playing chance games—they rarely

stake their whole hearts. So God has given us a surer reliance. The "take heed" is indeed for us; but something more, something that will enable us to plunge wholeheartedly into the life and work of God without misgivings. "Now unto him that is able to guard you from stumbling"—is not that great? God able to guard us from stumbling! But that is not all: "And to set you before the presence of his glory without blemish in exceeding joy." (Jude 24.) It makes us sing with Paul: "I know him whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." And so we commit ourselves to His keeping the more utterly, and trust the more unquestioningly in the whole of that precious promise, knowing that thus we are guarded by the power of God "through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:5.) That is the faith that leads to self-surrender, and that alone the hope which is worthy of the name.

THE PERFECTING TOUCH

"Wherefore," says the apostle Peter, "girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on *the grace that is to be brought unto you* at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1: 13.) Not the condemnation that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Christ, mind you, but the *grace*. Now we have tasted of the grace of God, and have understood how, without desert on our part, God's free, loving favor in Christ Jesus blotted out all our sins, and has supplied us with strength and help, that "where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly: that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 5:20, 21.) And every Christian may glory in his Lord and say: "By the grace of God I am what I am." Yet there is a journey before us and a battle—and how will it end? But there is grace ahead.

"Through many trials, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far,
And grace will bring me home."

Especially in that awful moment when the Lord shall descend, then shall grace be brought unto us, on which we must set our hope perfectly, not half and half. And just what will it mean to us? Perhaps the best answer is given by Peter himself: "And the God of all grace, who called you into his eternal glory in Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, shall himself perfect, establish, strengthen you." So, whatever is lacking, he will make it good. He will perfect us. And so we stand secure against that day, and may well set our hope on that great day of Jesus' coming. And so shall we ever be with the Lord. "And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it." "He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus."

NEWS AND NOTES

Abilene, Texas: "We praise the Lord that He has opened up the way for a weekly broadcast sponsored by the South Side church. Some of the brethren here, along with me, have felt for a long while that this sort of work would present us with a much greater opportunity for whole counsel preaching in this area. The program is each Saturday at 10:45 a. m. on KRBC, a local station with a good coverage in this area."—Carl Kitzmiller.

Amite, La.: "The six churches of Christ in Tangipahoa parish, (county), were visited by five young student preachers from Kentucky Bible College over the week end, Feb. 17, the trip supervised by Bro. Dennis Allen, a teacher on the College staff. Four of them visited Big Creek church Saturday night where a meeting was in progress, Gayle Palmer preaching, and rendered several songs. Sunday morning they separated, filling the pulpits at Amite, Hayden Grove, Shiloh, and Oak Grove. Sunday night Pine Grove church was taken into the circuit. Bro. Allen at Bayou Jacque and Earl Mullins in New Orleans with Seventh and Camp streets church; he also was heard over radio by many up this way. He and Bro. Allen were at Amite Sunday night. Shortly after service as the boys came in from the country points the trip home was under way. They left a happy and appreciative group of churches who were refreshed by their messages and fine spirit. They also left a faithful witness for the Bible College."—A. K. Ramsey.

Sefner, Fla.: "The church at Brandon is making some efforts to widen its influence. Since Brother Chambers has been with us he has been putting out a bulletin nearly every week, and now we are putting them in the P. O. boxes in Brandon and nearby towns. We are planning on putting out 600 this next issue. A Ladies' Bible Class was also started a week ago. Interest is not what it should be. So many not converted to the Lord. The efforts Bro. Chambers is putting forth should have better response.

"We need a few families of devoted Christians to locate here. Be

glad to correspond with any interested. Pray for the work here."—H. C. Hinton.

Abilene, Texas: "The work at South Side is blessed by a wonderful peace and harmony. Pray for us that more may be accomplished that will count in eternity. We were happy to have Brother and Sister Rhodes with us recently, as they travelled to the coast."—Carl Kitzmiller.

Word and Work still continues to be of a very high type and full of rich blessings.—Carl Kitzmiller.

Sugar Creek Church Report

Louisville, Ky.: "The Lord gave us a cause for real rejoicing February 10 when a whole family (husband, wife, and eleven year old son) came to the Lord and were baptized into Christ the same hour of the night. They were very happy in their decision for Christ and their coming was an encouragement to us all. They had never made a profession of faith before. The husband said he had just decided that he could attend church all of his life but if he never accepted the gospel it would not do him any good. We thank the Lord for opening their hearts to the truth."—Dennis Allen.

Louisiana Trip

The weekend of February 17 Earl Mullins, John Pound, Eugene McGhee, Barclay Riley, Bob Morrow and Dennis Allen went to Louisiana at the invitation of the churches there. Brother Richard Ramsey made arrangements for the trip, hoping to interest some of the boys from Kentucky Bible College in locating there as a field of labor.

"Earl Mullins preached at Seventh and Camp and spoke over WWEZ Sunday morning. The other four boys preached at Amite, Hayden's Grove, Oak Grove, Shiloh, and Pine Grove (No one preaching at the same church twice) and Dennis Allen preached at Bayou Jacque Saturday night and Sunday morning and at Amite Sunday night.

The boys were well received and were enthusiastic about the work. Brother A. K. Ramsey has done a good work at Amite and the sur-

rounding country. The boys felt that they received a greater blessing from the brethren there than they gave. The churches paid the expenses of the trip and gave a nice contribution to the school. The Lord gave travelling mercies both ways and all were blessed by the experience.—Dennis Allen.

Chattanooga Tenn.: "Work at McCallie Ave. church going along very well. Interest is good, and report just put out on finance for 1951 is splendid. We have some regular fellowship with three foreign missionaries, help Kentucky Bible School, and Sellersburg Home, and keep up home work. We baptized a man of about thirty years of age last Sunday. Thank the Lord."—E. H. Hoover.

Brother and Sister E. L. Jorgenson are spending a few months this winter in Hollywood, California. Brother Jorgenson is doing some preaching at the Hollywood Boulevard Church, which meets in Hollywood Hotel. We expect the Jorgensons back in Louisville about the middle of March.

Pine Apple, Ala.: "I have gone to the church services only twice since December 1 and brethren came and conveyed me both times on account of a lame leg and foot. I am hoping soon to be doing service uninterruptedly in the Lord's vineyard."—Flavil Hall.

James M. Neill, 1217 Hanover Street, Tarrant City, Ala., would like to purchase a copy of the Boles-Boll debate, which is out of print. Any one having a copy for sale may contact Brother Neill. Also we could use a few copies at the Word and Work office.

N. B. Wright to Louisiana

Brother N. B. Wright has returned to New Orleans, La., to work in that field for the Lord. Besides being of service to the Camp Street church as needed he will do evangelistic work in the State and as called otherwise. Address Brother Wright at 1129 Seventh Street.

O. D. Bixler in the States

Brother and Sister Bixler have been making their home in Louisville the last few weeks. Brother Bixler has been speaking in various churches, presenting pictures of his work. The Bixlers will soon return to the Orient, and Dean.

their son, will likely go with them. The Allensville, Kentucky church has mailed 4,000 letters, hoping to raise \$1,000 for their return and \$3000 to apply on a new chapel which is much needed. The treasurer of the Allensville church is John M. Kerr.

Lexington, Ky.: "Three precious souls made the good confession last Sunday at the morning service and were buried with their Lord in baptism at the close of the evening service. How it thrills our hearts with gladness here below to see souls turn to the Lord in obedience of faith; what must be the joy in heaven among the angels of God when one soul or more repents and turns again."—H. N. Rutherford.

"Words of Life" Commended

Brother Rutherford speaks highly of our Saturday morning program over WGR. He thinks it is a credit to the Lord and His work. Do you hear this program? Tune in WGR, Saturday morning at 9:30 for a half hour of singing and preaching.

Sellersburg Children's Home

"Since the first of the year three boys have been received into the home. This brings our number to twenty-one: eleven boys and ten girls. There are three, two boys and one girl, who are not in school. This means eighteen lunches have to be prepared for school five days in the week. Those who may be desirous to do something and are undecided as to what our needs may be might send pencils, note book paper, etc. A basket of apples or oranges come in handy. Each child has either one or the other in his lunch each day. Five of our children have been sick with flu; three have had ear trouble in connection with it, however all were not serious and are well on the road to recovery.

"On the 20 of Jan. I was with the church at Bohon, Ky. It rained all day, but the attendance showed interest in the work. I am to return on March 2."—F. S. Spaulding

Gallatin, Tenn.: "I was with Paul Clark and the Mountain View congregation at Johnson City, Tennessee, for twelve days the first part of February. Found the brethren in a new building of brick construction and well appointed in every way. There were two bap-

tisms and three other responses. Attendance was excellent, singing good, and interest fine. Locust street church in Johnson City gave excellent cooperation. We made our home with Brother and Sister Kenneth Istre. Bro. Istre is the minister of the Locust Street congregation. Our stay with Brother and Sister Istre was most pleasant. Brother Clark is doing an excellent work with the new congregation."—H. L. Olmstead.

Pekin, Ind.: "Work is going good in Pekin. Peace and harmony prevail, and we are planning good things for the year."—R. R. Brooks.

Dallas, Texas: "East Grand church of Christ, for the month of February, had one baptism, and three to transfer membership to us. We are also losing two of our most faithful members, who are this week moving to Michigan, near Detroit."—J. E. Blansett.

Read Inside Front Cover Page

President Winston N. Allen has a new article about the Kentucky Bible College on inside front cover of this issue of Word and Work. While the College does not at the present meet the standardized educational requirements, yet most of our teachers have the master's degree and the Christian training offered along with the spiritual environment is unique and highly worthwhile. High school graduates, who are interested in obtaining training for Christian service along with their college education would do well to consider Kentucky Bible College, which was launched with you, our Christian young people, in mind. Write W. N. Allen today.

Boyd's Writing Commended

Alexandria, La.: "The articles of Brother J. Edward Boyd on the Book of Acts are clear and forceful. His comments are full of thought and worthy of consideration. His discussion of passages which have been subject to controversy is on a high spiritual level and gives the reader a richer view of the things that the book of Acts

contains."—W. J. Johnson.

To the above commendation the publisher would like again to call attention to the fact that J. E. Boyd now writes the Word and Work Quarterly. We have just finished reading the lessons for the coming quarter and find them superfine. Bro. Boll is highly pleased with Brother Boyd's work. The new quarterly is in type and will be out about the middle of March.

Alexandria, La.: "The Alexandria church of Christ, MacArthur Drive and Peach Street, recently suffered the loss of two families by their moving away, Brother John R. Burgess and family to Baton Rouge, and Sister Ruth Sheltman and husband to Oklahoma. We miss them, but since they have left others seem to have accepted the extra responsibility shifted to them.

"Brother Ivy J. Istre of Jennings has promised to be with us in a series of gospel meetings in April. We are looking forward to a good spiritual feast at that time."—W. J. Johnson.

Louisville, Ky., "On a recent trip to Florida it was my privilege to be with the brethren at Woodstock Park in Jacksonville on January 13, where I met again many friends of past years. This congregation is doing well under the ministry of Dan Richardson, and is reaching out into other nearby fields. Brother Johnny Adams is leading a new work in South Jacksonville, and progressing nicely. Plans are being made for a new building there.

"Was with the Ft. Lauderdale brethren on the 20th, where Brady Green has labored so faithfully for several years. The faithful there are pressing on under difficulties, but with faith and courage, God will give them success and victory. They need our prayers and our support.

"The work at Shawnee moves along in an encouraging way. One was baptized at our morning service on February 10th."—Willis H. Allen.

Just off the Press—R. H. Boll's booklet
"PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS"
40 pages—Neat paper binding, 40¢ each, 3 for \$1.00
Order from THE WORD AND WORK

AGREE OR ELSE NO FELLOWSHIP

Stanford Chambers

"How can two walk together except they be agreed?" The application of this scripture as it is quite generally interpreted makes quick solution of the fellowship question, saving many from the painful ordeal and embarrassment of exercising toleration. He doesn't agree with me, so I am to "cut him out." Who should attempt what the Bible shows to be impossible? But are you sure that rhetorical question has not been overworked?

"Except they be agreed": agreed on what? The direction of their travel. Disagreement as to that makes their walking together impossible. Here are two brethren in complete disagreement as to whether U. S. A. is justified in having part in the Korean war, and they are discussing the matter as they walk together going up to the house of God. The objective point of their travel they did agree upon. To be sure one could have been intolerant of the other because he took the opposite view and could have refused to walk with him. It does not follow that because you will not walk with me all the way that therefore I should not walk with you any of the way. A. Ellmore used to say "A Christian can walk arm in arm with a bartender if they are going to the house of God."

Once while we were with some satisfaction carrying on street meetings in the Jewish section there came to our city a converted Jew, a baptized believer and missionary, and we used him in speaking to the Jews we yearned to reach in their own Yiddish language. He presented Christ to them as the promised Messiah. We have never repented of our action in the matter.

A congregation was being carried away by an optimist into a pacifism and isolationism hurtful to the Cause. We welcomed the help of a man who knew what our Lord and the prophets had said on those lines and who was not negative to discerning the "signs of the times" designated by the Savior. He helped many. That was just shortly before World War I broke out.

These men "walked not with us" all the way, and of course we could have disallowed them to walk with us any of the way. Partisanship did not have its way, and we are glad. Had either man come as a representative of the organization with which he was (at least in a measure) affiliated and for the propagation of the same the case would have been different. We could relate a number of instances besides these two in which we walked some of the way with men with whom we did not agree all the way, including the matter of affiliation. We did not extend fellowship to the organization in any case. We believe the Lord got some glory and we got blessings.

The "Christian Forum," despised and rejected by some, we believe to be making a sincere effort to get baptized believers, and especially those in some measure identified with the "Restoration Movement" to see or find a way to exercise toleration toward brethren not in full agreement and to demonstrate fellowship where now division is rife. It does not urge following a brother in his crooks

and turns as he wobbles from the straight course we see (or think we see) so plainly marked out, but that we do not because of divergence at some point or points refuse to walk with him any of the way. In our judgment the Lord will make use of this desperate earnestness of Earnest Beam, and that there may be a revival of that kind of praying once heard on behalf of that same oneness for which He prayed who was in the very shadow of His cross and that supreme sacrifice. Brother Beam should not be sinned against by any neglect to pray for this endeavor and the healing of division. The fruit of the Spirit is every Christian's concern.

This writer does not fully endorse *all points made* by the Forum in its urgent plea. We cannot quite parallel some things paralleled therein. For example, the man with songbook in hand is not quite like the man with saxophone in hand; the man with tuning fork in hand is not quite like the man with trombone in hand. (And it is true that letting in the organ lets in the orchestra). The songbook in hand has for its express purpose aid in doing something asked of us by Him who is head of the church; it improves the singing. The tuning fork, ditto. The trombone in hand is not for that purpose. It is introduced to improve the program of music by combining the tones of the instrument with those of the voice. Granted skill in the handling, the more instruments in hand the more improvement in the music. It cannot be said the better the singing, and moreover the improvement of the singing is not the purpose. Better music than mere singing is the object. Suddenly, without notice, in the middle of a strain stop everything but the singing part and judge as to how much improved is the singing.

As to the arm-waving (We are not "sold" on the gymnastics and dramatics of professional or semi-professional song leaders—or of pulpiteers either) but it is to be observed that the more pieces in the band the more apparent need of arm-waving.

The man with lesson outline or sermon notes in hand is prompted solely by a purpose to set forth more clearly the truth on the subject in hand. It is to help him do what is commanded, "Preach the word." If he has a class off to itself for the time being it is for the same purpose. Opposition thereto cannot be put on a par with opposition to the orchestra whose purpose is not to aid in doing what is commanded. Cups came into use after people were made germ conscious to all those weak in faith to enter more fully and freely into real communion. (Once where we regularly worshipped was a sister who had cancer of the lip. She was sensitive and easily offended and could not be served after the rest. There were those who could not drink from the same cup and really commune; there were more who in reality *could not*). Even so, if a congregation sees to practice joint participation in the same cup, that is the same container, that is its own business, and they are not to be excommunicated for it. And if they consider they are strong and the others the weak, then let those who are "strong bear the infirmities of the weak" and not disfellowship them. To require "an acknowledgement" either way is unscriptural. Strive to hold in, rather than to cast out, if you would be truly scriptural.

Our understanding is that Brother Beam in practice makes such distinctions as we have set forth above, and though on some matters on some lines we may not be in full agreement our fellowship is not affected. I can preach in "his" pulpit (and have more than once) and he unbridled can preach in "mine." We alike deplore these divisions contrary to the teaching of Christ in Romans fourteen or anywhere else in God's word.

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MISSION

Frank Mullins

As we understand the principle by which we are justified through the shed blood of the Son of God, then we are prepared to see that by the same principle we walk in newness of life. Romans, chapter 7, portrays an honest, willing soul desiring to do God's will, but finding in his flesh a power of sin stronger than his will and desire to do God's will. This power of sin in his flesh brings him into captivity and leaves him wretched. Here is the background of a soul having been washed in the blood facing the will of God in his own strength and resources, and his inability, his failure is just as complete as before coming to Christ. And the more honest one is in facing this issue in the light of God's word the more wretched one will be, until he sees the power of God to save from this wretched state. The apostle cries out: "Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" Then he answers his own question: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7:24, 25). Immediately from this point we are launched forth into the Holy Spirit chapter of the Bible, Romans 8. And what a graphic unfolding of the mission and blessing of the Holy Spirit: "What the law could not do (I paraphrase here) in that it was dependent on man in his own strength, in the flesh, God has done by sending His Son into the world and through Him giving to us the Holy Spirit to dwell within us. And now the law (or the principle upon which the Holy Spirit works within) of the Spirit of life has made me free from the law of sin (the power of sin in my flesh) and of death" (Rom. 8:2-4). The Holy Spirit within is stronger than the power of sin in our members, therefore, by the Spirit we put to death the deeds of the body, and "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of Christ dwelleth in you."

How manifold are the blessings of God set forth in this chapter through the Holy Spirit. He brings the assurance of "no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus"; He brings the joy of knowing that the ordinance of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; He brings victory over the deeds of the body; He bears witness that we are Sons of God, and takes away the spirit of fear and bondage, and makes real this blessed relationship to God as our Father; He makes us to realize we are "joint heirs with God's Son" (whatever He is to God that is what we are and

whatever He possesses that we possess); He brings to our hearts that whatever life may hold for us now, there is glory yet before us when Jesus comes that far surpasses any suffering we undergo now. "The Holy Spirit helpeth our infirmity." Perhaps in these words is summed up His mission. We know not how to pray as we ought, but He maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. And taking the feeble cry of our heart He presents our imperfect prayers before God "according to His will." When the feeblest prayers of God's child reach God's heart they are perfect because the Holy Spirit shapes and molds them to that end. Even so, as we are raised to walk in newness of life we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit takes the feeble efforts and abilities of the child of God, who walks by faith, and molds and shapes that life to the will and purpose of God, "both to will and to work for God's good pleasure."

This is as definitely a life of trust in God for His power and working as when we came to Christ for justification in His shed blood. This life demands that "I am crucified," so that it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me. And the life I now live in the flesh, I live in faith, faith in the Son of God to live his life in me through the indwelling Spirit. This is the mission of the Holy Spirit, the bringing of the Christ life into those who are Christ's. The Christian life of faith is not man living in his own resources the teaching of Christ from a moral and ethical view-point, but to the contrary it is one's willingness to yield to Him, to realize their body has been bought with the price of His shed blood and is now become a habitation of God in the Spirit, and as it is presented to God the Holy Spirit takes over and lives in and through that person the same pure, holy, victorious life in the center of the will of God even as Christ did when He was in the earth in His own body. Pentecost of Acts 2 is the birthday of the Holy Spirit, when he took on a human body as definitely as when Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary—not just one human body, but all who are redeemed by the blood of Christ form His body—"a habitation of God by the Spirit." His body today is the church, His Holy Spirit dwells and lives within that body and produces the same results as was manifest through Christ in His personal ministry—the will of God done perfectly, the mission of God accomplished to the salvation of souls. The Holy Spirit's mission is to glorify Christ, by taking the things of Christ and making them known to us and through us. So that whatever Christ is in His standing and relation to God we become and are. Whatever His glory we share in it. Whatever His victory it is ours. Whatever His destiny we shall share it with Him. The Spirit-filled life is a Christ-centered life, a life in which "Christ is all", a realization that in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in Him we are made full, "for of His fulness we all receive."

It did not take the Lord long to get the people out of Egypt, but it took forty years to get Egypt out of them.—*Sel.*

HOW TO BE SAVED

J. R. Clark

Is there one question which men ask that might be singled out from all others and proclaimed the greatest question that ever fell from the lips of man? We think that there is one that deserves this distinction. This question was asked many times in New Testament days and has been asked audibly and in the heart thousands upon thousands of times in every generation since. And this age-long question is the number one question of the present hour. Let us hear it in the words of some who lived in the first century. "Good Teacher, What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" asked a rich young ruler of the Lord Jesus. On the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus a great crowd of Jews were convicted of sin by the preaching of Peter and cried out, "Brethren, what shall we do?" A heathen jailor who witnessed the miraculous release of two Christian prisoners became stirred about his own spiritual need and, trembling for fear, fell down before these two men of God, saying, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

In dealing with this question of "How to be saved" I would like to present the answer in brief from start to finish. It is my conviction that some do not give a sufficient and full answer to this vital question. Some start at the wrong end and stop there (at least in emphasis); others do not carry the answer through to its proper and scriptural end. There is too much involved to hold anything back or to make a mistake.

FIRST OF ALL, to be saved one must see himself as a lost sinner, undone and helpless. The Lord Jesus said "I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." The Pharisees and scribes, to whom these words were spoken, were not in reality righteous—none is in and of himself—but they were selfrighteous. Unless and until they could see themselves as lost sinners they could have no part nor lot in Christ's blessings. Such was only for those who saw and admitted their guilt before God.

Note that Peter on the day of Pentecost brought men face to face with their sins. In the light of his preaching men saw themselves as murderers of the Son of God. Like Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth they cried out because of the blood on their hands, which was actually on their guilty conscience. The text says that they were pricked in their hearts. This was by no means a pin-prick—the force of the original work "pricked" is "stabbed deep" as with a spear. In the white light of God's truth they were cut deep, crying out, "What must we do?" Most certainly they were convicted of sin and were in a frame of mind to receive the salvation of Him who said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners . . ."

In the days when Japanese royalty thought that they were linked with the divine, a Japanese queen laughed at a missionary who pointed out from the scriptures that she was a sinner. To her such a thought was ridiculous. A lost Indian, not willing to lose face in admitting that he was lost, said to his rescuers, "Me not lost, wigwam lost." A lady expressed a regret that she had not been a

greater sinner, for then said she, she could appreciate more her salvation. In answer the preacher to whom she was speaking said bluntly, "You were a great sinner! and have reason to be thankful." As long as you hold out for your innocence your case is hopeless! Guilty or not guilty? that is the question. In Romans 3, after reviewing man's case, both Jew and Gentile, the great Judge of all the earth leaned over the bench and said, "Guilty!" "We before laid to the charge both of Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin; as it is written, "There is none righteous, no, not one; . . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" This each of us must see and admit if he is to be saved, for truly Christ came to save only sinners.

The next step in your salvation is to recognize God's provision for your cleansing. God's salvation plan is set forth tersely in Romans 1:16 and 17. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith." God's provision is the Gospel. And what is the Gospel? The answer is found in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, wherein we learn that the Gospel is made up of three great facts: "that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures." Here in brief outline is God's provision for man's salvation. God's problem was not how He could be righteous and allow the sinner to be lost, but how He could be just and at the same time justify the ungodly. There was only one way. God did the amazing thing! In the Person of His Son He paid our debt and set us free. "One died for all, therefore all died." Only thus could God be just and justify the ungodly. We have heard of a judge who, to uphold justice, passed sentence upon a very dear friend, but after the trial he reached down into his pocket and paid the fine himself. Suppose it had been spiritual death! In our case the penalty was just that, and He paid it all. This is the reason we can go free.

In his great Gospel sermon on Pentecost Peter preached the death, burial and resurrection of Christ over against the sins of the people. God's plan for us is not that we deny, ignore, nor minimize sin, but that it be brought out into the light and that we fully confess our guilt and cast ourselves in humble faith and repentance at the foot of the cross.

In the cross of Christ I glory
Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

And this brings us to a final consideration. Having seen ourselves as sinners, lost and undone, and having beheld God's glorious provision through the cross, we wish now to know what the scripture says about how we may contact and appropriate that wonderful salvation. As we see the many about us who continue in their sins

in the face of the doom that awaits them, like Jeremiah of old dismay takes hold of us, and we cry "Is there no halm in Gilead? is there no physician there?" Yes, indeed, there is balm for all our ills, and we have a great Physician who can heal and save.

The Gospel is the great reservoir of blessing, the great dynamo of power. What we do is nothing of itself and avails only as it brings us in contact with this saving power.

Referring again to that Pentecostal sermon, Peter said to the convicted multitude. "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." These believing, convicted sinners, were told to repent and to be baptized in order to have the salvation of God. To this agree the words of Jesus. In John 8:24, He said, "except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins"; in Luke 13:5, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"; and in John 3:5, "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Except ye believe, except ye repent, except ye be born of water and the Spirit—there is no alternative. It is this or perish! In this manner did the 3000 who turned to the Lord on the day of Pentecost make vital contact with the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ, and so must men, women, boys and girls contact that same saving Gospel today.

"BLESSED INVITATION"

Edwin Raymond Anderson

It would seem that the Lord God could not close the Divine Record with the final "Amen," without extending to man once again, the grace of another invitation to "COME." If one will say that the entire Word of God is One Glorious "COME," and if one will say that the spiritual texture of the Book is laced with the love of God seeking and drawing after man that He might claim the creature wholly for Himself, then it would be most fitting that the blessed invitation go forth once again.

And beloved, what an invitation it is! especially when back-grounded against the marvel of His glorious grace, His matchless mercy, and the exquisite limitlessness of His love divine and all excellent!

So we turn to the close of the Record and mark the blessed invitation, "And let him that is athirst Come" (Rev. 22:17). Here is an invitation which surely reaches to the saints, as well. For surely the saints of God ought to have a thirst—of divine sort—after the things of the Lord, a thirst told out in the longing and "holy heart-ache" of knowing more and yet more about Himself, and being the closer drawn to His precious, bleeding side. It would not be well to limit that invitation to those who as yet, are outside the fold. Sinners do thirst because of the barrenness of these wastelands of woe, and searings of sin. They need to come to the Fount filled with Blood drawn from Immanuel's veins, for blessed satisfaction. For,

of the water that He shall give, there shall be delightful draught, as He Himself said to the woman at the well.

But beloved, we ought to realize that the saints of God ought to thirst as well! It was such a "thirst" which characterized them of former days. One has only to peer into their lives and read their writings, to catch this spirit of a "divine dissatisfaction." There was nothing in the way of "static sainthood." They were never satisfied with the reach of the present. Like the hart panting after the water-brooks, so did their hearts pant after Thee O God, after the living God. Well did they fathom the depths of the apostolic admission, "That I may know Him" (Phil. 3:10). The more they learned of His precious Person, the greater the holy thirst to know yet more and be the more unutterably lost in the wonder, the praise, the worship and the adoration of the Lord Jesus Christ for His peerless Person alone and apart from all else. Not for what He would grant nor supply, but far richer and deeper; the desire of knowing Him for Himself, as dear McCheyne expressed it, "Christ, for Christ's sake alone"; and with everything made secondary to that noble urgency.

We consider them of former days as "other-worldly" and no doubt, too much so! Somehow in scrutinizing them, we seem to sense something of the way of unreality. They do not seem to "fit in" with the present ways of religious activity and program. We cannot conceive of them as serving on some careening committee, nor being eddied about in tumult and confusion for the frantic planning of "giant rallies" and such like. Yet beloved, we miss far too much if we consider them only in such light. It is true that they would not "fit in" too well with many of our denominations, for they had more regard for communion than committee, and held fellowship with the living Lord to be sweeter than the fuss and fury of many of our fundamentalistic fan-fares. And it may well be alas! that we have fitted in far too well, and so have come to miss the deeper things which move beneath the surface, not attracting much of outward attention, but withal, acknowledging a Lord for more dear and near and real, for the claiming.

Let us get back in spirit with them, beloved. We have missed so much for leaving them behind in the fever of our miserable modernity. There verily needs be a hunger and thirst in the heart-depths, after the living Lord. He has alas! become the pious By-pass. There needs be the blessed revival of whole return. There needs be the desire of seeking more of Himself, and not being satisfied with anything short or less. Yes, not even satisfied with the progress that may come with Christian work! for the Lord of the work is always more sensitive and meaningful than the work of the Lord. The Person is not to be pushed aside, piously or otherwise, for the promoting of the program.

So we get back to that blessed invitation. "Let him that is athirst come." And that really should search our hearts, in so many ways and avenues. And perhaps we shall discover to shame and for confusion, that we hardly thirst at all.

THIRD LESSON ON ROMANS

R. H. B.

Romans 1:16-32

"THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION"

The great theme of "Romans" is announced in verses 16, 17 of the first chapter: "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith.*"

The doctrine of the epistle turns upon these two verses. It is necessary therefore, to study the words with special care.

1. First, he speaks of The Gospel. The word means "good tidings." He had already mentioned it three times—first in verse 1; then in verses 3 and 4 where he tells us that the central theme of the gospel is "Jesus Christ our Lord." Again he names it in verse 9—"the gospel of his [God's] Son." In verses 14, 15 he declares himself a debtor to men of every race and sort; for which cause he was ready so far as in him lay, to "preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome." Then follows the text given above. If any had thought that perhaps his long delay in visiting Rome was due to a hesitancy on his part, Paul assures them that at Rome no more than anywhere else was he ashamed of the gospel. For in that gospel, he well knew, lay man's one and only hope; "for it is God's power unto salvation"—not to all men indiscriminately but to those who believe; to the Jew first, because he had the first right to it (Acts 13:46), and also to the Gentile. What a tremendous thing must be this "gospel," this message of good tidings from God!

2. But immediately the apostle goes on to tell us *why* the gospel is God's power unto salvation to all who receive it by faith. It is because it reveals (unveils) something to man. What does it reveal? "*Therein is revealed a righteousness of God from faith unto faith.*"

Now here we must determine what this "righteousness of God" is which is revealed in the gospel. The first impression might be that it is God's own, personal righteousness, the attribute of His character. But that is not the peculiar revelation of the gospel. The fact that God is righteous, and that righteousness is the outstanding trait of His character, is taught everywhere in the Bible, in the Old Testament as well as the New. But here Paul speaks of something that is especially revealed to us *in the gospel*, the very thing that makes the gospel the power of God unto salvation. He says that special thing is a "righteousness of God, from faith unto faith." The best commentary on this is Paul's own use of this phrase in chapter 3:21—"But now . . . a righteousness of God hath been manifested, . . . even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe." And this "righteousness," he says, consists in our "being justified freely [free gratis] by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3:21-24.) So evidently this "righteousness of God" is some-

thing God bestows upon sinful, unworthy man, by which such a one is made acceptable and accepted of God. It is a gift from God (Rom. 5:17) which is freely given to us and which we receive through faith in Jesus Christ. This is also stated plainly in Phil. 3:9—"Not having a righteousness of mine own . . . but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith."

We shall have occasion again and again to return to this wonderful theme. But now let us look forward into the apostle's explanation of every man's need of this "righteousness of God," which is "revealed" in the gospel.

The whole necessity is stated in the next verse, Romans 1:18.

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder [or, hold] the truth in unrighteousness."

Unrighteousness — all unrighteousness — falls under *the wrath of God*. That dreadful theme is the warning of all scripture, from Genesis to Revelation. The wrath of God is not like the selfish anger of man, a fit of temper and passion, but God's holy and righteous indignation against sin — only faintly comparable to the white-heat of feeling sometimes aroused in men when some vile deed is committed in their midst. Everywhere in God's word the fierce wrath of the Almighty is represented as that most dreadful and terrible thing the sinner must face. There are those easy-going prophets of our days, who say "Peace, peace, when there is no peace," and who profess not to believe in a God who has "wrath." But it is far better to take God as He is, than to make a god of our own to our own liking. Whatever men may say, thus it is written; and the wrath of God is the whole basis and background of the gospel. For salvation cannot be unless there is such a thing as damnation and perdition.

The wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness of men. The measure of it is the light men have — who "hold the truth in unrighteousness." The more truth a man knows, the greater the guilt of his wrong-doing; the greater also the wrath of God and the consequent retribution upon that soul. The fact that all men had fallen under this condemnation accounts for God's act in sending His Son into the world, who alone was able to rescue us from sin and the imminent wrath to come.

* * *

With your Bible open now at Rom. 1:18 see the outline of humanity's sin and guilt. See how much light *all had—enough*, at least, to render them "without excuse"—verses 19, 20. See what they did with it, verses 21-23; how they began to decline, going down and down in degradation. This is exactly the reverse of the evolutionary philosophy so widely believed today. So far from struggling up from crude notions of deity to ever higher conceptions of God, men began with a knowledge of the true God, and ended in abominable idolatries. Can you trace seven steps in this account of the race's degeneration?

Now see what God did by way of righteous retaliation—vs.

24, 26, 28: He "gave them up." See the reason *why* He gave them up, as stated in vs. 25, 28. And see also the results in human life and conduct of this giving-up, described in vs. 24:32. Such were (and are) the conditions in the Gentile world.

In Romans 2, however, the apostle takes up the case of those who thought themselves superior—most especially the Jew; and shows them that they also come under the same verdict. Then in Rom. 3:9-20 (setting aside vs. 1-8 for the time) see how he sums up both Jew and gentile, so "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God." Ponder this teaching in Rom. 1-18 to 3:20. In our next lesson we will look into it a little more particularly and thence go forward in this wonderful, heartsearching message of Paul's Letter to the Romans.

PERSONAL THOUGHTS

The word "gospel" literally means "good tidings." This implies that humanity was, and is, in some sort of evil condition. Where things are ideal there is no call for "good news"; but when men are in peril or in distress, good tidings are most welcome. A man unaware of his lost state cannot appreciate the gospel. He must first be brought face to face with his great need. As the white writing shows up from a black black-board, so the message of the gospel (which is the message of God's redeeming love) can be made real only on the background of man's ruin and perdition and God's sentence of wrath. If a man cannot or will not see his need there can be no gospel for him.

The long passage, from Romans 1:18 to 3:20 reveals man's doom and condemnation. If it were not for this fact there would be no need for the gospel. Where there is no perdition there can be no salvation. Salvation is akin to salvage.

"God gave them up." The glasses we drink from are called "tumblers" because originally they were made with round bottoms and set in a metal frame. All men are "tumblers," unless upheld by God's hand. Left to himself man goes down and down—far below the level of beasts. Three times we find this phrase (Rom. 1:24, 26, 28)—and see what in each case was the consequence. O God, uphold us still, and give us not up.

He "suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways." It was the only hope. Thus they might learn by experience, and taste the bitter fruit of sin and self-will—that like the Prodigal they might realize some day, and turn back in their hearts to the Father's house.

Israel, too, had to learn this. "But my people hearkened not to my voice, and Israel would none of me. So let them go after the stubbornness of their heart, that they might walk in their own counsels." The history of the Jews' rejection shows what this meant.

"Even their women." A good woman is the noblest creation of God. "There is never a great good man," it has been said, "but there is a good woman back of him." She is the moral governor of the race. When a nation's womanhood becomes degraded and debauched, the ruin of that nation follows swiftly. It was at that point that the great civilizations of the past fell and perished. So will it be again.

See the list of sins in Rom. 1:28-32. They were the common sins of the heathen world. They are the common sins today also—and our guilt is the greater for the greater light we have. Has God given us up?

"It is your sweet privilege to place all your need over against His riches, and lose sight of the former in the presence of the latter. God's exhaustless treasure in Christ is thrown open to you, in all the love of His heart. Draw upon it, in the artless simplicity of faith, and you will never have occasion to lean on a creature-prop."—C. H. Mackintosh.

LESSONS ON THE BOOK OF ACTS

J. Edward Boyd

Acts 20

IN MACEDONIA AND ACHAIA. We have few details of this part of the journey. At Troas "a door was opened" to the apostles "in the Lord." (2 Cor. 2:12.) But he was disappointed because Titus was not there with word from Corinth. (Verse 13.) He was so disturbed about conditions in the Corinthian church, and about the effects of his first letter upon them, that he would not tarry with the brethren at Troas but hastened on to Macedonia. He was "afflicted on every side; without were fightings, within were fears." (2 Cor. 7:5.) But soon Titus arrived, bringing comfort and joy both by his presence and also by his good report about Corinth. (Verses 6-11.) With all their faults those Corinthian Christians had one commendable trait: when they found that they were wrong they were eager to make things right. However, there were still some among them who were opponents of Paul and who went so far as to deny that he was a genuine apostle of Christ. That was a serious matter, because it would imperil the gospel which he preached; so in the letter to them which soon followed (2 Corinthians) he vigorously defended the genuineness of his apostleship. There was much exhorting to do in the churches of Macedonia; and it is probable that at this time he made the visit to Illyricum (which bordered Macedonia on the west) mentioned in Romans 15:19.

There was much to do during the three months that he spent in Greece. There were things to set in order in the Corinthian church. (1 Cor. 11:34.) But his great accomplishment at this time—one which has been of inestimable value to the church during the centuries—was the writing of the Epistle to the Romans. Often he had purposed to go to Rome; but there had been hindrances. Although he had never been there, he had a number of personal friends in the Roman church. (Romans 16:3-15.) Among them were Priscilla and Aquila, who had left Ephesus and returned to the imperial city. And he had heard much of the faithfulness of the Roman brethren. (Rom. 1:8.) He was continually praying that he might be permitted to visit them; but he felt that he must first go to Jerusalem, "ministering to the saints." (Romans 1:9, 10: 15:22-28.) As he was preparing to set sail for Syria he learned of a plot that the Jews had laid against him. He changed his plan and went by way of Macedonia instead. Did he not trust the Lord to protect him? But the taking of prudent measures is not at all incompatible with faith in God. A number of brethren from various churches "accompanied him as far as Asia." Luke joined them again at Philippi; and they sailed across to Troas, where the others were waiting. How beautiful was the co-operation among Christian brethren in those days!

AN ALL-NIGHT MEETING. From the seventh verse of the twentieth chapter we gain a considerable amount of information. The clear implication is that it was the regular custom of the disciples to

meet together on the first day of the week. Paul and his company spent seven days in Troas; yet no meeting of the church is mentioned except for the last day. Then it is spoken of in such a way as to make the impression that it was their practice to meet on that day. This view is corroborated by Justin Martyr, who lived and wrote about the middle of the second century: "On Sunday we hold our joint meeting; for the first day is that on which . . . Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead." It came to be known as "the Lord's day," even as the breaking of bread had come to be known as "the Lord's supper." (1 Cor. 11:20.) The opinion that in Revelation 1:10 the expression is used in the sense of "the day of the Lord," as in 2 Thessalonians 2:2, et al, is without convincing evidence. In the Greek the two expressions are different, more so than appears in our English translation. Says Dean Alford: "They must be bold indeed who can render it (Rev. 1:10), 'I was transported by the Spirit into the day of the Lord's coming,' in the face of the absence of a single precedent in the universal usage of the early church." Paul and his company were in Troas on the sabbath; yet there is no word of anything that took place on that day. But it is clearly indicated that they met the following day—the first day of the week.

The declared purpose of this first-day-of-the-week meeting is also significant. "We were gathered together to break bread." It is not said that they came together to hear preaching, although the greatest of preachers was there. Nor is it said that they met to hear the scriptures read and expounded, nor to sing and pray. It is not that these things are of lesser importance in the development of Christian character; but the Lord's supper is given the place of the distinctive feature of the Lord's day service. Its purpose was indicated by Jesus: "This do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:23-26.) In it we "proclaim the Lord's death till He come." It is not to be regarded lightly, nor to be partaken of carelessly or thoughtlessly, but soberly and reverently, with deep gratitude for the sacrifice which it commemorates. Wherever there are disciples of the Lord Jesus they should follow the example of the New Testament church in coming together on the first day of the week to break bread. Its observance is so simple that the most humble and illiterate can engage in it; and yet it is so profound in its significance that the most learned and capable can be richly blessed therein. Let no Christian permit the pleasures and cares of life to deprive him of this precious privilege; let no one remain away from the service because there is to be no preacher, because the services are dull, because the singing is poor, etc. Said Jesus, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." And those who love the Lord Jesus will want to be in such a gathering.

This meeting at Troas took place in the evening. It has been suggested that this time was chosen because some of the members were slaves unable to come during the daylight hours. On the morrow Paul intended to leave and continue his journey. There was so much to say to this group of disciples that he continued his speech until midnight. And his congregation did not walk out on him! Such was the intense interest in the Word of the Lord. But one

young man was overcome by sleep and fell from a third story window. This is the first recorded instance of sleeping in church, but not the last! Eutychus did not desire or intend to go to sleep, else surely he would have sat in a safer place. But nature sometimes asserts herself, in spite of the best of intentions. No doubt there was great consternation when he was taken up dead; but it gave way to joy when Paul restored him to life. But not yet did the meeting break up, although the Greek word for "talked" in verse 11 suggests a more informal, conversational character. Day dawned, the time for separation. Paul's companions set sail for Assos; and the apostle travelled the overland route of twenty miles to meet them there. Why? We are not told; but we can understand the need for occasional periods of solitude for quiet meditation. At Assos they took him in; and from there they sailed to Mitylene, Chios, Samos, and Miletus.

MESSENGERS OF PEACE

W. J. Johnson

"How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things." Rom. 10:16

Here is something to think about. It pertains to our activities as citizens of the kingdom of heaven. For according to the authority of Christ Jesus we are intrusted with the message of peace to bear to men of every nation, proclaiming salvation in his name, and deliverance from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of Christ. (Col. 1:13.) His instructions are that we "walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Eph.4:1-3. For by this manner of living the qualities of the message that we bear will appear more practical to the alien sinners, and the purpose of our mission will be more effective in their conversion. This was true among the first Christians, who are examples in observing what Jesus commanded His apostles to teach. For this reason reference is made to their faith and practices in the plea for restoring New Testament methods of worship and service.

The plea, frequently called "Our Plea," for the restoration of New Testament teaching is for oneness of God's people, for love, peace and fellowship to prevail among them in accord with the scriptures. This is the purpose that the pioneer preachers had in mind and according to their writings and teachings they lived it more consistently than many advocates of the plea do today. For it is obvious that by giving heed to whisperings, false accusations, backbitings, misrepresentations, factions (party teachings classed as sound doctrine) and other works of the fleshly mind, the mark is greatly missed. Here the admonition of James finds apt application. But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves." James 1:21. "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which ye were called in one body; and be ye thankful." Col.3:15.

“FAITH OF OUR FATHERS”

E. L. J.

CAUSES OF DIVISION — II

H. L. Olmstead

KINGDOM OF THE CLERGY RETURNS

In the various religious groups there has been, as we have shown, an Authoritarian body who declare the doctrine and practice of each denomination. Against this rule of the Clergy our fathers rightfully rebelled. The Clergy was organized. There were Synods, Conferences, Councils, etc., who guard the faith of the local churches.

Today, representing the various groups among us, are the Papers and Schools. Both are mostly organizations of the preachers. Usually one man is president of the organization and his decisions are the final word. The theory, especially of the papers, is that to guard the Churches they must pass upon the orthodoxy of every preacher and missionary. It is they who must review all the acts of the local Churches in these matters of missionaries and ministers. These organizations reach everywhere. They wield great power in the movement. They make the young preachers and missionaries feel that it would be dangerous for them to have such an organization opposing them, or not to have their unqualified endorsement, so these young men either suffer in silence or subscribe to the creed of the organization. Now, to head a group or to be important in a faction, appeals to the flesh and to the fleshly mind. No doubt the pope of Rome feels that if he and the College of Cardinals did not speak, the Churches would go to pieces. So with the heads of all religious organizations. So do our papers and schools feel. If they did not speak, and sometimes actually interfere, they feel that the Churches would go to pieces with no one but Christ to head them and nothing but the Bible and their chosen servants to guide them. The difference between our “kingdom of the clergy” and that of the others is that most of theirs was authorized by the Churches, while ours are self-appointed organizations.

THE CAUSE UNDERLYING IT ALL

Among the works of the flesh we find, “enmities, strife, jealousy wraths, factions, divisions, parties” (Gal. 5:20). If it were not for the predominance of the flesh, brethren could honestly differ and not divide. If it were not for fleshly pride we could stand to see our own religious conclusions investigated and even assailed. Were it not that we desired the preeminence, like Diotrephes (3 John 9), we would think twice before casting any one out of the Church. If we did not love power we would not constitute ourselves into religious organizations to pass upon the orthodoxy of our brethren. If preachers crucified the flesh with all the passions and lusts thereof, the passion of jealousy and envy so often seen would be non-existent.

Our hope for real unity does not lie along the path of creedal

uniformity. It must come as a result of putting Christ, and not things or incidentals, in the center of our preaching and plea. There is needed such a preaching of the full Gospel of grace, salvation, and holiness by the power of God's Spirit as is set forth in the New Testament, a preaching that stops not at merely changing men's religious views but changes *men* themselves. There was once such a forthright ministry of the central message of the Gospel that those who embraced it were said to be "new creatures in Christ Jesus." The number of nominal Church members since Pentecost has been very many. The number who could say with Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ" has been far less. It is clear then that there can be no unity between those who are after the flesh and those who are after the Spirit. There can be no compromise there. Preaching that produces group religion and no personal religion can never produce unity, for it appeals to the flesh, rather than to the spirit.

As in the long ago, he that was born after the flesh (Ishmael) persecuted him that was born after the Spirit (Isaac), *so also it is now*. Wherefore, what saith the Scripture? cast out the handmaid and her son, for the son of the handmaid shall not inherit with the son of the free woman" (Gal. 4:29, 30). If our preaching be concerned with incidentals, with philosophical and theological contentions, these all appeal to the fleshly mind but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh (Col. 2:23).

There is only one counteractive agent against the flesh, and that is the Holy Spirit Himself. "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man (be he elder, deacon, preacher, editor, college president) have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." For this there can be no substitute (Rom. 8:9).

Creedal agreement and uniformity in congregational practice, may be desirable but are not essential. The common life imparted by the Spirit of God *is*; else the flesh will dominate all our actions and division will be inevitable. "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18).

THE CHALLENGE AND CALL

These things being true, in these troublous days of moral laxity, mere group religion, careless and ungodly living, loose thinking in a time of trouble, when all men's hearts are fainting for fear of the things that are coming to pass on earth, we are challenged to a ministry of the unsectarian gospel of Jesus Christ, a gospel that preaches the cross of Christ not only as the procuring cause of man's salvation, but preaches the Cross for ourselves that we may no longer live unto ourselves but unto Him who died and rose again. (2 Cor. 5:15).

The call today is for men, who, in the utter abandon of their faith, will declare the whole counsel of God.

The call is for men who are laboring to save men, *not doctrine*.

The call is for men who not only preach Christ-centered religion but who *live* it themselves.

We issue a call for men who will preach Christ and Him crucified, *not* so as to leave the impression that He is defending the the-

ology of some group, but that he is laboring to bring men to Christ by bringing Christ to men.

The times challenge us to seek understanding and fellowship with all who know and love our Lord in sincerity and truth in every place.

We are called at whatever cost or personal sacrifice to turn away from all allegiances that are creed-centered instead of Christ-centered. We are called upon to throw off the yokes of legalism and creedalism, to wear only the yoke of Christ. "His yoke is easy and his burden is light."

What is needed today is not men who do think that Jesus started something that reached its climax in the 13th Century and left believers in the bondage to papacy; nor that the climax of Christ's movement came in the 16th, 17th or 18th Centuries. *That* left Christians in bondage to the creeds. Much less do we need men who, in their claims for chapter and verse authority for all they do in religion, resort to the legalistic hair-splitting distinctions as tests of loyalty that are now being made in a score of places. Surely the truth of God is a living and active thing. Its nature is such that it cannot be stored away in cans, fashioned after the pattern of human minds who place the stamp of finality on these human containers.

We, therefore, recommend that all who seek to be simple unsectarian Christians, those who seek fellowship in free Churches which are not controlled by preacher organizations or by clergy, (whatever the method they may employ—whether direct organization, or under the guise of religious Journals or Schools or groups and cliques of preachers) declare unceasing spiritual warfare against all such workings of the flesh. That we back up, take a new start, declaring allegiance to no group, not even our own, but only to Him who is the one divine head of the one body of Christ which is His Church.

I humbly suggest that we for ever repudiate all tests of loyalty that have been arrived at by human reason, and all attempts at Christian unity other than that which the Holy Spirit will work among those who have received God's Christ and hold His Word in holy honor. This unity will be genuine, not artificial; it will be of the Spirit and not of the flesh; it will be divine and not human; it will be of God, not of men. It will, please God, build up only His house, and not a sectarian party!

SELF-RESPECT THROUGH LOVE

No man can realize himself loved of God and be at all appreciative of that love, without at once becoming more self-respecting. If God so loves him, personally and individually, he may not throw himself away; for this love, even if responded to even a little, gives God a claim on him, even as it gives him a claim on God. He is no more his own; he is bought with a price, a love-price, even the blood of Jesus, who in seeking the wandering sheep followed its path, and was made as a sinner in my behalf that I might be righteous in him. And this love is also the love of Christ that constraineth us to serve Him for the blessing of others.