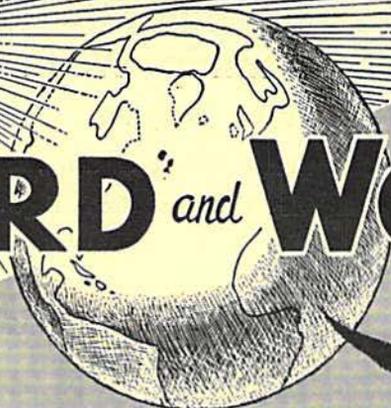


"Holding fast the faithful Word . . ."



The **WORD** and **WORK**



"Holding forth the Word of life."

JUNE, 1977

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30th Annual Louisville Christian Fellowship Week

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30th Annual Louisville Christian Fellowship Week

August 8-12, 1977

DAY SESSIONS: Portland Avenue Church of Christ, 2500 Portland Avenue.

EVENING SESSIONS: Highview Church of Christ, Fegenbush Lane at Glaser.

Theme: IMITATORS OF GOD. "Be ye therefore imitators of God as beloved children." —Eph. 5:1.

MONDAY

Chairman, Edw. Schreiner

Evening Session

7:30- 8:00 Singing
8:00- 9:00 Be Ye Imitators of God Hall Crowder

TUESDAY

Theme: PERSONAL WORK

Chairman, B. D. Fields

Day Session

9:00-10:00 Bible Exposition: Romans Robert B. Boyd
10:00-10:20 Fellowship Period
10:20-11:20 Why Do Personal Work? (Emphasis on Personal Responsibility) Herbert Ball
11:20-12:00 Prayer Time
12:00- 1:15 Lunch Time
1:30- 2:15 Successful Techniques in Your Daily Activities Bill Medley
2:30- 3:15 Techniques in a Visitation Program Ray Naugle

Evening Session

7:30- 8:00 Singing
8:00- 9:00 Personal Work Howard Marsh

WEDNESDAY

Theme: Local Church Outreach

Chairman, Tom Rowe

Day Session

9:00-10:00 Bible Exposition: Romans Robert B. Boyd
10:00-10:20 Fellowship Period
10:20-11:20 Why (Related to Home and Foreign Missions and the Community) Victor Broaddus
11:20-12:00 Prayer Time
12:00- 1:15 Lunch Time
1:30- 2:15 How? (Missions—Foreign and Home) Vernon Lawyer
2:30- 3:15 How? (Local Congregation) Orell Overman

Evening Session

7:30- 8:00 Singing
8:00- 9:00 The Local Church Outreach Vaughn Reeves

THURSDAY

Theme: The Christian Home

Chairman, LeRoy Friedley

Day Session

9:00-10:00 Bible Exposition: Romans Robert B. Boyd
10:00-10:20 Fellowship Period
10:20-11:20 Establishing the Christian Home C. E. Stocke
11:20-12:00 Prayer Time
12:00- 1:15 Lunch Time
1:30- 2:15 Christian Ethics in Today's Society Dr. Paul Clark
2:30- 3:15 The Problems of the Christian Home in Today's Society Nathan Burks

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THE WORD AND WORK

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Robert Heid is a minister in Louisville, Kentucky



God's Family

W. R. H.

THOSE POOR READERS

One of Paul's final admonitions to Timothy reads: "Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching." Perhaps his word to Robert Heid, if I were blessed with his advice today, would be the same. And not to me only, is this word addressed, but to the many, young and old, rich or poor, weak or strong, that have been blessed with ample education to enable them to do so. School libraries, ministers' libraries, and libraries in homes have grown (if only slightly,) in much greater proportion than the average amount the books are read. We have in Louisville the library of the late Bro. R. H. Boll. It is shelved and displayed, catalogued, and in a neat quiet room amply heated and lighted; but there is little demand to enter, and only token interest, even in the Portland area.

WHAT READING MATERIAL DO YOU LIKE?

Reading is something akin to eating. Some of the things that we like, are not good for us, while other things that we are needing, we refuse to have. So with books. Some of the titles that catch my eye are not aimed for my edification; in fact they may so fill my thoughts that meditation is stifled. Other books that have a real message are often drab in title and jacket, if not also in literary style. Today writing has become quite competitive, with each author vying for the brief attention span of the casual reader who delights to be tickled or entertained, rather than have his soul's needs met. Am I alone in saying that I have to make myself read some things that I know are good while I have difficulty turning aside from worthless chaff? From the list of books that have become "best sellers" I think that many other people have my propensity in this.

HOW READEST THOU?

The word for "reading" in the verse mentioned above, means "to gather exact knowledge of, recognize, discern." This would supply Timothy with the understanding and discernment he would need

to exhort and teach, for without a continuous taking-in, he would soon be trying to feed the flock from an empty crib. The word used here does not include reading for pastime or light entertainment, as one reads the newspaper or even *Readers Digest*. Paul, in his second letter, asked Timothy to bring to him the "books, especially the parchments." Perhaps the latter were scribe-copies of the scriptures, giving them special worth in Paul's appraisal. These, doubtless, with other books that Paul had accumulated, were to be his daily bread while in chains.

WE GROW MENTALLY

Many of the young people in our public schools are found to be reading at a third-grade level. This is so unfortunate! Remedial reading classes are being set up in many schools to alleviate this situation, for if a child does not read well, his higher education becomes impossible for him to achieve. But we wonder if many of the parents are doing even less with their reading, not because they cannot read but because they *will* not. Radio has for a long time competed, and now that TV has moved in the use of our libraries has been reduced to a trickle. I remember when the Portland brance of Louisville Free Public Library used to be crowded. Now it is closed much of the time. Even records and ear-phones being installed were not able to reverse the trend, for people have become too lazy to read.

YOU MAKE THE CHOICE

Formerly we mailed out the *Word and Work* in an envelope, in order for it to arrive in better condition. When inflation hit, we found it economical to change, sending them out unwrapped. But this was not a bad development, for now at least they are open to view. We heard that many issues had been lying around unopened in some homes. Now we know that at least the outside covers will be seen, and we trust the titles will stir your interest. We, too, are competing for your brief reading time. So, we try to make our pages worthy of your time by honestly dealing with much of God's word, in a manner that will possibly hold your attention. However, we are not aiming to compete with your Bible, but rather to encourage more use of it, searching to see if these things be true. God's word is the fountain head of all worthwhile reading. Anything that men may write, at its best, is only a reflection of some of the divine wisdom of God.

When you pick up something to read, or when you have an hour to peruse your library, the choice is up to you. An old book-mark bore this inscription: "Choose your books as you choose your friends." What choices do you find yourself making?

"When you can't praise God for what He allows, praise Him for Who He is."

Carl Kitzmiller is a minister of the Church of Christ in Oakdale, La.



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

Are disasters in natural events a form of God's judgment on people? If all things work together for good to the Christian, why is he not spared such things?

Yes, there is no doubt that God sometimes uses the forces of nature to bring judgment. Great droughts, as well as insect plagues, pestilences, etc., are mentioned in the O.T. as judgment. In all likelihood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah would have been described as a natural disaster if our modern news gatherers had reported it. Even the flood of Noah's day was a great unusual "natural" disaster.

But we must not reach the conclusion that everyone who suffers loss in such a disaster is marked as an exceeding great sinner, or that a Christian who suffers must somehow have some secret sin for which he is being judged. God does not always spare His people at such times or miraculously deliver them. It seems evident that the storms, floods, droughts and such like are all a part of the curse of sin on the world, and when the curse is removed these things will pass away. However, while this age runs its course there are a number of ways in which we are identified with the infirmity that belongs to this life. For the Christian death is a defeated enemy, but even Christians suffer the loss of loved ones, and until the return of Christ must pass that way themselves. In some respects, as people who are "in the world," we share some common experiences. This should not be interpreted to mean that God is unmindful of us or is not overruling for our good.

Even with our limited human wisdom, we can see that if Christians were remarkably singled out and exempted from all the common experiences of mankind, there would be a tendency to serve the Lord for ulterior motives. In other words, such a course would not be for our good in the long run. The devil, when he accused Job of serving the Lord for what he received of Him (Job 1:9-10), was not far wrong in his estimate of the frailty of man. That was not the reason Job served the Lord, but he was an exceptional man.

God is overruling in Christian lives, and we have no way of knowing how often He has actively intervened on our behalf. This is the kind of thing He can do without even the Christian being fully

aware of it. His providential care is no myth. But this does not mean that exemption from trouble is always the best thing for us. We, too, need to be reminded that present things are corruptible and destructible, and we must not have our hearts set too much on them. The person who tries to discern God's love or judgment solely on the basis of what happens in this life will normally be very wrong. We are never promised that our Christian lives will be spared all sickness, all disaster, all harm from natural causes, etc. There need be no doubt that God can spare us when that is desirable according to His purposes, but He is not bound to such a course. We make a serious mistake when we suppose such exemption is always best.

I know of a town in which a tornado destroyed all the church buildings except one. Some of the members of the church whose building was spared tended to regard this as evidence they were thereby shown to be approved of God and the others as disapproved. I have often wondered what conclusions they would have reached if the situation had been reversed and only their building was destroyed. Although He spoke of other than natural disasters, Jesus indicated that tragic events do not of themselves mark those who suffer as being worse sinners than others (Lk. 13:1-4).

What should our attitude toward sectarian people be?

I am not sure that there is any simple answer to such a question, and the best I can do here will be incomplete. Some sectarian people are following the light they have about as well as the average "non-sectarian." This is not to say many of these could not have had much more light or that they are not accountable, only that they are spiritually rather unlearned in some areas of life. They need more light and they fall far short of the ideal, but we can be glad for their love of the Lord and their acceptance of some Christian truths. Generally, we ought to count this as a foundation on which to build rather than these as enemies to be destroyed. Others may be far less teachable and so thoroughly sectarian that there is little opportunity of changing their views. Some are so thoroughly immersed in false teaching and so militantly opposed to the truth that it may be necessary to oppose their efforts and expose their errors.

I find two major errors to be prevalent toward peoples of the various religious faiths. One is that of an almost total lack of discernment. It is more or less assumed that all groups are just about the same except for minor differences, that it does not matter much so long as one is "something" religiously, and that anything sincerely followed will be acceptable. These are often so undiscerning as to Bible truth that if they are cast with a Bible-believing people it is largely the result of chance. A preacher or teacher might present that which is almost totally contrary to what they are supposed to believe without their being aware of it.

God has given us a Bible to be believed and followed, and we must never become careless or indifferent to what it reveals. Because one can recognize sincere effort on the part of a people or can appreciate the truth they do hold does not mean he should abandon a fuller understanding or a better position. Personally I believe some people may have saving faith in Christ and may be saved in some religious systems that are far from being scriptural in a lot of ways. That does not mean I should adopt that system as standard or proclaim it as a sufficient way before the Lord. Some may be saved in spite of the system of which they are a part, but that very system might destroy others.

On the other extreme from accepting everything are those who are sure everyone is wrong and hell-bound except themselves and their sort. These generally understand little of the grace of God and tend to regard their own "perfection" as the reason for salvation. These allow little room for disagreement with themselves and are seldom very modest about their achievements in discovering "the truth." Yet these people are often very lacking in the fruit of the Spirit and the Christ-likeness which is to characterize God's people. It is evident to almost anyone reasonably well-read in the Bible that these people have no corner on acceptance with Christ.

We ought not despise any serious, Bible-based attempt to be New Testament Christians and to stress that sectarianism is wrong (1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3:1-7). We ought to be committed to the whole counsel of God not only as an ideal but as a practice, as much as possible. We ought to be careful that in a zealous attempt to extend fellowship to every true Christian we do not also extend approval to some systems and to some teachings that are misleading or false. We also need to use the opportunities that exist to teach the mistaught and mistaken people "the way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:24-28). Even so, without approving the error in either our own lives or others, we need to realize that sectarian people have much truth and that we have far more in common with them than with the unbelieving world. We have to face the fact of the differences, but we should not forget that we have other things in common. We must be careful not to be too quick to beam in our own. In a lot of ways our judgment will have to be on an individual basis and with the realization that the individual may be better than the system of which he is a part.

-113 N. 6th St., Oakdale, La. 71463

"Those who leave others encouraged never lack for visitors."

THE JUBILEE AGE

(PART TWO)

Fred W. Schott

Road Blocks to the Kingdom

I would like to briefly identify what I consider to be seven specific roadblocks to a more complete fulfillment of the Jubilee Kingdom in our age.

1. CHURCH STRUCTURE.

Bigness is the word. It is significant, I think, that while most churches are concerned with bigness and with increased numbers Christ chose to deal most intimately with a group of twelve men. Those twelve men then went on to "turn the world upside down."

Bigness and a concern to be the biggest and the best is just one way in which the church is fashioned according to the world. Many times our elders function more like boards of directors of corporations than spiritual overseers of groups of God's children. Could that be because we chose our elders in ways similar to those of corporations? Else why is it that most often the elders of a church are also seen as the best businessmen in the congregation, most often evident that they are also the most affluent, and therefore are the most "logical" choices to conduct the "business" of the church.

2. INFATUATION WITH BUILDINGS.

Church growth, spiritual growth, is too often identified with new and larger buildings, then maintained by adding newer and nicer furnishings. I suggest that we need to go back to the "Tabernacle" concept of the church. If you remember, the Tabernacle that God instructed Moses to build was a tent. It is also appropriate that this is the only kind of structure designed for worship that was commanded of God to be built. David asked "permission" of God to build a temple. God had not commanded it. I am not suggesting that we return to tents, although there was certainly nothing wrong with the "tent revivals" that I remember attending as a very young boy. I am suggesting that we return to an idea of a God "on the move" and a God too big to be confined to any building, no matter how big and how beautiful and how much we have spent on it. More than that, I am suggesting that we return to a concept of a people willing to pick up at any time and follow our King! leaving the institutions to run themselves and the mortgages to pay themselves!

3. THE "SUPERSTAR" PASTOR SYNDROME.

In every walk of life our culture seeks the superstar epitomized by the sports and entertainment world. The church is no different.

Many congregations dream that someday they will find and, no matter what it costs, hire a superstar pastor who will "draw in the crowds," balance their budgets and pay off their church mortgages; and give their whole congregation someone to rally around, to make them proud, to pull them together as a congregation. If you doubt what I say, ask ten Christians this week how their church is going and nine out of ten answers will relate how well or how poorly the church is doing by how well or how poorly the pastor is doing.

Tied to this roadblock and, in fact, I think very much a part of it, is "Sunday morning evangelism" or a "bring them to church" witness. How sad that much of the church's witness has been reduced to "come to our church this Sunday. We have a good pastor. Come hear Bro. So-and-so speak." How ironic that the greatest part of our witness seems to be wrapped up in the two hours on Sunday morning, when the example of the early church clearly shows that the gathering on the first day of the week was primarily for the upbuilding of the saints to better equip them to continue the redemptive and intercessory work of our King in the world.

4. "AT EASE" IN THE SUBURBS.

Put quite simply, brothers and sisters, we are too rich. Now it is certainly not wrong to be in the suburbs, but it is certainly as wrong to be at ease in the suburbs as it was to be at ease in Zion. It is not wrong for Christians to live and worship in the suburbs, but there is something terribly wrong, considering that Christ calls us to be imitators of Him, that so few Christians live among, identify with, and take on the sufferings of this age's poor, oppressed, and neglected.

I fear that if it were possible for us to send a delegation from amongst our modern churches to Jesus and ask, "What more must we do?" our Lord would sadly answer, "One thing thou lackest . . .

5. PROGRAMS, PROGRAMS, PROGRAMS.

I am convinced that we have become so obsessed with programs, planning, and organization that we no longer can see clearly to simply follow the Lord. Every church, every minister it seems, is trying to run some super new or revitalized program. Every meeting of Christians, it seems, brings announcements of new programs to be supported.

It is ironic that when Christ calls us not to worry about tomorrow, about what we shall eat, about what we shall wear, that the programs of our affluent churches demand more and more money. Christian radio waves are crowded with appeals for more money. The cry comes to us that God desperately needs your money to support His work. I say to you tonight that our God, our King, is never, never desperate and any work that is desperate is not of His Kingdom!

The sixth and seventh roadblocks to the Kingdom, as I perceive them, are:

6. THE LACK OF MINISTRY TO THE POOR.

7. OUR BELIEF IN THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE.

These last two, in my opinion, are the most crucial, and if we were to get a good hold on them, we might just get a handle on all of the rest. Therefore, the rest of my remarks will center around God's people's responsibility to the poor, and the Christian's proper place in the American culture. They go hand in hand.

GOD'S PEOPLE'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE POOR

Many of you have no doubt already disagreed with some or much of what I have said. I warn you that it is here that some, perhaps many, of you will disagree with the points that I will make on these issues. Again I ask only that you search the scriptures and your hearts to see if these things that I say are of God or not.

Fundamental and evangelical Christianity has become so infatuated with right-wing political thought that to many Christians, when the words poor, or minority, or black, or charity, or social responsibility are even mentioned, their hackles are raised, their defenses thrown up, and the battle lines are quite clearly drawn.

In some strange way, some very strange way, helping poor people, as the scriptures clearly command, and the calling for social justice and equality, as is clearly indicated in the Day of Jubilee—not to mention the angry cries of the prophets—makes one suspect as a liberal modernist or even worse, as a socialist or a communist.

Many Christians sound *anything* but loving, as they spew out their contempt for busing, welfare, ADC, government giveaways, and so on. As if there were no *people*, thousands of people, involved at all! I am very afraid that our contempt of these programs is also read by the world, perhaps rightfully so, as contempt for those most wronged by these very programs—those most in need of our Great Physician.

Just the point! Even the largest and most humane government in the history of the earth cannot provide for the poor as well as those subjects of the Kingdom of God. Any time man, with the best of intentions, tries to ease the plight of the poor, the results are most often a dehumanizing, bureaucratic mess. Our King, King Jesus, demands a better and more loving, but a real, way from His subjects.

Satan has effectively used the current political processes to bring to a virtual halt any legitimate Christian or Kingdom response to the poor and oppressed of our day.

The Testimony of Scripture is Overwhelming—Or It Should Be!

In considering God's people's responsibility to the poor, the testimony of scripture is overwhelming—or it should be! For example, let us consider two of our most dearly held doctrines, communion and baptism. We are not the only fellowship of churches who have very strong opinions on these two issues. In fact, the

great disagreements over them is evidence of how strongly most churches hold to them and the importance they place on them.

Concerning communion and baptism, the following is based upon my own quick survey of a Bible concordance, and honestly could be off a little, but it should be close enough to give some idea about which I am speaking. Communion, the doctrines and the practices, no matter what they be, are based on about seven passages and some twenty verses. Baptism, again the doctrines and the practices, are based on about nineteen passages and some fifty-two verses.

God's people's responsibility to the poor, however, is based on over *three hundred* passages and over *one thousand* verses! The figures are not mine, but found in another brother's book. Again, there could be some error. Yet even a great deal of error in any of the above figures would still leave room for great contrast. However one does so, any examination of the scriptures without a doubt reveals a special concern for the poor.

A Quick Survey of the Scriptures

From the Mosaic covenant to the promises of the gospel, the Bible points to the poor, the widow, the orphan, the stranger, the needy and the oppressed as a special concern of our King.

Let us look first at the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, *God especially loves the poor and does not forget them.* As we see in Psalms 72:12-13, God's anointed One "delivers the needy when he calls, the poor and him who has no helper. He has pity on the weak and needy, and saves the lives of the needy." And in Psalms 9:12, the Lord "does not forget the cry of the afflicted." Isaiah 25:4 tells us that God has been a "stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in distress."

In the Old Testament social order, the poor received an economic advantage. Deut. 15:7-11 and Ex. 22:25 show us that the people were commanded to loan freely to the poor, but to charge them no interest. And in Lev. 19:9-10 and 23:22, we see that part of the wheat and grape harvests were to be left ungathered for the benefit of the poor. Significantly, part of the purpose of the tithe was to provide relief for the poor, as can be seen in Deut. 14:29 and 26:12-13.

The Old Testament emphasizes that God requires justice for the poor and will judge those who oppress them. God's words by the prophet Zechariah are representative of the scores of similar passages:

"Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy each to his brother; do not oppress the widow, the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor."

Finally, in the Old Testament we can see that God's people

bear a special ethical responsibility for the poor. Remembrance of their own Egyptian slavery is cited in Deut. 24:17-22 as sufficient motivation to show mercy to the oppressed. The faithfulness of God's people was continually measured by their treatment of the poor. The Jubilee King, King Jesus, measures us thus in this the Jubilee Age.

WHAT OF JESUS AND THE POOR?

What of Jesus and the poor? Three points must be made.

One: Jesus made the preaching of the Gospel to the poor a *validation* of His own ministry. As already cited, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, *because* He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor." It can easily be seen in the Gospel records that in Jesus' ministry there was a conscious intent and a purposed practice to preach the Gospel especially to the poor.

Two: Jesus believed that the poor were more ready and able to understand and accept the Gospel. That is in stark contrast to the attitude of the modern church, which continually makes excuses for not taking the Gospel to the poor, especially if the poor are non-white.

Jesus once thanked the Father, as you will recall, that these things about which He was speaking were hid from the wise and understanding, and revealed to babes, or the uneducated, unsophisticated, the poor.

Three: Jesus specifically directed the Gospel call to the poor, as can be seen in the favorite passage, "Come unto me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." No matter how hard we try to spiritualize these words, Jesus spoke here, literally, in the first place, to the poor. Jesus' call is pre-eminently to the poor; of course, not exclusively, but pre-eminently to those most wearied, most burdened, both spiritually and physically, from long hours of physical labor, from various oppressions known only to the poor.

The record is clear. The fundamental sympathies of Jesus were with the poor and oppressed. In short, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Jubilee King, demonstrated the same attitude toward the poor that God revealed in the Old Testament.

THE POOR AND THE MODERN CHURCH

What of the modern church and Jesus? Again three points must be made.

One. Like Jesus, the church must begin to place a special emphasis on the poor. As they have always been, the poor are ready for the Gospel. Every great spiritual revival in history has been marked by a great response of the world's most rejected masses.

There has been an unfortunate pattern in regards to the poor and the gospel. First, in large outflowings of the Holy Spirit, the poor respond. Second, through their new found life and its religious discipline, they begin to prosper as God blesses them. This new prosperity leads to a rise in economic status. Third, with this new found respectability comes a neglect for the new poor. I say to you tonight that it is in this third state that the modern evangelical, fundamentalist American church can largely be found. We have forgotten from whence we came, and worse yet, we self righteously fail to give credit to our gracious King for who we are and what we have become. True gratefulness and thanksgiving to our King for His many blessings and provisions, must be accompanied by concern for those not so blessed.

Two. The number one priority among the poor must be the proclamation of the pure, clear, unadulterated Gospel of salvation. Any work of Christians that does not clearly proclaim the saving plan of God's salvation for the individual is not the complete Gospel of Christ.

Three. Christian responsibility cannot stop with evangelism. Why? Because the scriptures and Christ dictate that we should meet the physical and social needs of the poor as well as the spiritual. Any Christian work which does not show real concern for the physical and social needs of people is also not the complete Gospel of Christ. This is the essence of the Kingdom as it now exists, and as it exists concerning "the hope that is in us."

Listen, brothers and sisters, we have direct commands from our King, a King so powerful that He laughs at the great super-powers of our day! We have direct commands from that same powerful King, to do justice, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the widow and fatherless, visit the prisoner, and set at liberty the oppressed.

We greatly err—no, we out and out *sin*—if we dare to spiritualize these direct commands from our Jubilee King.

A right and Biblical response to the poor by subjects of the Jubilee King is more than just doing good deeds, more than an updated Christian philanthropy, more than a guide to help Christians avoid sin. It is even more than doing so just because we have been commanded to do so by our King.

Such a response by the people of God is a bold proclamation to the powers of the world about the Lordship of Christ the King. It says to the world, to the powers of this darkness, that there is a new order, there is a new community at work in the world, where Christ is King, where the Jubilee King rules the hearts and actions of men.

Ernest Lyon is a professor of music at the University of Louisville, and minister of the Highland Church of Christ.



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

Promised Through the Prophets

"The gospel of God, which He promised afore through the prophets in the holy scriptures." In this way Paul closes the first verse and opens a new subject in verse two of the first chapter of Romans. But because verse three adds "concerning his Son" so often students of Romans will concentrate on anything prophesied about the Lord Jesus Christ and overlook that the specific type of prophecy that Paul is talking about is that which told beforehand of the gospel. The gospel is not the birth of Christ, nor is it His life. Paul tells us himself what he means by "the gospel" when he says, in 1 Corinthians 15, "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" and then goes on to list some of His appearances during the forty post-resurrection days on earth and then His appearance to Paul after His ascension. So Paul in Romans 1:1,2 is telling us that the prophets prophesied of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord as the means of providing men with the good news that they can be saved through faith in that resurrected Son.

Possibly we should also note that the term "the prophets" does not necessarily confine itself to the books we call books of prophecy. In Hebrews 1:1 the writer speaks of God's speaking "unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners" and he is obviously including all the Old Testament in that term "the prophets." I believe Paul is here using the term that way.

In order to prophesy the gospel, the predictions had to include Christ's coming into the world. Probably these are the best known of the prophecies—His being the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15); His being born to a virgin (Isa. 7:14), His being born as a child but given as a Son (Isa. 9:6), His being from everlasting (Micah 5:2) and then prophecies of his work of preaching, healing, and many other details too numerous to list here. But let us turn for a moment to the specific prophecies of His providing our salvation through His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension.

I suppose that the first, somewhat obscure when spoken, prophecy along these lines was that the serpent would bruise His heel (Gen. 3:16). For lack of space we will skip over many passages and include two from the Psalms. The first is Psalm 16:8-11, where His death and quick resurrection are set forth briefly but clearly, the resurrection to be followed with "fulness of joy" and "pleasures for evermore." But even more important to most students is the remarkable setting forth of His death by crucifixion in Psalm 22, a description given long before crucifixion became the means used by the Roman government to put to death non-Roman criminals. And, again, after the death, beginning from verse 22 we have a statement of things to happen, thereby necessitating the resurrection.

To me the most important of all the passages setting forth our Lord's substitutionary death is that beginning in Isaiah 52:13 and running through the fifty-third chapter. It not only describes somewhat of the effects of crucifixion on His person (especially 52:14), it also speaks of His being "despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" and many such details; but it also points out that "he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" and that "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah then sets forth His actions when He was brought to trial and then crucified, even to the detail of dying with the wicked and buried with a rich man (in Joseph's grave, that is). Then, again, after His death, which is described as "an offering for sin," He is said to "prolong his days," to "see the travail of His soul" and "by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many." From death to resurrection and being able to justify. No wonder chapter 55 then can invite us to come to Jehovah for pardon!

I wish there were space to speak of His being called "Jehovah our righteous one," His cleansing Israel, and many other such prophecies, and space to dwell on the sacrifices of the Old Testament, especially the Passover, as setting forth in advance the gospel, but let us stop now and praise the Lord for His wonderful salvation to undeserving men. And let us go forth with greater conviction as we see that God truly set this forth in advance and fulfilled it in detail nearly two thousand years ago. May we continue to preach that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" until He comes again into the world to gather those saved sinners together for a wonderful eternity.

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Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

BY NOW YOU'VE heard of *Roots* and have formed your opinion of it. From the first it had the smell of ripe sardines to me, but one can't say too much when a writer's craft is bringing him in millions of dollars, and all the liberals are very full of praises for his literary endeavors. I may be wrong, but (you can say you saw it first in *Word and Work*), I have a feeling that we will find out that there is quite a bit of bunk slipped into the information of *Roots*. You have probably never heard of the distinguished Negro American and humanitarian, Henry Mitchell. He is president of the North Star Missionary Workers of America. In the February issue of *Star News* he tells us this: "My American friends, the whole act of slavery can be blamed on African culture, just as much as it can be blamed on the white man's mistaken value system of the past. I say the blame should lie more with those in Africa who sold members of their tribes to slave masters with no concern for the welfare of those human beings. Our history books tell us how the white man set sail to different countries looking for slaves to buy, but they were rejected and fought off by almost all except those in Africa.

"The showing of the novel *Roots* dug up things of the past which were better laid to rest and forgotten. It opened up old wounds which had been healed. It created guilts. It drove a wedge between many black and white Americans which hadn't been there before. It stirred animosity in the hearts of many black children and started them looking back, instead of thinking about progressing

today and tomorrow . . .

" . . . My friends, as I traveled through the weeping, suffering land of Africa and saw millions upon millions of blacks, suffering, starving, their children sick and dying, with vermin infesting their bodies and homes, I could not help but think that if my ancestors had not been sold into slavery, my family and I, no doubt, would be in the horrible condition that exists in Africa today.

" . . . My friends, I restate, I am against slavery, but after comparing the suffering condition of black people in Africa today, and black people in America today, who are no longer slaves, but free men and women, I must admit that if slavery was my only means of transportation to America, then thank God for the American slavery system of yester year, which finally came to an end."

It is so seldom we read in popular American publications the sentiments expressed above by this Christian American who is grateful to God for his American heritage. But there are millions of them, and they are the bulwark that has held back the satanic attempts to destroy America from its beginning, and especially in the dreadful civil conflict which accomplished the black man's freedom. White man's blood was shed for the black man's freedom, and the nation was saved as well. In what other country have you heard the equal?

IN COMMUNIST MOZAMBIQUE 80,000 Christians are in re-education camps. Many have died. The whole population has to work two days a week for the benefit of the state. On Sundays and one other week-day they

have to attend Marxist indoctrination classes without being fed. Of the Makua tribe, 35,000 blacks have been killed. In Communist Angola 90,000 from the Kunhama tribe have been slaughtered. Neto, ruler of Angola, has announced over the radio his intention of closing all churches and punishing all priests and pastors.

Ambassador Andrew Young, President Carter's "perfect choice" for the U.S. top seat at the United Nations, is a great backer of the afore mentioned African countries, and, so far, such actions have had no upsetting effect on the Ambassador. Of course, one can hardly expect a red-leaning U.S. appointee to be disturbed whenever the Reds are having their way. Come to think of it, Mr. Carter isn't disturbed either. Should we wonder why?

Ambassador Young received his training at the Highlander Folk School at Monteagle, Tennessee. This school has enjoyed the support of communist dominated organizations and identified communists. It seems to produce what these organizations and people want most.

STAY AWAY FROM CUBA if you know what is good for you. Juanita Castro, exiled sister of the Cuban communist dictator, says that Castro is interested only in political and monetary gains, not in friendship with the United States. In an open letter to President Carter, Miss Castro says that "those who state that the lifting of economic sanctions against Cuba and/or the establishment of relations with its Communist government do not constitute condoning or accepting its actions are wrong. My brother, Fidel, and the international Communism he represents are not interested in this country's friendship, but in the economic gain that would accrue to his regime from this move and increase of his political prestige in the eyes of the world that such action would bring." She asks Carter, "Why, after your pronouncements concerning human rights, do you not vigorously advocate that these be respected in Cuba before even trying to renew relations of any kind? I come to remind you of those killed by Communist Cuba's firing squads . . . Cuba's concentration camps and

jails . . . of the enslaved people of Cuba muted by terror and waiting."

Senator Helms (R.-N.C.) says that the State Department has informed him that it knows of 27 Americans who are being held in Cuban prisons—eight of them as "political prisoners" and the rest on criminal charges. In a statement, Helms says that the trade embargo against Cuba should not be relaxed until the political prisoners are released. He also criticizes a proposal by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to allow the sale of medical supplies to the Castro regime, saying that "both food and medicine are strategic items in time of conflict. The fact that Castro has 3,000 wounded troops in Angola right now in need of medicine speaks for itself."

LET ME INTRODUCE TO YOU Ms Eleanor Holmes Norton, New York City Commissioner of Human Rights, Pres. Carter's recent appointee to head the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, a post paying a salary of \$52,500. (Figure that one out—there are 52 weeks in a year.) Radical feminist Gloria Stein explains how the appointment was managed: "We sent telegrams, talked to congressional delegations about Eleanor Norton, had business groups to send telegrams . . . We worked weeks . . . It's a shame that there has to be a campaign to get someone appointed." (Maybe you have to campaign to get certain someones appointed.)

With these credentials she should have just sailed right through: Before being appointed to her post, Ms. Norton spent five years with the radical-left American Civil Liberties Union. While there, she aggressively represented Vietnam War protesters, civil rights activists, assorted radicals, and (surprise) Ku Klux Klansmen. She helped found the frenetic National Black Feminist Organization in August 1973.

As chairman of the New York Commission on Human Rights, Eleanor Holmes Norton several times supported a bill introduced before the New York City Council to permit homosexuals to serve as policemen, firemen, and teachers. Ms. Norton strongly urged the Council to pass the bill without delay. She was also a sponsor of the radical Women's Liberation

demonstrations and strikes in New York during 1970, and appeared on a feminist platform with Trotskyite Communist Ruth Ann Miller.

Mr. Carter's appointee was quoted in *Ebony* magazine for January, 1969, as having stated that, "when the brothers go into the streets, as in Newark and Detroit, I cannot number myself among the black people who sit back and categorically condemn them. I have to ask myself, 'was that violence totally unwarranted?'" The human

rights of law-abiding citizens of Detroit and Newark did not seem to concern Eleanor even as innocent people were killed and injured, and property damage amounted to millions of dollars.

It won't take a Jean Dixon to predict her policy as head of E.E.O.C.

Thank you for encouraging remarks and for items sent in. Keep it up; I can use both. And God bless you and our great country.

The Supernatural in the Natural

R. C. Bell, in *World Vision*

In the midst of a splendid reign, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, lost his mind, deserted his throne, and lived for a season in the fields as a beast. (See Daniel 4.) One time the terrible Assyrians invaded the lands of Israel and took the inhabitants away into foreign captivity. (See Isaiah 10.)

These records are not in the Bible primarily to inform us that kings sometimes become insane or that strong nations often devour weak ones. Secular history is sufficient for this. But their distinctive value lies in the additional fact that God has a hand in such things; "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will"; that God uses one nation as a battle-axe to punish another nation. In short, that the supernatural is in the natural. And what a flood of light this distinctive truth throws upon the history of both individual men and of nations!

God promised Abraham that his descendants should come out of Egyptian bondage in the fourth generation and inherit Canaan. The books of Genesis and Exodus reveal the method God used in keeping His word. Joseph's bad brothers sold him to slave dealers, who resold him in Egypt, where he became ruler of the land. As a result of this, Abraham's people in process of time became a slave colony in Egypt, whence they were delivered by Moses and finally settled in Canaan by Joshua, in fulfillment of God's promise made four hundred years earlier. The unfolding of God's method shows that envious brothers, evil slave traders, villainous Potiphar's wife, a forgetful prisoner, and godless Pharaohs were all, unknown to themselves, worked into it. Joseph came to see the guiding hand of God in it all, for he told his brothers that although they meant evil against him by selling him, "God meant it for good" (Genesis 50:20). "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee" (Psalm 76:10).

Jesse, through natural, fatherly feeling, sent to his three sons who were soldiers under King Saul, some good things to eat. And what was more natural than to send them by their ready brother,

David? To one acquainted with God's ways, however, the supernatural is very evident in this: for while on this errand, David, by slaying Goliath, became famous and soon entered public life in the double capacity of court musician and armorbearer to Saul. God was overruling that a king after His own heart might be ready for the throne upon the death of the faithless Saul.

Very naturally Ahasuerus, a heathen, Persian king, fell in love with the lovely Esther and made her his queen. But it is another case of the supernatural in the natural. According to Esther 4:14, Mordecai, a man of God, saw God using this incident to prevent the extermination of His chosen people, for in persuading of Esther to intercede on their behalf he said: "And who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" God worked even the king's being unable to sleep into His plan for saving the Jews. (See the sixth chapter of Esther.) God as well as Ahasuerus was awake that night! God Almighty can work wonders with weak things. He can build with stubble as well as with gold. Indeed, a man acquainted with God's ways fears to call the merest natural trifle a little thing, because he knows not what use God may be making of it.

After the Jews at Jerusalem had arrested Apostle Paul on a false charge and were doing all in their power to kill him, God undertook to deliver him safely in Rome (see Acts 23:11), but did not disclose the means He intended to employ. However, a reader of the remainder of the book of Acts sees God's way unwound before his eyes. Part of it consists in using nearly five hundred pagan Roman soldiers in order to get Paul safely out of Jerusalem and on his journey to Rome.

These Romans were doing as Romans usually did. They were acting of themselves, knew that they might have done differently, were unconscious of God's presence, and were fully responsible for their decisions and activities. Even so Judas, Caiaphas, and Pilate were worked into God's plan of giving the world a Savior. Neither evil men nor evil angels can escape contributing to God's eternal purposes. And the supernatural blends so kindly with the natural that men untaught of God cannot distinguish between them. Observe that even miracles sometimes blended thus with the natural. For example, when God wanted a dry path through the Red Sea, He made use of a wind; or, if the path was to be through the Jordan River, the water below ran down to the Dead Sea as usual. How easily can God then, when it suits His purpose, withdraw the miraculous elements but still do things!

Although a full understanding of this matter baffles theologians and philosophers, yet a child can see that God in His autobiography (the Bible) claims for Himself the disposition and the power to control and to use all nature, human as well as physical. God wants men to know this truth, else it would not be written so large.

Bible Exposition -- Matthew

JESUS ON THE SINS OF OUR AGE

S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

Introduction

If one were to single out the peculiar sins of our age, the latter half of the twentieth century, looming large in any listing would be the sins mentioned by our Lord in Matthew 5:21-32, the sins of murder, adultery, and divorce. In fact, they form a kind of epitome of the morality of our age, an abridgement of the worst form of the denial of the biblical ethic. It is the special sin of the New Morality that it makes these sins respectable in the eyes of its adherents.

The New Morality, the term given to the ethics of men such as Bishop John Robinson of *Honest to God* fame, Joseph Fletcher, the Lutheran Martin Marty, the Baptist Harvey Cox, and the Presbyterian Robert Wood Lynn, has taught with varying emphases and qualifications that right and wrong cannot be legislated—even by God—in a once-for-all code that fits every situation. God, according to this body of theologians, has not issued such a code; He has called for LOVE. What this simple law demands in each particular situation is right. Hence, the New Morality has sometimes been given the name of Situation Ethics. According to this “code” adultery and other sins may, if the situation is right, be acceptable. The popularity of the New Morality is illustrated by the phenomenal success of Hugh Hefner’s *Playboy* enterprises, which have, until just recently, grossed millions catering to the hedonistic appetite of the United States. In fact, the sexual revolution of this country has been immeasurably aided by the ethics of the New Morality.

The presuppositions of the New Morality have been defined by Joseph Fletcher as including pragmatism, relativism, positivism, and personalism. All of these principles, particularly as interpreted by the eminent theologians, are utterly opposed to the biblical presuppositions of the Christian, who rests his case upon the principle of the verbally and plerarily inspired revelation of God in the Holy Scriptures. Further, the New Morality errs in these specific ways. First, it is antinomian, at least according to Fletcher’s variety (the same cannot really be said for Bishop Robinson’s variety). Second, it fails in that it does not define love in a Christian way, as involving redemption and the cross of Christ. Third, it is Pelagian (an ancient British monk who believed man, despite sin, could discern and do God’s will with just trifling assistance from the Spirit of God), because its concept of sin is weak and erroneous. And, finally, the

result is an ethic that is sub-Christian and an insult to a holy God.

In the section of the Sermon on the Mount before us we have a sure word from our Lord Jesus Christ, and it is diametrically opposed to the pagan principles of modern society's ethics. In the opening section of the instructional division of the Sermon (5: 17-20) Jesus had emphasized that He was not a Law-breaker, but a Law-fulfiller, and that the Law and the Prophets were the abidingly authoritative and inspired Word of God. Every part of them, even to the jots and tittles, shall have its complete fulfillment. And then He had stressed that, in order to enter the Kingdom of heaven, one must possess a righteousness that exceeded that of the scribes and Pharisees. That could only come as a gift from God through faith in Him. Thus, the Lord Jesus completely vindicated the Scriptural tradition.

The same, however, cannot be said for the Pharisaic and scribal tradition (5:21-48). He does not hesitate to disapprove of it and correct it, although there may be portions of it that have remained essentially biblical. Of the latter He approves. In order to express His criticism of the tradition He sets forth six antitheses between the Pharisaic tradition and the true view of the Law. The antitheses not only correct misinterpretation, they also deepen and sharpen the true views. The six are in two pairs of three each, separated by the "again" of verse thirty-three. The characteristic expression that occurs six times here is, "but I say unto you" (Cf. vs: 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44). The first three pertain to the Decalogue, while the last three pertain to the Pentateuch. The great impression that steals over one is similar to that expressed by another student; "Jesus understands the Old Testament better than the Old Testament itself." That's not strictly accurate, for really what He does is give the real force of the Old Testament, but it seems to be true because of the traditional distortions that gained such currency in the minds of many through the years.

I. THE QUESTION OF MURDER

The first antithesis is contained in verses 21 through 28. It concerns *murder*. The tradition says "No murder," but I say, "No *anger*."

The basis of the tradition to which Jesus refers is the sixth commandment. Since He uses the word "heard," it seems clear that He is referring to the oral teaching of the rabbis. They read and taught the commandments orally in the synagogues. The words "by them" may be more accurately rendered by *to them*. The remaining words of the verse confirm that our Lord is referring to Jewish tradition primarily. The introductory words of the verse, then, may mean simply, "It is an old tradition which has obtained for many ages."

The essence of His reply is that the commandments go beyond the overt act. They touch the inner man. For years and years rabbis had taught that one kept the sixth commandment by avoiding murder, but our Lord probes deeper and says that one keeps it only if he both avoids murder *and anger!* Anger, like murder, is a crime to Him. It is possible that John's words reflect this teaching, "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." The words are to be understood within the context of the nation, it would seem, for in Jewish thought a brother was an Israelite by nation and blood, and a neighbor was an Israelite in religion and worship, that is, a proselyte. The word "Raca" was an Aramaic word for utter contempt, being equivalent to our *bonehead, blockhead, or knucklehead.* The text may be rendered, then, "whosoever shall say to his brother, 'you knucklehead, you.'" For such the danger of hell must become real.

There is some difference of interpretation over the statements of verses 21 and 22. Perhaps the sense is something like this: The rabbis say that murder is liable to judgment, but I say that anger is liable to divine judgment. And the rabbis say that abusive language such as *raca* is punishable by the local court, but I say that abusive language is punishable by the fire of Gehenna.

Two things emerge from these opening words. In the first place, all *unlove* stands condemned by the Savior and the law of Moses. And, in the second place, our Lord Jesus believed in hell. It is one of the striking facts of the biblical revelation that He, who spoke most penetratingly of the love of God and is often referred to by liberals as "the meek and gentle Jesus," spoke of hell more than any other New Testament figure. If hell-fire and damnation messages are wrong (they are not, of course), then His should be condemned, but the very idea is ridiculous, as the common Christian consciousness knows.

There follow two illustrations of the principle (vs. 23-26). In the first one the point is that to obey the law of love is better than sacrifice. Therefore, postpone sacrifice rather than postpone reconciliation. Incidentally, the illustration proves that the situation the Lord has in mind occurs under the Law period when sacrifices were made. The sermon is for those who live during the period of time while Jesus is offering the Messianic Kingdom to the nation Israel.

In the second illustration there is a reference to some contention over money matters, as the last clause of verse 26 indicates. Although some Romanists have emphasized the words of verse 26, "paid the uttermost farthing," referring them to purgatory, it should be obvious to the careful student that it has nothing to do with that mythical place and process.

What is the cure for this anger that Jesus points out is really murder? Looking over the section we may conclude that it is found

in these things: (1) admitting that we do get angry; (2) correcting injustices; (3) do it quickly; (4) relying upon the grace of God, for it is only by His enabling grace that these things could be done.

II. THE QUESTION OF ADULTERY

The second antithesis concerns adultery, which is referred to in the seventh commandment of the Decalogue. The tradition says, "No adultery," but I say, "No *lustful thought*." The rabbis legislated only for actions, not for one's thoughts, but the Mosaic law in its real meaning included the latter. In the enumeration of the 613 precepts of the Law there is attached to the seventh commandment these words, "This is the thirty-fifth precept of the law, namely, that no man lie with another man's wife." It is clear that the rabbis interpreted it of the *act alone*, and that with a married woman. Perhaps this gloss was in our Lord's mind as He interprets the meaning of the law for the heart.

The Lawgiver's interpretation. The words, "to lust after her," express the purpose of the look. It can hardly be called sin to have involuntary desire; it is a sin to look *in order to* lust.

The words of our Lord have the most serious significance and relevance for our day. Hardly ever in the history of our western world has there existed such a challenge to the Christian conception of chastity before marriage and faithfulness afterward. Unbridled passions dominate our society, urged on by the mass media and professional purveyors of hedonism. James Montgomery Boice has put it this way, "The Christian ethic of faithful and monogamous marriage is also threatened in our day, perhaps even more seriously than by the mass media, by a new hedonism symbolized by the so-called 'playboy philosophy.' Hedonism is the philosophy that makes pleasure the chief goal in life; and it is as evident in the pursuit of the second home, the third car, and the right and proper friends, as it is in adultery and pre-marital sex experimentation. In fact, in the playboy philosophy the two go hand in hand. Thus, the pages of the magazine seem to imply that choosing the right kind of wine or the right stereo is almost as important as finding the right kind of playmate.

The final verses of the second antithesis merely point out that, if one uses the excuse that a member is the cause of the sin, then the member is to be cut off. One does this with a physical ailment, like cancer. The purpose of our Lord is to lead the man to see that the trouble is not in the member, but *in the heart*. A fallacious excuse is met with a fallacious reply to show the falsity of the excuse and lead to the true reason for lust. The usual symbolical interpretation of the verses is to the effect that the offending member's excision represents severe self-abnegation for the sake of purity. Both ultimately point to the need for a *new heart*, as well as *new principles of action*.

It is evident now that the Lord Jesus interprets the Old Testament in depth, in contrast to the superficialities of the rabbinic tradition. He deepens and sharpens its obvious and outward sense. As He says, He "fulfills" it.

And, further, it is clear that Jesus concurred in the invalidity of tradition as a measure of truth, although it might contain truth. He may deepen it, as here, or revoke it, as elsewhere. For Him the sole final authority is the inviolable Word of God.

What is the solution to the problem that our Lord has expounded here? One thing is true, first of all. The times require a clear recognition that the appetite for sex in our day is "enormously out of proportion to its function." And there is another thing that must be borne in mind. For the Christian there are times when the apostolic injunction, "Flee fornication" is the wisest advice that heaven can give. In this respect Joseph is our great example, while David is an example of the negative type. And, finally, total victory requires a philosophy of life that sees marriage as ordained by God, and also as that for which one waits in purity and to which one remains faithful afterward.

III. THE QUESTION OF DIVORCE

The third antithesis concerns divorce. The tradition says, "Conditional divorce," but I say, "no divorce at all, with one exception." The passage in question is Deuteronomy 24:1, and it contains a problem of interpretation. What is an "unseemly thing"? One of the famous rabbis, Shammai, with his disciples took it to mean some grave offense like adultery. On the other hand, another rabbi, the well-known Hillel, with his followers held that a man could divorce his wife for no more serious a misdemeanor than letting his food burn!

The Lawgiver's interpretation. Now, if the exceptive clause is genuine, and I think it is, then the Lord is laying down a law that divorce is only possible for one reason. If the clause is not genuine, then our Lord is stating the original ideal, mentioned in Genesis 2:23-24. In both cases the teaching of our Lord is deeper than that of Moses. But, let us remember that these things cannot be applied to unbelievers. They apply to those within the kingdom of God.

There is a question about the nature of the sin referred to. Does verse 32 refer to the sin of the one who puts away his wife, and then to the sin of the one who has been put away? The verse should probably be rendered in this way, "But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to be stigmatized as adulterous (or, exposes her to adultery), and anyone who marries a woman so divorced commits adultery." Thus, the sin is only that of the person who puts away his wife.

It is very evident, then, that our Lord entertained very strict principles regarding divorce, and His words have the greatest importance for our adulterous society today. It would not be so much the concern of the Christian church were it not for the fact that the actions of the world, because of their excesses, have so influenced the church. The rise of adultery and divorce in the world is matched by a similar rise of them in the life of God's people, and the resultant problem is one of epidemic proportions at this very moment. If the church of Jesus Christ is to fulfill His will and please God in her service, she must listen to the expression of His will in this matter.

REPRINTS:

BAPTISM

W. J. Johnson — Sept. 1945.

Baptism as taught in the Bible is from heaven. Christ holding all authority both in heaven and on earth instructed His disciples to baptize believers in His name and promised salvation to them who believed and were baptized (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16; Luke 24:47-49). He still holds this authority and forbids that any one should make any change in respect to the meaning and purpose of baptism as some have assumed to possess.

Some look upon baptism as if it were something distinct from faith. They have made it a door into the church, to be opened or shut against any one as the church sees fit. In other words they have made it an act of initiation into the society or group of people who have subscribed to a set of principles peculiar to the organization, whatever that organization may be religiously.

But as baptism is set forth in the scriptures it is an act of faith that makes one well-pleasing unto God. It marks the point of separation from the world. It is the circumcision made without hands, for when we were buried by baptism into the death of Christ, we put off the body of sin, the body of flesh, the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man Christ Jesus. We were planted with Him in the likeness of his death and raised with Him in the likeness of His resurrection. (Rom. 6; Col. 2:11, 12.) In baptism we accept the death of Christ as our death. For this reason baptism is not a work that merits salvation. And besides it is written in Ephesians 2:8, 9. "By grace have ye been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." Also in Titus 3:4, 5. "But when the kindness of God our Savior, and his love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Savior." And Gal. 3:26, 27. "For

ye are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ."

In baptism we may say further, there is a transition from the old life to the new, from bondage in sin to liberty in Christ Jesus, from servants of sin to servants of righteousness, from death to life, from darkness to light. Hence Peter saw the likeness of baptism in the transfer of Noah and his house from the old world into the new when they were borne in the ark upon the water, and said, "Even so doth baptism now save you, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3:21, 22).

Now if any one desires to believe and teach that a person is pardoned of his sins before he is baptized, let him consider the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. After he had seen the Lord and was blinded because of the vision, he was led by the hand of them who were with him into Damascus, where he continued three days and nights in fasting and prayer. It is clear that he was a believer and penitent. He still felt the weight of his sins resting heavily upon him; he was still seeking the answer of a good conscience toward God; he did not enjoy the peace of God which passeth understanding; he was still out of Christ, for he had not been united with Him in the likeness of His death; he had not accepted by faith the death of Christ as his death which is the form of doctrine. No other understood his condition better than he. So he tells us in plain language what Ananias told him to do, "and now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16).

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC FOR WORSHIP, YES OR NO?

In outlining the various acts and order of worship in the assembly of the Church, the Word is quite explicit, both by direct instruction and example. Space will not permit us to cover all the details, but we will list enough to bring out our point.

In the case of the Lord's Supper, we are told what elements to use, what they represent (Matt. 26:26-69), what our attitude should be (1 Cor. 11:17-34) and by example or practice, on which day of the week it should be observed (Acts 20:7).

While we are not told how much we should give, we are told to give as we have been prospered (1 Cor. 16:2), let not our left hand know what the right hand doeth (Matt. 6:3), and give not of necessity but cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7).

Much is included about prayer. We are to pray with the Spirit (1 Cor. 14:15), pray for all men (1 Tim. 2:1) and pray with thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6). The Lord Himself gave us an example in Matt. 6:9-15.

Preaching is another part of our worship, and the Lord gave us the basis for all preaching and teaching in the great Commission (Mark 16:15). Paul told the Corinthians that he was sent to preach

the gospel (1 Cor. 1:17) and said that he determined to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Cor. 2:2). He instructed Timothy to preach the Word (2 Tim. 4:2-4).

The Lord also has told us to sing—spiritual songs, making melody in our hearts unto the Lord (Eph. 5:19) with grace in our hearts unto God (Col. 3:16) and with the spirit and understanding (1 Cor. 14:15).

In several instances in the Old Testament, even in the dedication of the temple, musical instruments were used along with the singers (2 Chron. 5:13, 14) in offering praise to Jehovah God, and we have no reason to believe that this was displeasing to God. However, in all the detailed instructions and examples given to the church in the New Testament, including those mentioned above, nothing is said either directly or by example about the use of an instrument when the church meets to worship. Now was this an oversight on the part of God, or did He in His wisdom and knowledge intentionally omit it in order that the instrument not become a part of our worship? If He had wanted it used, surely He could and would have said so somewhere in His instructions and examples in the New Testament just as He did in the Old Testament. He gave us instructions to *sing* and since this can be done without the use of an instrument, this must be the way He wants it.

Since then the instrument is not mentioned as a part of the detailed instructions for our acts and patterns of worship, since it is not necessary for spiritual singing, it must have been introduced by man's own will and choosing—therefore, the use of it in our worship is wrong.

If it is used in the home or in some other group where the church is not meeting specifically as a body for worship, this is another matter. There is nothing wrong with eating, but Paul told the Corinthians to eat at home and not bring their food into the assembly as a part of their worship (1 Cor. 11:20-22).

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC ETC

Every time I think about the question of instrumental music in the church, it reminds me of another issue that has helped divide the church, namely, the question of one cup or many for the Lord's Supper. A story I remember about the latter issue is of a church that had divided over the question of cups, and in the process fired the preacher. In searching for a new man to fill their pulpit they called a young college "preacher boy." When he arrived for his first sermon a deacon cornered him before he could get out of his car and popped the question, "Do you believe in one cup or many?" The young preacher answered back with wisdom beyond his training, "What have you got?"

Somehow I feel much the same about the question of instrumental music in the church. It would seem that the church would be strengthened and unified if brethren were asking the question,

“What do you believe about Jesus of Nazareth?” rather than “What do you believe about instrumental music?” It is somewhat ironic to me that the former question is asked as criteria for one’s becoming a part of the body of Christ, but not quite enough to *keep* Him in good standing. Too often one’s belief concerning such questions as instrumental music is deemed to indicate his faithfulness and growth, when personally I cannot see that it has any bearing whatsoever; quite to the contrary, I feel it adds to pride in the flesh—either being proud that you are “legal enough” not to use it, or proud that you are “free enough” to use it.

Obviously then the matter of instrumental music is one of opinion and personal conviction. I have worshipped and worked with folks who have instrumental music and folks who do not. It is plain to see that the use of the instrument or lack of it has nothing to do with the faithfulness of the members of these churches. There are many born again, loving, working, and faithful in both groups. Equally, there are many unloving, faithless, and lazy members in both groups.

Admittedly this article has presumed that the question of instrumental music is a question of opinion. The verse in Ephesians 5:19 has been used by many to justify only a cappella singing, but the Greek does not lend itself to such an interpretation exclusively. If it did, then would not those who sing harmony parts miss the mark, since the verse says to “make melody” to the Lord.

The argument that the instrument is an aid to worship is used by some to exclude it entirely. If this is valid then our sound systems, morning bulletins and songbooks must also go out with the instrument. The difficulty, of course, is that some brethren dislike the instrument, but deeply revere “Great Songs of the Church,” so they make their decision on the basis of their personal preferences.

If each Christian would stop and think for himself, study the Word under the Spirit’s direction, and disassociate himself from the thoughts and pressures of so-called “brotherhood experts” from either camp, he would arrive at a personal conviction on instrumental music, as well as many other matters of personal opinion, and more wonderfully would not try to make them binding on other believers.

My personal conviction is that there are times in worship when the instrument being played by one under God’s direction can be a glorious worship and praise gathering. There are other times when the Spirit seems to declare just the blending of voices. In either case, the positive command is to sing, to praise God, to worship Him. Those who would spend all their time deciding how to do it don’t leave much time for actually doing it. This is in no way to say that God can be worshipped in a careless way, but rather to emphasize that God is more interested in the worshiper’s meaning than his mechanics.

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Alvin Hobby

Livingstone, Zambia

May 25.

Yesterday Georgia and our daughter Anita started a new Bible class for women, to be taught each Tuesday afternoon at Syandazya Village about 16 miles northeast of here. Twenty-five women were present for the first class.

One of the members of the church here, Mr. Kebby Musokotwane, has been chosen by President Kaunda to be a minister in his cabinet. So last night a going-away party was given here at the church for the Musokotwanes. They will be moving to Lusaka in the near future.

Since the Lester Brittell family will be going to the States in August, Lester is trying to arrange a place for Elaine to live, before he leaves.

Rena Stewart-Brown

Cape Town, R.S.A.

7 May 18.

Our church building is at last being extended. The members of the church are planning to do it all themselves, and trust God to supply what we are still lacking in funds, walking by faith and not by sight.

Our weather has now set in with a vengeance. We are having plenty of rain up north, again having floods with many people homeless and some having lost their lives.

The Colored work is still progressing in spite of disturbances and unrest. I cannot thank God enough for these Coloreds who are remaining steadfast and faithful. We earnestly need your prayers for this great work in God's vineyard which stretches so far and wide, and for willing ones to go out and seek the lost.

Donald R. Harris

Salisbury, Rhodesia

May 31.

We are not quite complete with the concrete floor on the new home, but should be finished soon. We are now awaiting some cement.

We have leased a small building about five blocks from the home, in the light industrial area, and I have employed three young men to work on the stoves there. We have also perfected the means of rewiring the old solid plates and thus cut down repair costs to the consumer. We have trouble keeping enough stoves and plates

for the current demand, PRAISE GOD. However, it will be a while before the new shop really shows a good profit, as we have had to buy more tools, work benches, etc. The business has been good, though, and we feel that after six months the shop will be pulling all its own weight and able to contribute liberally to the Children's Home and be completely clear of debt. We have also through this means been able to speak to people in that area about Jesus Christ, and our young men will endeavor to reach others for Christ at every opportunity. I have witnessed them do so.

Addie Brown

Salisbury, Rhodesia

May 23.

We had a very good flight back to Rhodesia. I really enjoyed it. We have been back just two weeks.

We had a real family reunion in Searcy. All of our children living in the States came, as well as a number of grandchildren and great grandchildren. It was a mountain peak experience of my life. My two sisters and their husbands were also there. The ladies of the church brought in all the food for the day, and what a spread it was! They wanted to do it.

We all miss Dora so much. Kim has been doing a lot of the cooking but school started today so she can't do much outside her classes except her homework. How sad it is to see a home without a mother.

The political situation is not good at all now. We wonder how long missionaries can stay and work. Many are praying. Thanks so much for your prayers.

Shichiro Nakahara

Shizuoka City, Japan

May newsletter.

As the summer approaches, we are getting things organized by having meetings from time to time, and some of the major matters related to our summer camp have been thoroughly discussed and are shaping up nicely.. Our Bible camp has two main objectives—one is to train our young people for better service, and the other to bring non-Christians into a fellowship with Christ and God. Most of the young people seem to be very hesitant about coming to church services on Sundays but not so much to camps, so a camp plays a very important role in our programs, and we must make it as meaningful as possible.

In the early part of April, during the spring vacation, we had made a special effort on our own young people to have them bring their friends, providing a 3-day program for them by showing some of the Moody Science Films, presenting Bible messages and having times for discussion. Everyone that was present seemed pleased with the program. It was our first attempt we have ever made, and we must continue working on it in order for results to be realized.

Thomas W. Hartle

Cape Town, R. S. A.

May 17.

Since my last news report regarding my present health condition, due to carrying out the needed advice from the doctor (resting, etc.) I am feeling much better but still have to go easy. I have been focusing on a personal work program over the past three weeks, among individuals and families who are happy to request this. We have also organized cottage meetings, but there is no question about it, we have the capable men within the congregation where I labor, who are apt to teach, organize meetings, etc. so my going on personal work programs in no way will hinder the work in general going forward to the glory of God.

Irene Allen

Eagle River, Alaska

May 10.

Next month we lose two military families which will diminish our number greatly. It seems our main ministry just now is to the neighborhood children who come to Sunday school and to the showing of religious films at night.

Spring is in evidence now. Our snow is practically gone, though nearby mountains are still covered. Tree buds are swelling and last week we saw the first robins of the season.

Elaine Britell

Livingstone, Zambia

March newsletter.

Ba Agrina went with Ba Sarah and I to Mukuni to give the women a lesson on "Faith." Before going, the Lord gave me time to duplicate the first 20 stencils for Genesis in Chitonga, and post them. There are 27 more stencils ready, then I must type the remaining chapters—22 through 50. Daily I thank God for you dear friends who had a part in getting this electric typewriter which lightens the work so much.

The Government is in the process of making Sinde into a Medical Clinic. Lester's house is being prepared for the Clinic, and my house will be for staff. The church has one of the buildings for worship and Bible classes besides rooms for the preacher. We are so happy that Sinde will still be a blessing to many people.

May God bless you in a special way for your many letters of encouragement; for your love, prayers and great part in spreading His word. May He abundantly bless each of your labors. God keeps a record of those being saved and He will reward you. We deeply appreciate your helping to make it possible for us to work in this part of the Lord's vineyard. Please drop us a line when you have time—letters brighten the day!

"Suffering doesn't create attitudes; it simply reveals them." Luke 6:45

"Has God trusted me with a test? Can I accept affliction in the attitude of worship?"

NEWS AND NOTES

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

Lilly Dale Church of Christ, Tell City, Indiana.

We are in the midst of our VBS. A high mark of 161 in attendance was reached tonight.

We have had five new births so far in 1977 and several responses for prayer and rededication.

Our revival will be August 3-10, with Bro. Francis Plaisance of Abbeville, La., as evangelist. Lilly Dale's "Homecoming Day" will be Sunday, August 7.

Many of our church folks will be attending Woodland Bible Camp this summer as campers, directors, counselors, cooks, handymen, etc. —Harry K. Coultas.

Atlanta, Ga. Enclosing check for renewal of my subscription. Enjoy it and its good help for these days. May God continue to bless all whose efforts effect its publication. —Emma Hargesheimer

GOD'S WORD RADIO PROGRAM
Saturday, 9:30-10:00 p.m. WFIA-FM (Dial 103.9). B. D. Fields, speaking. Bro. Friedley, singing. For inclusion of announcements in the Louisville area, call B. D. Fields, 776-6379 with particulars to be announced.

Cramer and Hanover St. Church of Christ, Lexington, Ky.

From Cramer & Hanover comes from time to time a report on the work of Joe Goins. He is with O.M. and his last letter came from India. Among other things, he reports: "A Nepali speaking brother and myself went on a "Gospel Trek" for a couple of days in some nearby mountain villages. We were very encouraged by the openness and receptivity of the people. A great majority of

those with whom we spoke bought gospel packets. One member of a family who reads will often read aloud and the others will sit around and listen."

One was baptized at Cramer and Hanover on May 22.

Cramer is to add on to its present facilities, in the near future, a large fellowship hall and additional classrooms.

Bro. Victor Broaddus, accompanied by five young people, from S.C.C. left the week of June 5th on a mission endeavor. The young people will receive first hand experiences as they visit missionaries overseas.

MEETINGS AHEAD

Cherry Street: June 26-July 3 with Bro. Bennie Hill.

Waterford: July 10-16 with Bro. Howard T. Marsh.

Fisherville Church of Christ, June 20-26 with Bro. Terry Morrison.

Rangeland Church of Christ, Lou. Ky.

Good responses are reported from "Words of Life" over WOR, the station recently added is New York. Earnest prayer is requested for its continuance. One letter concerned a Jewish woman who had accepted by faith the Lamb of God, the enduring sacrifice for sin.

Gallatin Church of Christ, Gallatin, Tn.

One new birth is reported by the Gallatin bulletin on may 8, and another on May 18. Two others came for membership in that congregation.

Tell City, In. A good report of Brother Stan Broussard's meeting is given. There were three new births and the church was built up and strengthened.

WHAT WOULD HE SAY?

If He should come today
And find my hands so full
Of future plans, however fair,
In which My Saviour has no share,
What would He say?

If He should come today
And find my love so cold,
My faith so very weak and dim
I had not even looked for Him,
What would He say?

If He should come today
And find I had not told
One soul about my Heavenly Friend
Whose blessings all my way attend,
What would He say?

If He should come today
Would I be glad—quite glad?
Remembering He had died for all
And none, through me, had heard His call,
What would I say? —G. E. T.

A PACKAGE OF SEEDS

I paid a dime for a package of seeds
And the clerk tossed them out with a flip.
“We’ve got ’em assorted for every man’s needs,”
He said with a smile on his lip.
“Pansies and poppies and asters and peas!
Ten cents a package, and pick as you please!”

Now seeds are just dimes to the man in the store
And dimes are the things that he needs;
And I’ve been to buy them in seasons before,
But have thought of them merely as seeds.
But it flashed through my mind as I took them this time
You have purchased a miracle here for a dime!

You’ve a dime’s worth of power no man can create
You’ve a dime’s worth of life in your hand!
You’ve a dime’s worth of mystery, destiny, fate,
Which the wisest cannot understand.
In this bright little package, now isn’t it odd?
You’ve a dime’s worth of something known only to God!

Author Unknown

Evening Session

7:30- 8:00 Singing

8:00- 9:00 The Christian Home

Bruce Chowning

FRIDAY Theme: Be Ye Ready

Chairman, C. V. Wilson

Day Session

9:00-10:00 Bible Exposition: Romans

Robert B. Boyd

10:00-10:20 Fellowship Period

10:20-11:20 Signs of the Times in the Church

John Pound

11:20-12:00 Prayer Time

12:00- 1:15 Lunch Time

1:30- 2:15 Signs of the Times in the Mid-East

John Mengelberg

2:30- 3:15 Signs of the Times in the World

Earl Mullins

Evening Session

7:30- 8:00 Singing

8:00- 9:00 Are You Ready?

A. J. Istre

Hospitality Committee: C. V. Wilson, 897-2831

Edward Stout, 239-7871

Planning Committee: Joe Blansett, Chm.; Fred Bowser, Victor Broaddus, Jim Embree, B. D. Fields, LeRoy Friedley, Robert Gill, Alvin Price, Tom Rowe.

Churches Serving Noon Meals:

TUESDAY: Sylvania, LaGrange, Shawnee, Jeffersontown, Jefferson Street, South Louisville, Fern Creek.

WEDNESDAY: Kentucky Avenue, Ormsby Avenue, Highview, Buechel, Community, Utica, Hamburg.

THURSDAY: Cherry Street, Highland, Sellersburg, Iroquois, Henryville, Waterford.

FRIDAY: Fisherville, Portland Avenue, Ralph Avenue, Rowan Street, Eastview, Rangeland, Eighteenth Street.

Excellent
For
Evange-
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Work

Only
10c

How GOD
FORGIVES



For
An
Effective
Tract
Ministry

Only
10c

R. H. BOLL