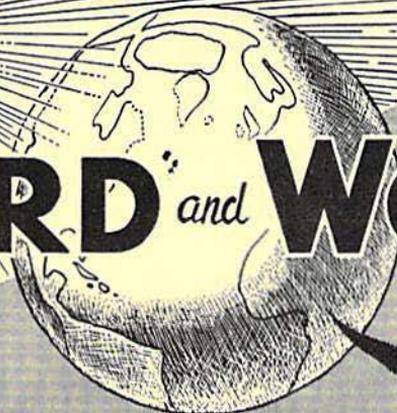


*"Holding fast the faithful Word . . ."*



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



*"Holding forth the Word of life."*

OCTOBER, 1979

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(Signed) Wm. Robert Heid

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Robert Heid is a minister in Louisville, Kentucky.



## God's Family

W. R. H.

### Feed My Lambs

In our limited experience at farming, we decided to buy a small flock of sheep, in order to clear up the place and have something of interest to care for, and to learn about. The Lord makes several references to sheep when he deals with the problems of mankind, and I hoped to better understand what the analogies reveal.

Several characteristics immediately captured our attention: the general meekness and vulnerability of the animals, their stupidity and need for constant attention, their ugly nakedness after they have been shorn, and the wide spectrum of dispositions of the mother ewes, from the thrifty and industrious ones who took good care of their offspring, to the useless ones who would not ever so much as claim their own young. It was more than a little disconcerting, then, to re-read the scriptures that call us the sheep of His pasture.

One fact became evident in the first few months: If these animals were to be profitable, the rogues and rascals would have to be culled out. Unless the lambs are fed and cared for, all profit is gone. Somewhere I read that the wool pays for the feed, and the lamb is the profit. Ill-born or unclaimed lambs that are cast aside to starve or freeze are only grief to the owner.

There are several messages to us in the realm of spiritual things, to be gained from this application from nature. First of all, the old sheep have to be thrifty and healthy in order for their lambs to get off to a proper start. Parents ought to apply this fact, and really dedicate their lives to righteousness before beginning to bring children into the world. What a tragedy for the little ones to bear unnecessary weaknesses or scars as a result of undisciplined parents. Who can measure the after effects of alcoholism, drug addiction, nicotine, or promiscuity as it may influence generations yet unborn? We cringe at the thought of war or famine bringing disruption and starvation to any community; but how often are these same conditions brought about, totally unnecessarily, because of the selfishness of man? The strength of any nation lies in its young people, but the induction of our young men into the service in W.W. II showed that far too many of our youth were irreparably unfit for strenuous service.

But there is a weakness more serious than that which affects the physical body, for this life is short, at the best, and the failings of this

flesh will not mark the new bodies that are to be given us at His appearing. The weaknesses that are really serious are those that span into eternity—moral and spiritual blights that will affect our soul's eternal destiny. Many parents live and act as not to be taking God and His Word at all seriously. It is little wonder, then, that the children grow up with time and interest for everything that the world has to offer, and no inclination to give time or thought to God. Times of affluence, as we are now experiencing in this land, only tend to make the matters worse, because even the parents are not being re-proved by adversity. It is a time like unto which Jesus referred as seed growing among the thorns, when He explained, "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful."

Peter exhorted his fellow-elders (1 Pet. 5:1) to "tend the flock of God, exercising the oversight." This advice was not to a particular elder, who might be singled-out as the chief leader, but was to the plurality of elders. So, the blame, in cases where this care is lacking will be charged to each of those in position of elders. I am sure that as Peter wrote this command, he was recalling the 3-fold assignment that Jesus gave to him: "Feed my lambs; tend my sheep; feed my sheep."

I have seen toddlers who are out of sorts merely because they are always a bit hungry; not hungry for lack of milk, but grown to the stage of development where they should get a good bit of solid food and then be comfortable and sleep all the night. It takes plenty of food in order for a baby to grow up—and that for a long period of time. Yes, as long as there is any life, there is a continuing need for food, even to "hold our own" physically. Now, when the parents discover that the baby's troubles arise because he is not eating the solid food, the cure is simple. Some sharing from Mother's or Dad's supply will bring happy relief.

Just so, some of the young Christians and babies in Christ in our congregations are in an unhappy state for the mere lack of proper food. The milk of "first principles" is warmed and dispensed week after week, year after year, until a sort of allergy develops. It is not that the first principles are not essential—there can be no spiritual birth without them. But, as life goes on, there are some challenges that need to be presented; to wit:

Growing into the stature of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Giving of our best, to the Master (time, youth, strength, income).

Personally obeying the Lord's great commission to go into all the world.

Girding self with humility to serve one another (as Christian doctors, nurses, teachers, aids).

Studying God's Word for my own enlightenment and instruction.

Seizing the opportunity to "handle aright the word of truth" in teaching others.

Being content and "fulfilled" in a humble place of service.

I find that many people enjoy a sermon on first principles, evidently because they can say (to themselves), "all these things have I kept

from my youth up." Now, we need that further concern, "What lack I yet?" When we see these lacks, as in the light of God's word, and when we find out what He would have us to do, then are we getting to the "solid meat" which makes us into full-grown men.

Jack Blaes preaches at the Antioch Church, Frankfort, Ky. and teaches at the Portland Christian School in Louisville.



## Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

**KENTUCKY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS WIN** before the Kentucky Supreme Court. In a landmark decision, the Kentucky Supreme Court ruled unanimously that the state has only limited power to control the curricula and instruction in private and parochial schools. The high court said the state cannot rule on the quality of instruction, cannot require certification of private teachers, cannot prescribe textbooks and cannot make private schools come up to state accreditation standards. The state had appealed the ruling Judge Henry Meigs handed down in September, 1978. (See July and October 1978 issues of W.W.) Justice Robert Lukowsky who wrote the decision pointed to the state constitution, specifically Section 5, which says in part: "... Nor shall any man be compelled to send his child to any school to which he may be conscientiously opposed." After extensive research into the debates which led to the adoption of this piece of legislation, Mr. Lukowsky said, "We conclude that the delegates in adopting the Beckner amendment (part of the original Section 5 compromise) intended to permit the Commonwealth to prepare its children to intelligently exercise the right of suffrage by compelling attendance at a formal school, public or private or parochial, for a legislatively determined period each year." From this the Court determined: Section 5 does not allow the state to prescribe standards for private and parochial schools in

teachers and textbooks. The state must approve operation of such schools unless it shows they really are not schools as contemplated by the state constitution. Needless to say, Christian school promoters are pleased and thankful to Jehovah for this victory, but are assured that the opponents of Christian and private education will continue to work feverishly to bring all men under the oppressive hand of the state. The limitation expressed: the state... "cannot make private schools come up to state accreditation standards" becomes a bit amusing since private schools would have to come down to if they should attempt to emulate the state's attempt at public education.

**IN AN ATTEMPT TO EXPOSE AN ESPIONAGE NETWORK** set up by Hanoi, and in spite of threats made against their lives and those of their families, some courageous Vietnamese refugees approached a **Chicago Tribune** correspondent in Kijian, Indonesia. Ronald Yates reported from Kijian that, "Several hundred Vietnamese infiltrators, posing as boat people, have slipped out of Vietnam with other refugees in the last six months as part of a scheme to set up intelligence networks in resettlement countries such as the United States." Refugees have revealed that Hanoi's spies "have been on almost every refugee boat that has left Vietnam in the past half-year." Nguyen Kyo Dong, head of a refugee camp in Kijian, and Hoang Coa Bang,

a doctor in the nearby Ungaat camp, sought out the Tribune columnist and asked him to "Please warn the American people that every boat coming out of Vietnam has at least one agent on board." Dong and Bang have reportedly told U.S. authorities who some of the infiltrators are, yet the authorities have decided to let several hundred of these Communist agents come into the United States where they will be under surveillance in the hope that they will lead American agents to the remainder of the network. Vietnamese families who have lived here since the 1975 exodus from Vietnam are subjected to threats of reprisal if they refuse to cooperate with the spies. Dong told Yates that "People in this camp have come to me with stories about relatives in America who have been told their families in Vietnam will be executed if they don't do what they are told. So even though they have risked their lives to escape oppression in Vietnam, they find the oppression has followed them."

**THE GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE REPORTS THAT** the Carter Administration has spent more than \$1,200,000 of the tax-payer's money to build up public pressure for Senate ratification of the SALT II Treaty. During the six-month period ending June 30th, officials of the State Department and the Arms Controls and Disarmament Agency participated in more than 650 speaking engagements before local groups and conferences in 48 states and the District of Columbia. The White House also mailed out, at tax-payer's expense, thousands of SALT documents, background reports, speeches, and booklets. Most were distributed to newspapers, columnists, radio and television stations, and congressional staffs

Communists in the United States are also pressing for ratification of SALT II, and according to the official Communists newspaper Daily World, "A call for a people's crusade to repeal the frantic attempts by the ultra-right to sabotage the SALT II Treaty was sounded... by Henry Winston, chairman of the Communist Party USA... Winston called on all Communists and others who love and cherish peace to step up the crusade for SALT II."

Speaking at the annual Daily World picnic in New York, Comrade Winston described the SALT II agreement as a big first step in the process of total nuclear disarmament and told the audience that the aim of SALT II is "to save the world from thermonuclear devastation." He concluded by declaring that the desires and sentiments of Americans for SALT II "must be registered in meetings, in the telegrams and letters to their Senators—in petitions. Their voices must be heard, their wishes respected."

My voice has been heard, and it is not the same as the chairman of the Communist Party USA's. Neither is it the same as the Washington Administration's. All voices not heard will be construed by the Senate as agreeing with the Communists and others who do not love and cherish peace and who are "stepping up the crusade for Salt II."

**COMMUNIST VIETNAM AND NICARAGUA** recently established diplomatic relations at the Embassy level in a ceremony held at the Vietnamese Embassy in Cuba.

The Communist Party in Nicaragua has emerged from the underground and announced its "solidarity" with the Sandinistas of the F.S.L.N. A report from Managua stated: "After several decades of clandestine existence, because of the Somoza dynasty's decided anti-Communist policy, the Communist Party of Nicaragua has come to revolutionary process led by the Sandinist National Liberation Front... In the first public rally since the fall of Somozism, and free from persecution, (Communist Party secretary general Eli) Altamirano said that the Communists are going to oppose any action intended to undermine F.S.L.N.'s merits. He asked all revolutionary forces to unite in defense of the revolution. He added that the Communist Party and the F.S.L.N.'s banners will stand together and their hymns will be sung as a symbol of an unbreakable union..." Somoza, called by the Communists, "decidedly anti-Communist," was called by President Carter "Anti-human rights." And was opposed by president Carter so vigorously that he must take the lion's share of the blame for the rise of Communism in Nicaragua.

**SINGER JOAN BAEZ TELLS A NEWS CONFERENCE** at San Francisco that she is leaving for Southeast Asia to focus international attention on the plight of the Vietnamese boat people and the Meo tribesmen of Laos as they flee their native lands. When Baez denounced Hanoi for giving millions of Vietnamese the choice between the open sea and the gulga, Jane Fonda wrote: "Your actions only align you with the most narrow and negative elements in our country who continue to believe that Communism is worse than death." To this and editor of the *London Daily Telegraph* replied: "Well not worse actually, but on the strength of the sinking boats in the

China Sea, much the same."

**OCTOBER, 1979 IS THE THIRTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY** of the founding of the United Nations. Anniversaries are meant to bring memories back to mind. Remember that of the 17 men representing the United States who did the planning and shaped the policies that actually led to the creation of the United Nations all but one have been identified in sworn testimony as secret Communist agents. The chief one of these men was Alger Hiss who had much of the responsibility for actually writing the charter of the new body.

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## THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

### TREASURING UP WRATH

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? but after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Romans 2:4, 5).

To the person who does not understand the perversity of the human heart, it would seem a bit strange that men think God's grace is an indication of His indifference to sin. That is, it would seem strange to the person who understands how much God's grace cost Him, how much it cost Him to provide for our salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. God did not so love the world that He decided to forget man's sin so He could save men. He hated sin and He loved men, and out of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering He saved men by the terrible high price of the blood of His only begotten Son, Who shed that blood on the cross of Calvary, dying with our sins upon Him. God then raised Him from the dead that He might declare us righteous.

Romans 2:4 infers that those who think they can escape the judgment of God are despising the attributes of God that provided our salvation. They are indicating that they feel that it was not

necessary for Jesus to come and to die for them, since they feel they could earn the way themselves or that God would just overlook their sins out of the spineless love that they imagine He is. God is good, God does hold back from avenging sin, He is slow in avenging wrongs against Himself, but God is the righteous judge of the universe and He must bring judgment against the guilty.

In verse 5 Paul paints a very dark picture for those who feel that imagination that God is indifferent to sin. He says that such people have "hardness and impenitent hearts" and that they are piling up a treasure, but the most eerie kind of treasure one could imagine. A human analogy would be for a person to "milk" a poisonous snake of its venom day after day and store it up to drink. The subjects of verse 5 are treasuring up wrath for themselves when God must show His wrath against sin and reveal His righteous judgment. In the day that God reveals His judgment that wrath will be poured out on the foolish men who stored it up.

About 25 years ago Donald Grey Barnhouse preached a series of sermons using the book of Romans as the point of departure to present the message of the whole Bible. In his sermon on these two voices Barnhouse made five points that you might want to consider. The first was that there is common grace for sinners. By that he means that God could have justly sent Adam and Eve to the lake of fire as soon as they sinned and that would have ended the human race and He could send each one of us when we first sin. But He does not do that but gives us a time to repent. His second point was that men despise the riches of grace that are showered on them, a point we have tried to stress here. Thirdly, Barnhouse pointed out that men are ignorant of the purpose of God's grace to them, thinking it from indifference to sin when really it is to give you time to repent. The fourth point is that "the state of their wicked heart leads them to the most senseless folly," the folly of storing up wrath when they could be laying hold on God's grace, God's love in action in their behalf to provide every good thing for them for eternity instead of the wrath they are storing up. And lastly he points out that this accumulated wrath will be poured out on those who store it up when God unveils that judgment which is the subject of Romans 2.

How is it with you? Have you felt that because you are in good health, because God has not struck you down because you have sinned, because you continue to prosper—that because of these and other things you feel that you must be in God's favor? If so, and if you continue that way without what God is calling you to, then you and we must face God as the judge, the righteous all-knowing, all-seeing God Whose will you have gone against. Instead of that, feel the call of God and let His grace call you to repentance so that through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ you may have the eternal life for which God paid such a tremendous price. Don't delay another day; do it now.

(Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of five articles being written by Dr. Reagan in response to an attack on Pre-Millennialism which was delivered at the Central Church of Christ in Birmingham, Alabama, in June of this year by Bro. Guy N. Woods, the Associate Editor of the *Gospel Advocate*.)

*A Response to Guy N. Woods*

## Will the Earth Cease to Exist at the Second Coming of Christ?



by Dr. David R. Reagan

Bro. Guy N. Woods launched his attack on Pre-Millennialism by alleging that there is not the slightest evidence in the Bible that our Lord will ever put His feet on this earth again. He then observed that "the reason the Lord will never put His feet on the earth again is that there won't be any earth here for Him to put His feet on." To substantiate this assertion, Bro. Woods appealed to II Peter 3:10 & 11 which says: "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up . . . the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire."

If these two verses contained the only information available in the Bible about the end times, I would be forced to agree with Bro. Wood's conclusion that the earth will cease to exist when the Lord returns. But we are told in many places in the Bible that Jesus will return to this earth (Job 19:25, Isaiah 61:2b-9, Ezekial 43:6 & 7, and Revelation 19:11-21) and that He will reign over the world (Jeremiah 23:5, Zechariah 14:1-9, and Revelation 20:4). Thus, II Peter 3:10 apparently presents us with a classic example of "prophetic telescoping."

### PROPHETIC TELESCOPING

The telescoping of future events is a very common characteristic of prophetic writing. By "telescoping" I mean that the prophets often picture events as happening back to back when, in reality, the events may be separated by hundreds of even thousands of years. A good example of this tendency is to be found in Isaiah 61. The first verse of that chapter and the first phrase of verse two describe the first advent of Jesus. But the second phrase of verse two immediately shifts us forward at least 1900 years to the second advent of Christ. Jesus recognized this Himself when He read this passage to the synagogue in

Nazareth (Luke 4:18 & 19). He stopped reading in the middle of verse two because the rest of the verse was not applicable to His mission on earth at that time.

Another good example of the telescoping principle of prophetic writing is to be found in I Corinthians 15:23. Here Paul is discussing the order of resurrections. He states that Christ has been resurrected first, "then at his coming, those who belong to Christ." Although the word "then" gives the impression of immediate succession, we know that it represents a gap of at least 1900 years, because Christ was resurrected that long ago, and His saints have not yet experienced the resurrection.

In like manner, the passage in II Peter 3 which states that the Lord will come like a thief, "and then the heavens will pass away . . . and the earth and the works upon it will be burned up" is an example of prophetic telescoping. Although the word "then" present an image of immediate succession, it really represents a gap of at least a thousand years. The reason we know there is a prophetic gap here is because other scriptures clearly establish the point that Jesus will return to the earth to judge and reign with His saints:

*Isaiah 11:* Verses 1-3a portray the first advent of Jesus. Verses 3b-5 outline the Lord's return for judgment. And verses 6-9 present a beautiful portrait of the Lord's rule *upon the earth*.

*Isaiah 24:* "On that day the Lord will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, *on the earth* . . . for the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem." (verse 21 & 23)

*Jeremiah 23:* "Behold the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice *in the land*." (verse 5)

*Zechariah 14:* "Behold, a day of the Lord is coming . . . I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem for battle . . . Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations . . . On that day *his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives* . . . and the Lord will become king over *all the earth*."

*Revelation 19 & 20:* As in Zechariah 14, Jesus is pictured as returning to defeat the forces of Satan. Following His victory, the Lord begins to reign with His saints for a thousand years (20:4). All of this takes place "*over the broad earth*" (20:9).

### ANNIHILATION OR RENOVATION?

These scriptures seem to clearly establish the fact that the earth will continue to exist for a period of time following the return of Christ. But what will happen to the earth when the Millennial reign of Christ comes to an end? Will it be annihilated in fire? Will the whole universe simply de-materialize in a fiery cataclysm?

I think not. I believe the Bible teaches that this earth will be *renovated* by fire and that our eternal abode will be *this earth*, after it is purged and renovated by fire.

Bro. Woods does not agree with this interpretation. In his Birmingham speech, he expressed the opinion that the "new heavens and new earth" promised in scripture (Isaiah 66:22 and Revelation 21:1) are figurative in nature, representing an eternal abode in Heaven that will be strictly spiritual in nature. He cited John 14:2 & 3 as evidence of this:

In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

Bro. Woods failed to point out that the place Jesus is preparing for His saints is pictured in Revelation 21:1-3 as a holy city, the "new Jerusalem," which *descends from Heaven to the new earth* where God will dwell with men. Of course, Bro. Woods would argue that all the language in Revelation 21 is strictly figurative, because the *nub of the matter* is that A-Millennialists have a basic attitude of contempt for the material universe and therefore look forward to its dissolution. A corollary of this attitude is the expectation that the eternal abode will be strictly spiritual in nature.

### COMPETING WORLD VIEWS

This brings us to a fundamental theological and philosophical distinction between Pre-Millennialism and A-Millennialism. Pre-Millennialism is based upon a creator-*affirming* theology, whereas A-Millennialism is based upon a philosophy that is creation-*negating*.

Pre-Millennialists have accepted the *Hebrew* view that the universe was created good and that although it has been corrupted to some extent by the sin of Man, it still reflects the power, majesty, and glory of God (Psalms 19:1 and Romans 1:19 & 20). Further, Pre-Millennialists believe that God intends to redeem His creation by restoring the peace of Nature during the Millennium (Isaiah 11:6-9, Acts 3:21, and Romans 8:19-21) and purging the earth completely of all corruption during the cataclysmic fire which will produce the new earth at the end of the Millennium.

In contrast, the A-Millennialists have adopted the classic *Greek* philosophical view of the nature of the universe. They therefore look upon the material world as being essentially evil and cannot envision a perfect, eternal state that would be materialized in any way.

### A BASIC FALLACY

In other words, the fundamental fallacy of A-Millennialists is that they read Hebrew scriptures as if they were written by Greeks. It is true that the New Testament was written in the Greek language, but it was not written by Greeks, nor was it written from a Greek philosophical viewpoint.

The culprit here is St. Augustine, the great Church Father of the 5th Century. Augustine was a Platonic philosopher before his conversion to Christianity. He therefore believed that the material universe was inherently evil and that the only ultimate reality was the spirit world of immortal souls. After his conversion, he began to spiritualize the scriptures in the best Platonic style, arguing: 1) that

the binding of Satan in Revelation 20 had taken place during the ministry of Jesus, 2) that the first resurrection in Revelation 20 is the spiritual rebirth of the believer, and 3) that the Millennium is the period of the church age between the first and second advents of Jesus. His view was adopted by the Council of Ephesus in 431 and has remained Catholic dogma to this day.

It has also become the dogma of mainline, A-Millennial Churches of Christ. And since I grew up in such churches, my view of the end times was completely Platonic in nature. I was taught that when I died my soul would sleep until Jesus returned, at which time my soul would be resurrected and I would go off with Jesus to spend eternity in Heaven. You can just imagine the sense of shock I felt when I stopped listening to preachers and started studying the Bible and discovered that my Platonic view was completely unscriptural. The scriptures told me: 1) that when I die my spirit will go immediately to be with the Lord (11 Corinthians 5:8, Phillipians 1:23, and Acts 7:59); 2) that when Jesus returns, my *body* will be resurrected, reunited with my spirit, and glorified (Romans 8:23, Phillipians 3:21, and Luke 24:36-42); and 3) that I will spend eternity with God on a new earth (Revelation 21:1-4).

In other words, the Bible does not picture an eternity of disembodied spirits floating around on clouds. It pictures resurrected bodies reunited with their spirits to produce glorified persons in the image of Christ who will exist eternally upon a new earth in perfect spiritual communion with God.

## PLATONIZING

“Platonizing” the scriptures is what led to the First Century heresy of Gnosticism. Since the Gnostics had a Greek philosophical view of the universe, they were turned off by the concept of a God who had become incarnate in flesh. Because flesh was material, flesh was evil; therefore, it was impossible for God, who is infinitely holy, to become flesh. Their denial of the incarnation is what motivated the Apostle John to write: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come *in the flesh* is of God.” (1 John 4:1 & 2)

In like manner, the “Platonizing” of the scriptures is what led to the development of the doctrine of A-Millennialism in the 4th and 5th Centuries. This is the reason that A-Millennialism is based on the premise that the scriptures do not mean what they say, for if the scriptures are taken at face value, they obviously teach both a Millennial reign of Christ and an eternity on a new earth.

## THE NEW EARTH

One final point: I earlier stated that the new earth promised in the scriptures will probably be *this* earth, renovated by fire. That may seem to be an un-Biblical opinion, based upon II Peter 3:10-12. However, I would urge a careful reading of the entire third chapter of II Peter. Note that Peter speaks of three earths: 1) “the world that

then existed" which was "deluged with water and perished;" 2) "the heavens and earth that now exist" which have been "stored up for fire;" and 3) "the new heavens and the new earth in which righteousness dwells."

Notice that Peter refers to the original earth as having "perished." This is strong language, and yet we all recognize the fact that it does not mean that the original earth dematerialized. Rather, it means that the original earth was purged of sin and corruption and the nature of that earth was radically changed.

Before the flood, the earth probably had a thick vapor canopy (Genesis 1:6 & 7; 2:5 & 6, and Job 38:9) which had a greenhouse type effect, filtering the sun's rays to the point that people lived longer and the earth had a stable, uniform climate and was covered with lush vegetation. When this canopy collapsed (Genesis 7:11 & 12), the whole nature of the earth—its topography, climate, and life spans—changed so radically that Peter could truly say without exaggeration that the first earth "perished."

In like manner, this present earth will "perish" when it is purged with fire. That does not mean it will cease to exist. In view of what happened to the "first" earth, it probably means that this "second" earth will be heated up like a ball of wax and will be reshaped by the hand of God into a perfect, new earth that will serve as our eternal abode.

Generations come and generations go,  
but the earth remains forever.  
(Ecclesiastes 1:4)

(The author would appreciate responses to this article. Please address them to him at 2706 Clear Springs, Plano, Texas 75075.)

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Carl Kitzmiller is minister of the Oakdale, Louisiana Church of Christ and writes the Sunday school lessons for Word and Work Lesson Quarterly.



## *Questions Asked of Us*

Carl Kitzmiller

*What did Jesus mean in saying that we are not to call anyone father?*

The passage alluded to is Matthew 23:8-12: "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father on the earth: for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, even the Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your

servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted."

First of all, let's establish that Jesus is not talking about our fathers in the flesh. It would serve no purpose to deny that which is true, that life has been passed along to us by human instrumentality. Moreover, we are taught to love father and mother (Eph. 6:2). We are not to love father or mother more than Christ, but this is not at all involved in the recognition of one as a human father. There is a natural affection that one ought to have for parents in the flesh (cf. Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3). Hebrews 12:9 speaks of the "fathers of our flesh" who chasten us and receive reverence. We have (or have had) a human father, and Christ can hardly be understood as saying we are to deny that relationship. The statement needs to be read in its context.

Jesus warned us not to give nor receive distinctions of rank in a spiritual sense. Again, this is not to deny that there are those among us who occupy the role of teacher or master. But we are not to give to any human being that distinctive place that belongs only to God. We are definitely to have a spirit of subjection one to another (Eph. 5:21, etc.), but we must not so blindly follow another that we listen to the voice of that one ahead of God. There is one Teacher; we are all learners. There is only one Father; Christians are His children. There is only one master; we as Christians are servants. No man can be allowed to have that place as spiritual guide in our life that belongs only to Christ.

There are those who give such total acceptance to a teacher (preacher, elder, or others) that they are ready to accept anything that they say. It is one thing to respect a man's integrity, intelligence, scholarship, and spiritual maturity, so that we would not lightly or easily disagree with him in his position on God's word, but it is another thing to give him the place of infallibility or to credit his teaching as being the voice of God. It is this that Jesus warns about. There are those who have given the actual title of "Father" to those in spiritual leadership. These leaders may in many cases zealously demand such a title and the blind acceptance which it implies. Their word is "law," in that the people who follow them are required to submit to them even when the word of God is contradicted. There may also be such a thing in principle—i.e., those who give such authority to men without actually addressing them as "Father." It is this sort of thing Jesus warns about.

Human beings have the fleshly inclination which glories in rank. There is that seeking of the glory of men so well demonstrated in Bible times by the Pharisees. Men love titles, degrees, positions, rank. Jesus did not intend for His followers to demonstrate this kind of spirit. It is not that all organization is wrong, nor that there are not some differing responsibilities for Christians, but these differences are not matters for fleshly glory. Before God we (Chris-

tians) are all brethren, must give account in the final sense to Him, and have no right to dominate the faith one of another. We must not give one to another the honor and obedience due only to the Lord. Human distinctions of rank and preference are not to characterize God's people.

*What about women wearing pant suits, especially to church services?*

Let's first try to establish whether a woman should wear a pant suit (or such like). The objection, I suppose, would be that "this is man's clothing and is therefore forbidden by Deut. 22:5. The verse reads as follows: "A woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for whosoever doeth these things is an abomination unto Jehovah thy God."

The passage is one of the sundry ordinances of the O. T. law. While it was taken away as law by the Cross, it does have importance to us today as revealing what is displeasing to our unchanging God. In other words, I am not under this passage as a requirement of the law, but as it expresses to me what is still pleasing or displeasing to God it becomes a part of my guidance as a Christian. It is evident that of old God meant for the distinction between men and women to be preserved. They wore distinctive garments. Moreover, the regulation was probably directed at that type of sexual perversion which delights in the wearing of clothing of the opposite sex.

Now I know nothing in the N. T. which indicates God has changed His mind about these matters. God has made male and female, each with their own distinctive roles. One is not necessarily better than the other and there is no distinction as to salvation (Gal. 3:28), but the differences are His doing. It is a much healthier environment for the proper sexual development of children when the distinction is preserved. One has jokingly said that he was glad he grew up when he could tell his mother from his father, but in some cases today that possibility of error is not terribly far-fetched. This writer has no favor for some of the current fads of style and dress which seriously violate the *spirit* of this passage.

We need to be careful, however, in deciding just what style of clothing is man's clothing or woman's clothing. Who determines that? God did not define what constitutes each one. He did not declare that pants are men's clothing. What belongs in each category will largely be determined by the society involved and may even vary considerably from culture to culture and age to age. The flowing robes of some ancient cultures still preserved in some countries today are a far cry from the tailored shirts and pants worn by American men. Generally speaking, each culture and age recognizes some styles as belonging to men and some to women, and for that culture or age this is the standard. The people who make up the culture react to their concepts of what is or is not appropriate.

The women's pant suits which I know anything about are recognized by our society as women's clothing. No self-respecting man would be caught dead in one. So while this represents a departure from styles of the past, there are still those marks of difference. Like almost anything, this style can be so tight or suggestive as to be objectionable, but it can also be feminine and flattering to a woman as a woman. Under some circumstances they also represent a much more modest attire than the dress. People with perverse intentions can corrupt almost anything, but I do not personally believe a woman's pant suit violates the spirit of Deut. 22:5.

Now, as to church attendance. "If I work in one, why not wear it to worship? I'm the same person. God knows what I wear." Yes. But do we apply the same logic with respect to dirty clothing, work clothing, sleepwear? If a man must wear dirty work clothing to the services or else miss the service, then I opt for his coming to the service. If a man is so poor that he cannot afford nicer dress clothing, then I'm all for his poor clothes. But when we have a choice, what do we do? There are those things that are more appropriate for some occasions than others. If there is a compelling reason why a woman needs to wear a pant suit to church services, that is one thing. If she has a choice, knowing that there are some who may be displeased with the pants, why not do the thing that will edify?

Me? I have more concern about the gals who wear boy's style jeans! But if there are enough of them that do it for long enough, then I suppose the style ceases to be distinctively a man's.

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Doug Broyles is an alumnus and former Board Member of S.C.C., now working for the Lord and the Oil Industry in Saudi Arabia.

## SEVEN SAUDI SERMONS

Douglas I. Broyles

Since coming to Saudi Arabia, I've been intent on observing and learning as much as I can from my new environment. I'd like to share some of those lessons with you now.

The first lesson is to be able to disagree agreeably. When we arrived in Dhahran in May 1978, we were concerned about worship. We knew that there was a Protestant Fellowship, but we worried about whether they'd dare to mention baptism or even remember the Lord's supper. During our first week, God worked so we were brought into contact with the church of Christ here. The speakers are the men of the congregation, men who do not always interpret the scriptures as I have been taught; however, they do teach God's plan of salvation

accurately, and that is what is most important. We do agree on that. There is no instrumental music and we do participate in the Lord's supper each Lord's day. So we worship with them, teach classes, I speak about every six or eight weeks, and we thoroughly enjoy the fellowship. We had a choice of either this group or the Protestant Fellowship. You may call it compromise—we do not. We have chosen this one because we feel we are really worshipping Christ there. The other members are aware of our differences, and some even differ among themselves, but we all disagree agreeably and still hold that we can worship and have fellowship together. What about other churches who teach God's plan of salvation as you do? Can you disagree agreeably with them and have Christian fellowship with them? I challenge you to make the first move toward that end. It will help and bless both of you.

The second lesson I learned was that there can be no passive Christianity. I think you will agree with me that as a true Christian, you cannot sit still. Either you will grow with Christ or you will slide back with the devil. Perhaps many of you have been as I was—a member of the church for years, surrounded by good teaching, and rarely challenged to defend my position about anything doctrinal. Now that I am worshipping with fellow Christians whose own interpretations of some scriptures differ from mine, I have been challenged to study in order to substantiate my beliefs. I need to “handle aright” the scriptures, and I study so that I can see what the scriptures really say about what I believe. It has helped me to grow. For too long I just sat and tried to be a passive Christian—let the preacher and teachers do all the studying. Now I know that there is no way you can grow that way. I challenge you again to study so that you can grow. Can you show anyone who may ask scriptural proof concerning why you partake of the Lord's supper every Lord's day, why you don't have instrumental music, why you believe in baptism by immersion, why you believe in the rapture? Do you have to refer them to the minister and admit you don't really know why. Do you just shrug and say “We've just always been taught that.” Peter wrote (3:15) “be ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you.” That is the scripture speaking, so study to know *why* as well as what you believe.

The third lesson I have learned in Saudia Arabia is to be Color-blind. In our little congregation in Dhahran, we have members who are not white Americans. We have learned to love and appreciate them after getting to know them individually. Now we accept them as people, not as black Christians or yellow Christians. We work side by side with TCN's (that is an abbreviation which means Third Country Nationals) they're from Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Egypt, Jordan, etc. We have developed close friendships with some of these people. One of Joyce's dearest friends is a lady from Iran. We have dinner parties occasionally, and at one we had friends from Pakistan, Arabia, India, England, and Scotland at our table. We all sat and ate together. We didn't say to the Pakistanis and Indians, “go sit in the kitchen to

eat." They are all our friends and we eat together. We share stories about "back home" and we all learn and grow together. This has helped our children, too. They come home with friends named Muhammed and Fatima as well as Tom and Mary. They just say "He's my friend," not "He's my black friend" or my "white friend." They're color blind too, and I believe that is the way God wants it to be. We've sent money to support the work of missionaries, yet we've had difficulty in the past accepting the minorities in our own country. Perhaps because in Arabia WE are the minority, so we have to accept them. However, I think we have learned that these people are people with souls, and we care. Again, I challenge you to make special efforts to love all people.

Another lesson I've learned is to be tolerant concerning other customs and habits. In the first part I mentioned tolerating religious differences, but now I'm talking about customs and personal habits. Some of these are disgusting to me, but I have learned to hide my disgust, at least for a season. Clothing habits are quite different, personal grooming is very different, manners are different, such as burping after dinner to show appreciation for the meal. After lunch one must have a nap, so our lunch hour is from 11:30 to 1:00, which means I have to go to work at 7:00 instead of the customary 8. Prayer calls from the Mosques 5 times a day, beginning at sunrise disturbs our rest and quiet. Poor driving habits, pushing and shoving instead of queueing up, loud talking are things that can annoy us, but with God's help and the love of Jesus in our hearts, we try to be as Paul wrote to the church at Colossae, (3:12) "Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving each other; if any man have a complaint against any, even as the Lord forgave you, so also do ye, and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ rule in your heart." Listen, if I am even trying to have a heart like this, I can't help but be tolerant of my fellowman. Besides, I must remember that he is tolerating me and my habits. Christ loves us and died for us, not because of what we are, but in spite of what we are! Should not we do likewise?

David writes (Psalm 148:) "fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind, mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars, beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds, Kings of the earth and all people, princes and all judges of the earth, young men and virgins, old men and children, let them praise the name of Jehovah, for His name alone is exalted, his glory is above the earth and the heavens."

My fifth lesson in Arabia was to praise God as Creator even after meeting and dealing with the elements. We have high temperatures that feel like fire sometimes. It hailed once, but has never snowed. We have fierce winds that blow from the North occasionally, called "schmall," blowing sand like a sandblast machine. We have no mountains or hills, and for a kid from Tennessee, that was hard to get used to. There are sand dunes, date trees, camels, goats, few cattle, parrots and other birds, a King, princes, young men, bearded old men, and hordes of children dressed in white and women dressed in

black. Everything is in varying shades of beige and brown, yet we have learned to find beauty in the ripples of the sand dunes, the fruit of the date palms, the grace of the camel's walk, and in the hearts of the people here. It may be difficult sometimes, but we can find beauty wherever we are. And so, we have learned to praise God anew here in Saudi Arabia.

Of course, when we stepped off the plane in Tokyo and saw the green of grassy hills and trees and colorful flowers, purple mountains, and blue tiled houses, we appreciated all over again God's handiwork of creation, and we wanted to sing out "Hallelulia, praise Jehovah!" This lesson was for us to remember daily to thank God for the good Earth and praise His name for the colors of the rainbow and everywhere it is reflected.

When Joyce was in Athens atop the Acropolis, she sat down on a rock to listen to the guide, and there at her feet was a line of black ants. The minister beside her said, "I wonder if these ants know where they live. They're up here on top of the Parthenon. They're not just ordinary ants. They're *special* ants! They're Parthenon ants! I bet their ancestors have lived here so long, they've forgotten what it was like down there off this hill." Perhaps we're like that too. We've had a beautiful country to live in so long, we have forgotten what it would be like to live in the desert. We have had it easy so long, we have forgotten what it would be like to be in poverty. We have been Christians so long, we've forgotten the new joy we experienced at conversion. Arabia has taught me to come down off the mountain more frequently, as it were, and remember to praise God as Creator of this beautiful earth.

The sixth lesson I learned is to be aware of my position and responsibilities as head of my house. Most Arabs are of the Islamic faith, Moslems. Just as with Christianity, of course, there are some more devout than others, but the majority are faithful. I was not in Arabia long before I noticed that there are not many women out, and then, if you do see one, she is completely covered in black. If there is an Arab doing yard work or plumbing or anything in the yard, at prayer time he will spread a mat or a piece of cardboard or something, wash his feet and hands, and kneel and pray, oblivious to everything around him. It made me think how often some of us are too embarrassed to even offer thanks in a restaurant.

Joyce and I took the kids to the playground shortly after arriving and noticed there were cloven Arab fathers playing with their children, but no women anywhere. In the downtown grocery, the men are doing the shopping, clerking, and cashiering. They buy Arabic fabric, clothing, linens, furniture, and on and on. Even in the clinic, most children are brought in by the Arab fathers. I don't agree with the Islamic law about the way women are treated, of course, but the point I'm getting at is this: the men know they have responsibility and accept it. Paul wrote to the Corinthians (14:35) for women to ask their husbands at home if they would learn anything, and again he

wrote to the Colossians (3:21) "Fathers, don't be so hard on your children that they will give up trying to do what is right." What I'm saying is that I believe it is my place to see that my children learn the right attitudes toward other people, that they learn to respect the laws of our land and obey them, and most important, that they are taught to love Jesus at an early age, and to accept Him as their Savior, and to help them continue to study as they grow physically and spiritually. This means I must read and study with them, not just see to it that they attend Sunday school so their teachers can teach them. And I must study with my wife so I can help her learn, as Paul wrote.

Seeing the Arab men demonstrate their position as head of their house made me more aware of my own responsibilities. Have you been a father who leads; a wife who learns with her husband; children who obey and respect their parents and their teachings?

This last lesson I want to share is simply that when one leaves home for a distant land, whether it be nine thousand miles or nine miles, that person will either grow closer to the Lord or he will completely lose sight of the Lord. If the prayers of God's people go with him, chances are he will draw closer to God. We thank God daily for Christians back home who pray for us. We know they are because we have reaped His blessings as a result of those prayers. My request is that you continue to pray for us. These lessons I've learned were not easy for me, and I suppose there will be more for us to learn in the future. However, my request doesn't end with just us. James writes in 5:16 "pray one for another." Don't forget the young men and women who have left from your homes to serve in the armed forces, as missionaries, or to follow job transfers. All of us need the prayers of our home church families, and we humbly request that you do not forget any of us.

Being a Christian in Arabia is no bed of roses, but Jesus has carried us through. I once heard a story of a Christian man who dreamed of heaven. He told Jesus that he often saw another set of footprints beside his as he walked his Christian life during the good times, and he knew they belonged to Jesus. But during the suffering, he noticed only one set of footprints. He wanted to know why Christ left him, during the difficult times. Jesus smiled at him and answered, "I didn't leave you during the difficult time. I was there. I was carrying you. The footprints were mine."

Christ indeed has carried me and my family here in Saudi Arabia and has been our teacher. We pray that our hearts will always remain open to all lessons that we can glean from Him, and pray that our sharing them with you can bless you, too.

Larry Miles, a member of the Portland Avenue congregation, is working in Cincinnati and has taken classes at Cincinnati Bible Seminary.



## Reflections On The Restoration Movement: The Second Generation

Larry Miles

### The Life and Ministry of John Nelson Armstrong

John Nelson Armstrong was born in a log cabin on a farm near Gadsden, Tennessee on January 6, 1870. His parents were Robert and Elizabeth Hathaway Armstrong. While he was very young his parents were converted to the ancient gospel. Later he joined with them in naming Christ as his personal Savior. His parents read the Bible at home. Also in their home was the *Gospel Advocate*.

Recognizing the importance of education, J. N. Armstrong, in 1887, entered West Tennessee Christian College in Henderson, Tennessee. This later became what is now Freed-Hardeman College. He spent two years there. After his first two years there he taught school near his home in Gadsden. He returned to Henderson for a brief time and then transferred to Union College in Jackson, Tennessee and finished out the third year.

In 1893, at the age of twenty-three, he journeyed to Nashville, Tennessee to enroll in the Nashville Bible School. As you will recall from past articles the Nashville Bible School was established in 1891 by David Lipscomb and James A. Harding. It was for the chance to study the Bible under these outstanding men of God that impelled J. N. Armstrong to come to Nashville.

Here is a list of the courses that Armstrong enrolled in his first term at Nashville:

With Harding: Latin, Greek, Bible.

With Dr. Grant: English

With Dr. Ward: Physiology

With David Lipscomb: Bible

Armstrong's biographer, L. C. Sears, tells us how Armstrong felt about J. A. Harding in *For Freedom*,

...but Harding was a daily inspiration. He could double the lesson anytime and make the students love it. He had no equal in leading students to feel they could do anything they set their hearts to do. He had a perfect faith in God's immediate presence and instant help. He was fond of quoting Paul's statement, 'I can do all things through him that strengtheneth me.' And as he spoke, with an intensity of feeling and conviction that was contagious, no one doubted that God could help him also as he had helped Paul.

His two favorite classes were Bible and Greek. In his third year at Nashville he taught three classes in Greek in return for his room and

board. Concerning his capabilities in Greek, David Lipscomb said, "Well, Brother Harding, that Greek is alright. Armstrong can do it." One of his pupils in his Greek Classes was J. A. Harding's daughter Woodson, who later was to be his wife.

He also taught Latin. One of his first pupils was the late John T. Glenn, long time minister and worker in the Bucchel Church of Christ in Louisville, Kentucky. In his later years, Armstrong commented about John T. Glenn,

He and I learned the first rule: i.e., to love one another. In a little while he took my place in the teaching of Latin at Nashville. It is not exaggerating the fact to say that Glenn has never had a superior in all the Bible school faculties as a teacher of Latin, and I think only one equal.

Sears tells us that the un-named equal was Harding's son, Dr. Leon K. Harding.

J.N. Armstrong graduated from the Nashville Bible School in 1896 along with John E. Dunn, Webb McQuiddy, R. C. White, and Leon K. Harding. He spent the summer in evangelistic work around greater Nashville.

While he was teaching at Nashville Bible School, he married Woodson Harding. They were married by her grandfather, J.W. Harding of Winchester, Kentucky. To them was born one child, Pattie Hathaway (3-27-1899). They also raised two nephews.

In 1901, J. A. Harding went to Bowling Green, Kentucky to establish Potter Bible College. He took his son-in-law J. N. Armstrong with him. At Bowling Green, Armstrong was head of the Greek Department. He also taught Bible and Latin. Armstrong and his wife had always dreamed of starting a Christian College west of the Mississippi River. Three men were in their plans—R. C. Bell, B. F. Rhodes and R. N. Gardner.

In 1905, there was established at Odessa, Missouri the Western Bible and Literary College. The faculty at Odessa was as follows:

J. N. Armstrong: President; Bible, Greek and Hebrew.

R. N. Gardner: Vice-President; Mathematics.

R. C. Bell: English and Philosophy.

B. F. Rhodes: Bible and History.

A. D. Gardner: Business Manager; Business.

F. M. Dinsmore: Science.

Woodson Armstrong: Expression.

Clara Sullivan: Music.

There was opposition to the school's right to exist from a scriptural viewpoint. This opposition was led by Daniel Sommer, the editor of the *Octographic Review*. There were 3 debates held on the college question. Sommer and Rhodes held two oral debates and Sommer and Armstrong held one written one. We will go into detail about Sommer's opposition to Bible Colleges in our next article as it will feature the life and ministry of Daniel Sommer. Later in his life Daniel Sommer came to the conclusion that his views on Christian Schools should not be made a test of fellowship. In May of 1938, Sommer and Armstrong met at the Murch-Witty Meeting.

In 1907, after two years at the helm at Odessa, Missouri he was forced to resign because of his health. There were many outstanding graduates of Western Bible and Literary College. We would like to mention a few. Sears writes the following in *For Freedom*,

From Odessa also came a host of leaders in the church around the world—the Dow Merritts, George Scotts, Leslie Browns, A. B. Reeses, and others in Africa, the Orville Bixlers and E. A. Rhodeses in Japan, Don Carlos Janes, who probably did more than any other man of his time to encourage support of missionaries, and a long list of preachers, teachers, and devoted church leaders.

Armstrong spent the summer of 1907 preaching in Las Vegas, New Mexico.

In 1908, he was asked to take the presidency of Cordell Christian College in Cordell, Oklahoma. He came with the stipulation that every student be required to take a daily Bible class. His second year there he was joined by Rhodes and Gardner, the third year by S.A. Bell and W.T. Vaughn. He was at Cordell for ten years. The school closed its door in 1918.

In 1919, Armstrong was asked to become the head of Harper College in Harper, Kansas. On August 4, 1921, Harper College became a fully accredited Junior College. In 1924 Harper College merged with Arkansas Christian College in Morrilton, Arkansas. The new institution was called Harding College and was located in Morrilton, Arkansas.

Armstrong directed the college through the dark days of the depression. Without the sacrificial service of Armstrong and his faculty, there would not be a Harding College today. Armstrong spent his summers preaching the everlasting gospel. In 1934 the college was moved to Searcy, Arkansas where it has remained to the present. On April 22, 1936, John Nelson Armstrong resigned as President of Harding College. He remained as President Emeritus and Dean of the Bible. He was succeeded as president by Dr. George S. Benson one time missionary to China.

Commenting on the change of Presidents, J. N. Armstrong wrote the following which was in both the *Firm Foundation* and *Gospel Advocate*.

For thirty-nine years I have taught in Christian college work. For twenty-nine I have served as president and Mrs. Armstrong as dean of women. Our home has been a girl's dormitory where we have been on duty day and night throughout these long years. As we look back, we wonder how we have borne the weight of the burdens—both mental and physical—that have often been placed upon our shoulders. But...there has never been a time when we were not glad to have the privilege of spending our lives in Bible school work. We are thankful to God for the great opportunity it has given us to help mold the lives of thousands of boys and girls...

With the rapid growth of Harding college, with its attendant increase in administrative work, we believe we need younger blood. Mrs. Armstrong is now fifty-seven and I am sixty-six. We believe, by ridding our shoulders of part of the load, we shall be able to help guide the destiny of Harding College for years to come. For this we pray...

In his closing years he wrote for both the *Firm Foundation* and the *Gospel Advocate*. He conducted a weekly radio broadcast. He spent

his summers in evangelistic work. He spent the summer of 1941 with the Church in Huntsville, Alabama. Death came to John Nelson Armstrong on August 12, 1944 in Searcy, Arkansas.

John Nelson Armstrong was one of the stalwarts of Christian Education. Along with David Lipscomb and James A. Harding, his name will go down in our heritage as one who helped bring about the Christian College. He taught in six Christian Colleges and was president of four. Truly John Nelson Armstrong was a giant in Christian Education.

Lord willing, our next essay will center on the life and ministry of one of the most controversial men in the history of the Restoration Movement, that of Daniel Sommer, who lived from 1850-1940. We will be tracing a life that was contemporary with some of the early pioneers. Until next time **MARANATHA!**

## Missionary Messenger

*"Greater things for God"*

J. C. Shewmaker

Searcy, Arkansas

September 15th

This has indeed been a busy summer for us—many visitors, coming and going.

Joyce has been "hard put" to keep the canning up to date, especially the abundant crop of tomatoes, which are now beginning to "tail off". I know of no other more versatile vegetable. What a help in preparing the table for visitors! Since early July the rains have come just right and continue to do so. I have recently planted mustard, turnips, carrots, lettuce and garlic. At last the huge amount of compost we have made is beginning to help the production.

Having been asked to serve on the mission committee for coming fiscal year, I feel a great joy in working behind the scenes in this great congregation, the College Congregation, in carrying the glorious gospel around the world to many nations and peoples, from Harding Campus, to Minnesota and Massachusetts, and to Africa and Switzerland. Great is the harvest—few the workers.

We have made four trips this spring and summer—one to visit Joyce's relatives and friends in Tennessee, one to Waldron, Arkansas, a trip to our grand-daughter's wedding in Abilene, Texas, and one trip to North Arkansas to the Shewmaker re-union.

George Galanis

Athens, Greece

We have had a wonderful missionary tour for three weeks in Crete. We visited a lot of our friends and found them very well prepared with

the word of God and our Magazine. A lot of them were very receptive and at least twenty of them accepted the Lord as their personal Savior. We also attempted to organize them to start Home Bible study. We find it very difficult to make them start. A Bible Center is hatched in Iraklion, Crete, the largest city. There are some eighty souls at least there that can be organized into a Branch of the Greek Bible Center. For this purpose we are planning to rent an apartment to use it for regular meetings. Three hundred dollars at least are needed a month for rent. Please pray for this need.

**SEARCH AND BELIEVE MAGAZINE:** Our Magazine is performing an excellent evangelistic job. Souls get prepared by reading it and it seems that its role is very important. Please pray for it. It struggles to survive financially.

**ALEX'S CAR:** Alex, our local evangelist in Crete, has bought a Van-car to use it for his evangelist purposes. Now he pays \$300 a month up to April 1980. He also needs at least \$200 a month for gasoline. And remember gasoline is sold here for \$3.80 a gallon!!! Can you imagine such a high price? And yet it is a stern truth. Pray for Alex's needs and let us enable him to move.

**THE CATAclysmic PHENOMENON OF INFLATION:** I am sure you're well aware of the threatening consequences of the phenomenon of inflation in a universal scale. Please pray for us. We often come to a critical difficulty to be unable to pay our liabilities.

**FAMILY NEWS:** My wife's health has slightly improved. She does not have a malignant tumor. Praise the Lord! Our daughter Emie is expecting a baby around the end of November. Her husband MD. Tassos Paschos has been drafted in the army and he is to serve one year as unit physician. Costas, our son, has two more months to go in the Air Force before he gets discharged.

I want to express my warm and deeply sincere appreciation to you all my supporters that you share the Lords blessings with us. Please continue to pray for us. May God bless you.

Donald and Delores Harris

Salisbury, Rhodesia

September 27th

We are happy to report three more baptisms into Jesus, two of our girls from the home ages 13 and 15. One girl from the congregation 15 years old. Five others came forward for rededication. It appears that ones are becoming more concerned for their souls, and we Praise God.

We have started work on the new home again, with preparation for some of the plumbing. The plastering of the inside walls will begin the 1st of Oct. We will do that in stages a few rooms at a time, then will have glass installed in the windows before the rains come. It is awful dusty here at this time.

Donald went to the Dr. to check his nose; the Dr. said it was healing good now. He should not have any more problem with it now.

May God bless everyone for their continued support.

# AT BILL AND BETTY'S

## LABELS CAN BE EMBARRASSING

I was sitting behind a couple of women on the bus last week. They were the kind of people who talk in such loud voices that you just can't help listening to their conversation however much you try not to.

"I had a real to-do about that old lady who lives next door to us the other day," the one in the red felt hat said to the one who had a rather aggressive little Pekingese dog tucked under her arm.

"Is she the one who had the fall last year?" the peke owner enquired.

"Yes," red hat replied. "I noticed there was three days' supply of milk outside her door and I felt a bit worried. I had to get the police in the end before we could get in."

"What a business," her friend said. "It was good of you to take the trouble though. Some people wouldn't have bothered."

"That's what Mrs. Entwright said when I told her about it," red hat said with satisfaction. "Some people wouldn't have bothered," Mrs. Entwright said."

"Was the old girl all right?" the dog owner asked with interest.

"She'd been in bed with bronchitis for three days," red hat said. She'd managed to warm herself a bit of soup but that was all."

"I thought she'd got a son in London," dog owner remarked. "Why doesn't he look after her?"

She has," red hat said smugly. "And I got straight on the phone to him, I can tell you. 'It's nothing to do with me, Mr. Armitage,' I said. 'But if your mother's found dead in bed one morning, well, you'll only have yourself to blame.'"

"You told him straight," peke owner approved.

"Yes I did," red hat said. "And do you know what he said? He said 'I'm too busy with Church work to get down and see my mother very often.' Too busy with Church work! What do you think of that? 'Your Church work should begin here, Mr. Armitage,' I said. 'With your poor old mother. Charity begins at home you know.'"

"It's like that Mrs. Meadows and her son," peke owner said, warming to the attack. "Going at it hammer and tongs they were the other day when I passed the house. Couldn't help hearing them."

"And she's the president of the Women's Meeting," red hat chimed in. "And actually had the nerve to invite me to a special rally they were holding at the Church. A fine example she is."

"It's always the same," peke owner said complacently. "They that talks the most does the least, I always say."

Somehow I felt responsible for Mr. Armitage and Mrs. Meadows whoever they were, for we were all being lumped together under the general heading of 'Christians', and in the eyes of the general public there's no means of sorting us out.

I thought about the Christian doctor at the hospital whom I had heard from a nurse friend was terribly slack about answering his 'bleeper', and the Christian girl working in the supermarket who could be so rude if you asked her to get something that wasn't on the shelves. There's the friend from the Wives Group who shouts at her daughter's friends when they go to play in her house, and the lad from our Sunday School class who delivers the papers and never bothers to take the trouble to get them right.

"I wonder what people think of Bill and me," I thought to myself. "How often do they say—'And the Turners are supposed to be Christians' when they talk about something we've said or done—or perhaps something we haven't done would be more to the point."

The trouble is, that you never know when people are watching and listening and making a judgment on Christianity from the way you behave. It's a rather frightening thought really.

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## An Open Letter

September 24, 1979

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During Rhoda's dad's visit to us last week we came to realize that he and perhaps most of you were not aware of the letter we wrote to the board of directors of Southeastern Christian College during the summer. At that time we requested that they ensure that our back pays be given to us before July 10 in order that we could put a down payment on the house that we believed the Lord had directed us to buy here in Michigan. Our house in Winchester had not sold so we were unable to raise a down payment in any other way. Praise the Lord! He led the board to agree to this and indeed the Lord through them supplied all of our back pays. In about two weeks we received, if we recall correctly, eleven back checks which were owed to us.

Ever since that time we have been wanting to thank each of you who so graciously supplied our need. We understand that some of you even went into debt in order to pay our debt. We are truly grateful to you and to the Lord Jesus Christ. We praise His Name for having done this through you.

At this time we would like to also mention the urgent needs of some other brothers and sisters in Christ. We would like to be able to completely supply their need ourselves in gratitude for God's supplying of our need but it is not in our ability to do so. We are speaking of the other teachers and administrators at S.C.C. Very few of them have been able to find jobs yet and as a result are in need. As we understand it some of you have been aware of their need and have sent money to S.C.C. to help pay back salaries. Many of you, however are probably unaware of the severity of the situation and so have not responded. At this time there are certain ones who do not have jobs and who have not been paid for the month of May. These people should not have to wait for the school to be sold in order to be paid and should not have to go on welfare in order to live.

Thse Bible clearly says that "The laborer is worthy of his hire." (1 Tin. 5:18, Matt. 10:10, Luke 10:7) The importance of this principle is certainly emphasized by the number of times it is repeated. In a very real sense each member of the premillennial churches of Christ is the employer of the teachers at S.C.C. It was not the teachers who decided to have a school, it was the churches. Therefore each of us in these churches has a personal responsibility to pay off this debt.

We realize that for many people the situation at S.C.C has been like a sore thumb which having been amputated we would like to forget. We cannot teach you anything which you do not know but only remind you of what you have already been taught. In 1 Corinthians 9:14 it says "The Lord did ordain that those who proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel." These people have been proclaiming the gospel to the students and to others. Galatians 6:6 says "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teaches in all good things." Many of us have been taught at S.C.C. Those who taught there need these "good things". We have a special responsibility toward these people. The church cannot afford to cut off the members who comprise this "sore thumb".

Finally apart from all sense of obligation, debt, or pay, thank God we can meet these needs out of love. S.C.C. is not an ongoing, long term responsibility any longer. What is needed here is a single time gift out of the love in our hearts for Jesus Christ and His (and our) family. Let us sow bountifully that we may reap bountifully. God has promised that He would give us both physical and spiritual bounty if we would give to His saints (II Cor. 9:10). Let us meet this need cheerfully for "God loveth a cheerful giver."

Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.

In Christian Love,  
Ed and Rhoda Perozzi

# Ethics: SEX

by Godfrey Robinson & Stephen Winward

On the very first page of the Bible we read: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply'" (Gen. 1:27, 28). God created us male and female. He set within us those natural instincts and affections which lead to courtship, love, and marriage. The very first commandment in the Bible is, "Be fruitful and multiply."

When some people hear the word "sex" they think at once of the Devil. That is why we emphasize at the beginning that sex is the creation and gift of God, to be accepted without shame and with gratitude, and to be hallowed and directed aright according to the divine purpose. That purpose is not only the procreation and continuance of the human race. It finds its fulfillment as the servant of personal love within marriage, in which, according to God's ordinance, two become one.

## *Why Such A Difficult Problem?*

If this is so, then why should sex be such a problem, perhaps the biggest problem of conduct that many people have to face? That which God intended as a blessing can, if used wrongly, become a terrible curse and tyrant, and lead to untold suffering and wrong. Here we suggest just a few answers to this important and practical question.

In many people the sexual urge is the strongest and most insistent of all the instincts, and can therefore so very easily get out of control. But if it is hard to control in its natural state, then how much more difficult the mastery of sex becomes when it is stimulated in many unnatural ways. And such stimuli are all around us today, posters, the movies, picture magazines, the press, entertainment, loose conversation. Sex shouts at us everywhere.

Matters are made worse by the popular and wide spread misunderstanding of the meaning of "love." This greatest word in New Testament ethics is perhaps the most misused word in our language. The perfectly true statement that love is "the greatest thing in the world" is taken to mean that sexual appetite and erotic attraction are more important than anything else. The suggestion of many stories, films and plays is that the erotic element is the one thing in life that counts.

With some people today marriage has to be delayed for professional or economic reasons. This can be a further serious difficulty, for it means that when the impulse is strongest it is denied its natural biological expression. Here is something that we need to remember

when seeking to help young people, or when we are tempted to be unduly harsh or condemnatory about the sexual sins of others.

Now we believe that with God's help these admittedly great difficulties can be overcome. Not that there is any easy solution. The Scriptures teach that the Christian life is a continual warfare, and we are all the time up against the spirit of this present evil age. There is, however, a thrill in doing battle in the name and in the strength of the Lord against temptations to act contrary to God's purpose. Sex is by its very nature bound up with many other aspects of life, and cannot be "solved" by itself alone. Some people, for some years, will always find it difficult. But positive and reliable helps there are, and we shall now discuss them.

### *The Knowledge Of God*

The apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonian Christians: "Not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles (heathen) who know not God" (I Thess. 4:5, A.S.V.), implying that there is a vital relationship between ignorance of God and sexual vice. A similar thought is expressed in Romans 1:28. The positive implication of both these passages is that when we come to know, reverence, and trust God, we shall be well on the way to deliverance from sexual vice.

One of the reasons for this is that knowing God changes our basic attitude to other persons. It has been truly said that *all* sexual perversions or misdeeds stem from one root cause—treating a *person* as a *thing*. When we see other people in the light of God's love and purpose in Christ, we can no longer regard anyone as a means to the end of our own gratification. The true Christian will not exploit another for his own selfish, lustful ends. It is not possible to exaggerate the importance of this right personal attitude to God and to other people.

### *"His Room Of Pictures"*

Personal discipline and self-control must begin with the thought life, and especially with the imagination. The prophet Ezekial had a vision of seventy men engaging in secret idolatry, in which God asked him: "Son of man, hast thou seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in his chamber of imagery (pictures)?" (Ezek. 8:12, A.S.V.). The mind of every man is a "room of pictures." If the pictures are evil, then inevitably in time our desires and words and deeds will be evil. So be especially careful about the walls of your imagination. Let Christ reign there, and "whatever is true . . . honorable, . . . just, . . . pure, . . . lovely, . . . gracious, . . . think on these things" (Phil. 4:8, A.S.V.).

Because it is so important to guard the "room of pictures" inside the mind, it is likewise important to avoid evil pictures outside. That which is outside soon moves in. The kind of pictures to which we refer are all too easily found in the newspapers, certain magazines, advertisements, and the entertainment world generally.

### *Avoid Occasions Of Temptation*

When the apostle Paul writes of idolatry he says, "Shun it." A wise man will try to shun all occasions of sexual temptation. True,

we cannot *always* do so; but we often can. When we cannot, God will keep us; when we can and don't, how can we expect Him to keep us?

And not only should we ourselves seek to avoid occasions of temptation; we should try to avoid *being* an occasion of temptation. Girls have a special responsibility here, and it should hardly be necessary to point out the importance for the Christian of modesty in dress. Modesty is not an outmoded invention of Mrs. Grundy, but is rather a tendency and instinct implanted by God to stand guard over the mystery of sex. Modesty has reference not only to our clothes but also to our speech. The idea current these days that we ought to be able to talk openly about sex with the same sort of unconcern that we chat about bus fares or washing machines is absurd. The subject should be discussed only in the right setting, and with reserve and respect.

Again, we need hardly stress that sex is not a fit subject for jokes. We would not dream of joking about Holy Communion. Sex is a sacred subject, and flippant, careless talk about it should be shunned. The Christian can take a firm stand at work and in society on this matter, and as a consequence exert a most healthy and beneficial influence.

### *Christian Fellowship*

It has already been stated that a right personal relationship with God and a right personal attitude to other people constitute the rock foundation of good conduct in the sphere of sex. This can be stated in another way by stressing the supreme importance of *fellowship* with others, which itself expresses and satisfies so much of our total nature. In Christian fellowship we learn to love people, and real love can best control all man's instincts. For real love involves the whole of a man's nature, not only the emotions and affections, but also the mind and the will. Take every opportunity of enjoying good companionship; fortunately fellows and girls are allowed and even encouraged to meet and mix freely nowadays.

But "what communion has light with darkness?" Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? (11 Cor. 6:14,15). Let our fellowship be with those who share the same basic spiritual convictions, and the same moral standards. When young Christians are discussing dancing, for example, it is a relevant point to ask, "Is a dance hall the type of place where you would like to meet your future wife or husband?"

Two other points ought to be noted. The first is that many young Christians these days are far too anxious to get "tied up" with one partner, and as a result become deeply involved too quickly. Foolishly and erroneously they imagine that it is almost a disgrace to go around "unattached." The other point is that "necking" and "petting" are quite definitely out! There must be proper control and restraints, and desires for which there is no legitimate satisfaction at that stage. Otherwise, impossible strains are set up, and (as sometimes does happen) young couples go too far, with tragic results.

### All-Round Discipline

The problem of sex mastery is one part of the more general problem of self-control. And here it is useful to keep the figure of the athlete in mind, as the apostle Paul does. Steady practice, training, and discipline are essential, for no one can attain satisfactory self-control simply by waving the magic wand of resolution. Trusting in God, and seeking the Holy Spirit's aid, we must persevere. But it is a mistake to concentrate too much on the control of sex. Rather we should aim at all-round obedience and discipline of character. Remember David fell into sexual sin at a time when he was slacking generally.

It is also useless to postpone the achievement of self-mastery to some future situation. If we don't achieve it *now*, we shall not have it *then*. In this connection, do not assume that marriage settles everything. For most people marriage is indeed the divine answer to the instinct and urge, but within the marriage covenant there must still be discipline, restraint, and true love. The desire to be your best for and in marriage can be yet another incentive to self-control now.

Just as a man cannot cope by himself with every malady, but sometimes goes to the doctor for advice and help, so there are many who cannot cope alone with the problems raised by sex. Some of us make the mistake of supposing that we are the only people in all the world troubled in particular ways. But all these problems are common to lots of us, and there is a good deal of accumulated wisdom and help available. Seek help through reading the right books, or through the friendship and advice of a trusted minister or leader. If you need such advice, do not be too proud to seek it.

Finally, we need to remember that like every other aspect of our nature created by God, sex can be consecrated to Him. Marriage was instituted "in order that the natural instincts and affections implanted by God should be hallowed and directed aright." But there are many other indirect ways in which the sexual impulse may be consecrated. It can and does enter into more complex emotions: respect and chivalry, tenderness and courtesy, affection and protectiveness. Its energy is sublimated in creative work and the service of other people. Like all God's gifts, sex is a responsibility. We understand it and use it rightly when we return the gift for Him to direct and control. This act of dedication is well expressed in concise and beautiful prayer by Jeremy Taylor: "Lord, make my body the servant of my spirit, and both body and spirit servants of Jesus."

(By permission of Scripture Union, from *The Christian's Conduct*.)

## NEWS AND NOTES

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

Please start sending *The Word and Work* to us. Also I'm happy to see the Article in July issue by John May. Many years ago he gave me my first

New Testament and David studies from his Commentary "Am I Not Free."

—Mattie McReynolds



**John Phillip Pound, Jr.**

June 17, 1926 — July 31, 1979

"For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord..." (Gen. 18:19)

I can think of no better passage to describe our dear father, husband, and grandpa who has left his earthly frame for one of perfection. John Pound was a godly man. He walked upright and did not fear to speak boldly of his Saviour and our soon-coming King. He loved the Lord and the Holy Word more than any earthly blessing. Men, like our daddy, were the faith and strength upon which the Premillennial Church of Christ was founded. I can recall numerous times in the past few years how deeply grieved he'd become over a problem or weakness in the brotherhood. He knew the Bible by memory. It is precious to remember him sitting in his old red chair studying God's Word from his tattered, well-worn Bible. He was a dedicated minister, a faithful steward, a hard-working businessman, and a godly parent. Whenever one of his children slipped in their Christian life, he would always take the time to advise and strengthen.

He is sorely missed, but he left us a legacy that no mere man could give. We can only say, "Thank you, Dear Lord. Thank you our Daddy."

#### Thanks For Our Daddy

How many times we can recall  
From days that have long passed  
Of working with our daddy  
Until the evening came at last.  
He spoke of Heavenly things  
And of our Saviour's birth.  
He taught, and yea, he trained us,  
To give God all we were worth.  
He never thought of himself,  
Only of the fields to glean.  
He had a higher calling  
That came from God, unseen.  
The Father felt his work, done  
And called dad home to rest.  
He is dwelling, now, in Heaven  
The home of the saved and blest.

—Faith Pound

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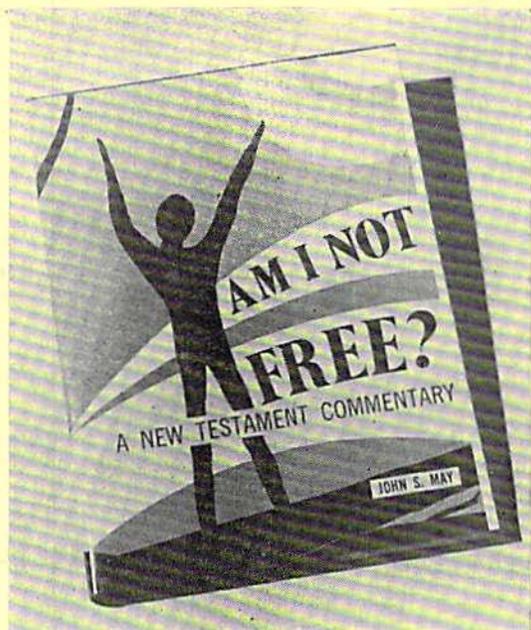
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