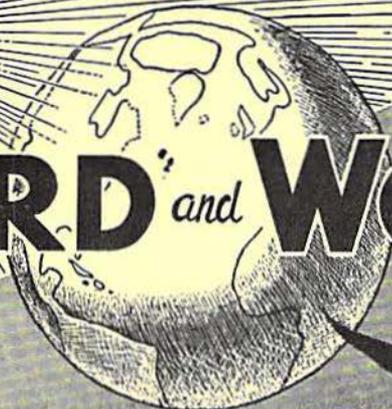


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THE WORD AND WORK

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THE WORD AND WORK

"A monthly magazine set to declare the whole counsel of God."

Wm. Robert Heid, Editor

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God's Family

W. R. H.

This month, we are pleased to present the first half of an article by David Morsey, in this Family department of the *Word and Work*. This timely article is copied from the February issue of *Herald of His Coming*. The concluding portion will be published next month, Lord willing.—W.R.H.

The Christian Family—A Stronghold In Today's Sinking Society

God did not intend us to bring children into the world with even a 50/50 chance of going to hell. There are principles that can be applied to the home which will pretty well guarantee the security of the children. And one does not have to be a psychologist either to know or apply them.

In the first place, we must see the family unit as a citadel—a bulwark against the forces of Satan. The Bible makes it very clear that we gather strength in togetherness. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst . . . If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 18:20, 19).

Growing together in the Lord and standing together against Satan are the most important elements of the family life.

God banks heavily on the family unit. It is the normal outgrowth of marriage. There are, of course, a number of reasons why some couples do not have children, but generally speaking, God's purpose in marriage includes the development of a family. Children are very important to the spiritual growth of the parent. Children help to break down the walls of self-centeredness, and force the parents into involvement with others. The raising of children demands self-sacrifice and a wholesome practicality about life. The responsibilities of a family usually bring about the needed transition in a young man from adolescence to manhood.

In view of the above, it is imperative that we fashion the family unit with utmost care. Nothing less than absolute reality will avail.

The children come and go very quickly. And in the brief span of time that parents have them, forces must be set to work in their lives which will give them the capacity to live life successfully for many years. Yet, in spite of this fact, many parents have carelessly neglected the most effective instrument possible in preparing their children for life—leading them in and sharing with them devotion to Christ. It is not enough to commit this critical task to the work of assorted Sunday-school and day-school teachers. Parents cannot simply tell their young people what to believe. They must share their faith with them.

This principle is so basic and so obvious, that one wonders why parents so universally neglect it. The excuses are myriad, but none of them adequate in the face of the eternal destiny of the soul. There is no anguish so great as that which comes from realizing that someone we love has gone astray, and we could have prevented it. Now, what are these principles that will guarantee the success?

THE FOUNDATION

The foundation must be laid very deep. First of all, the individual must himself be related to Christ in a dynamic personal involvement. Unless one sees life as Christ sees it, and has His Spirit within, no amount of wisdom will suffice to overcome the perils of life in Satan's world. Christ must be the head of the home in *fact* as well as in *theory*. All decisions regarding the family must be made in terms of His will. The important question is not what is the most reasonable thing to do— but what does Christ want us to do? Human logic is not adequate to meet the demands of our modern society.

There is no chance to experiment. We have our children for a very short period of time, and then they are gone, and all that we give them in guidance and influence must be done quickly. Many decisions of great consequence in the lives of the children must be made in the midst of crises when the mind is charged with emotion.

Our only safeguard is the prevailing presence of Christ. Our only hope, that we, being filled with the Holy Spirit, will make wise decisions.

THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE FATHER

The most fundamental principle in the building of the family unit is the concept that the father stands as the representative of Christ. To him is given the responsibility of leading his family in the ways of God. He will be held accountable before God for their welfare. This is true both of spiritual and physical factors.

"I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. 11:3); "But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:8).

This principle was first expressed in the Old Testament in the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy. Fathers are given a solemn responsibility to teach their children the things of God. "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. . . And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thine house, and on thy gates" (Deut. 6:6-9). A strong incentive is given for following these precepts: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

In the light of these passages we must conclude that a father is responsible for the training of his family; and that he will be held accountable for them before God; and that, if he will do his part, God will do His, and the family need not go astray. But this must be done

from the very beginning. Every month of delay will make the task that much more difficult, and there is no excuse that is adequate for a father's neglect of this sacred responsibility.

A man will sound very lame to God when he tries to excuse himself on the grounds that he was too busy, or that he did not know how. If a father does not know, he had better find out. The father should do all he can to know the things of God himself, and to see that his family gets the best of instruction from other sources wherever he may feel inadequate. In this respect it is very important that he find a strong group of believers where he and his family may find the help that comes from the body of Christ. As the family unit represents a citadel for the individual, so the body of Christ in its local group, represent a citadel for the family.

THE CREATIVE CARE OF THE MOTHER

While the father has the primary responsibility for the physical and spiritual welfare of the home, the mother has an equally important role in caring for the home, and providing an atmosphere in which the family can grow in the knowledge and love of Christ. The meaningful nature of this role will depend largely on the woman's attitude. If she looks upon herself as a "maid," or "chore-girl," that is what she will be. But if she sees her role as Christ sees it, then it can be full of challenge and fulfillment.

The mother's task is a creative one, in which, she too, represents Christ in the sculpturing of the spirits of her children. Children are not a hindrance to her fulfillment. In a way, they *are* her fulfillment. They cannot be viewed as interruptions to her work, but rather the work must be viewed as an interruption to the care of her children. When children are seen as an interruption by the adults, the day will come when the adults will be seen as an interruption by the children.

Here is one of the basic reasons for the going astray of our young people. We approach the training and discipline of children in terms of how to keep them from being a nuisance to adults. We are more concerned about their imposing on our rights, than we are with the development of their personalities. In this respect, they are all too often seen as the "enemy"—robbing the poor mother of the personal freedom to go out and "fulfill" herself.

When a mother goes off to work because she is frustrated at being tied down to her children, she is clearly saying to them that they are of secondary importance. If a woman does not want this kind of responsibility, she should not get married. It is understandable that children may get on a mother's nerves from time to time, and that she may feel frustrated and distraught. It is also understandable, and necessary for her to have brief times away from her children. But when the frustration becomes an obsession to change her role, there needs to be a fresh look at the glory of her assignment in the eyes of Christ.

In the sculpturing process, the mother must give primary attention to the task of leading her children in the knowledge of Christ, and devotion to Him. This must be done both by example, as well as teaching. A mother can lift her children no higher than herself. If

she is carelessly about the things of God, they will be careless. If she does not convey the love of Christ to them, they will not know the meaning of love.

It is a grave responsibility, and the mother may protest that she cannot do it because she is human, and she is right. That is why it is imperative for a mother to be possessed with the Spirit of Christ, and reflect His love and grace. Without this, she can have little assurance that her children will turn out well. It is so much easier to maintain steady growth and development in a child throughout its early years of development, than to have put the child back together again as a teenager.

This may seem to be a wearisome task, but the more consistently and carefully this is attended to in the early years, the easier the task will become as the years pass. A child's pattern of behavior is largely formed by the time he is seven. Diligence in these years will pay the largest dividends.

—David Morse in *Herald of His Coming*



Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

FROM THE MESSAGE, a publication of Multnomah School of the Bible of Portland, Oregon, we glean the following. Good news came out of the recently violence-torn Central American nation of Guatemala. On November 28, 1982, evangelist Luis Palau concluded his Guatemala City Crusade speaking to a massive crowd estimated at 700,000 by government officials who studied aerial photographs. According to church historian Virgil Zapata, head of Guatemala's Instituto Evangelical America Latina, this was the largest gathering of people to hear an evangelical preacher in the history of Central and South America. Zapata said that he believed "this was the second largest crowd to hear an evangelical preacher in the history of the entire world." (Billy Graham spoke to an estimated million people in Korea on June 3, 1973).

For hours traffic came to a standstill as some dozen separate columns of evangelicals and curious bystanders paraded to the Campo Marte Military Field where Palau delivered a 30-min-

ute message emphasizing peace with freedom. The evangelist stressed that the people of Guatemala must apply the teachings of Christ to their individual, family, and national life. Hundreds walked forward to the viewing stand when Palau extended the invitation to receive Christ by faith. All told, 3,200 Guatemalans made a Christian commitment during the course of Palau's eight-day campaign.

Jose Efrain Rios Montt, the nation's president, confesses Christ as his personal Lord and Savior in the evangelical sense of the profession. His presidency has had a dramatic impact of life in Guatemala. His uncompromising commitment to Christian principles and morality is helping weed out corruption in the government and military, as well as dampen the leftist guerrilla movement. Speaking after Palau, Montt said, "A nation finds its grandeur in fulfilling the Word of God. Violence and subversion will not change the world; only God, who is sitting on the throne of the heavens, can bring change. Armies

and swords are not God's means for bringing change since God brings peaceful change by the work of the Holy Spirit."

ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN OPINION, FEB. 1983, America has an illegal-drug problem of enormous proportions. The illegal-drug trade in this country is currently estimated to gross \$100 billion a year. To illustrate, "Reliable estimates are that the illegal-drug market in New York City alone grosses some \$45 billion a year. That's tax free, non-union, no affirmative action, and unregulated by federal, state, or local government. To most people, a figure like \$45 billion is difficult to comprehend. Perhaps it will make it more understandable to compare these vast illegal profits obtained from this human misery by comparing it with New York's retail trade industry (\$24.5 billion); its manufacturing industry (\$14.6 billion); and, its hotel, advertising, and service revenues (\$13.9). Attorney General William French Smith has reported, illicit-drug sales are 'about equal to the combined profits of America's 500 largest corporations.'" This article in the *American Opinion*, by John Rees, gives some startling information about the activities of dope dealers—practically out in the open—in major cities across the nation. I urge you to find a copy and read this article. Try the public library, or, better still, subscribe. *American Opinion*, 395 Concord Ave., Belmont, Mass. 02178 \$20.00 per year.

CONGRESSMAN ELLIOT LEVITAS (D-GA) POINTS OUT "THE PERSON who bears the heaviest relative burden of the Federal income tax bill in America is the middle-income tax payer. As the cost of running the country goes up, both in real dollars and inflated dollars, the largest proportion of those dollars comes from this middle-income group." In 1980 taxpayers with adjusted gross income between \$12,000 and \$50,000 accounted for 69.5% of taxable income and paid 63.1% of the amount of taxes paid by all Americans. The middle American can not find relief by a "soak-the-rich" tax plan. His relief can only come by a drastic reduction in the size, scope, and cost of government. Unfortunately, there are too few congressional members who are willing to cut back in this area.

ACCORDING TO HERTZ CORPORA-

TION, it cost an average of 34.5 cents per mile to operate an automobile in 1981. But the Federal government allows a maximum business mileage deduction of only 20 cents a mile. And the very generous IRS permits those who use their cars for charitable purposes a deduction of nine cents per mile.

FOR EVERY DOLLAR THE GOVERNMENT SPENDS TO ENFORCE a regulation, the private sector spends twenty to comply. We do not point this out to decry honest government regulation, but to point out the crying need to cut back to the bare minimum of government interference in the pursuit of the nation's happiness. Who wouldn't, for instance, be glad to pay more, if it takes it, to control the evil drug traffic mentioned above. That is a legitimate function of government. The government, through its many regulations has cleared the air of smoke from many of America's factories, but at the same time has placed many people in the ranks of the unemployed simply because of some really unnecessary government regulation. The liberal directed government would have us believe it loves poor people, and, indeed it must, it has done its best to create so many more of them.

I HAVE WONDERED WHY COMPANIES WHO OFFER REBATES didn't simply reduce the price, say on a car, by \$500, or whatever the rebate happens to be. That would be much simpler and more business-like. And, I thought, these business people surely know that, why don't they? Well, I found out that they, due to past experience with government interferences in their business affairs, must keep the prices up just in case they will be slapped with price control from an interfering government. And, don't forget, you pay taxes on the price before rebate. But the overworked goose has about run out of "golden eggs".

CONGRESSMAN DYMALLY (D-CA) has proposed two bills amounting to six million dollars which would give \$25,000 "to individual internees or their survivors and, in addition, compensate them for greater financial losses where they can be documented." These internees were the Japanese families who were, according to current liberal (put-

down-America) propaganda, grossly mistreated during W.W. II. Before deciding for this bill the Congress must make an unbiased study of the entire situation at the time this alleged injustice was done. The United States was at war with Japan at the time, and the Japanese forces were pushing close to the Pacific coast. So close that there was much talk of invading Japanese soldiers on American soil. It was felt that the Japanese, some of whom were Americans and some of whom were not citizens, would be in a position to aid invading forces if they wished to do so. Besides that, there was need to protect Japanese people from persecution from the general population. In order to cope with the situation, Executive Order 9066 was signed by President Roosevelt to authorize the Secretary of War and the military commanders to designate military areas 'from which any or all

persons may be excluded." The areas which were thus excluded were heavily populated by these Japanese people. They were not placed under arrest, nor were they forced to go to any area chosen by someone else. They were more free to go and do as they liked than the many American youth who were told when to leave their homes and go to areas of grave danger, many of them not to get back, and none of them sure they ever would. Many of these Japanese people chose to go to the relocation centers provided by a benevolent government even then under grave threat from the land of their birth. Some of them sooner or later moved to a place of their own choosing when they saw they could do better—no Gestapo trying to hold them. We should tell our Congressman that we don't owe this money, and we shouldn't be expected by anyone to pay it.



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

I have noticed that some very promising and capable people seem to come to us from other religious persuasions, but some of them are soon gone. Why is this?

Strictly speaking, this is probably not so much a Bible question as a psychological one. Perhaps a good psychologist would be in a better position to answer this question. Human behavior is not always predictable on an individual basis; neither can we know always just why someone does what he does. Even the individual involved may not really know why he pursues a certain course. There may be public explanations he offers and there may be those reasons why he himself believes he has done a certain thing. There may be those factors at work, however, which even that one has not realized. We are not declaring such people to be necessarily dishonest when they explain why they have acted. Neither are we charging stupidity. The offered reasons may indeed have been primary factors in the decision. Our point here is that human beings are complex and that multiple factors, some unrecognized, may influence our decisions.

The problem in view is the fact that someone, possibly a preacher or some other, learns of the position held by those of "our" fellowship

and responds very favorably for a while. He is eager, wants to learn more, rejoices in the scripturalness of the position or the belief, and begins to work with some church or churches among us. For a while the person may be lionized, and we glory that another has learned the truth. In some cases, however, after a period of time there is a growing disenchantment, either by the individual of the group, or the group of the individual, or even mutually. He may move on to working with some other group or organization. Only the Lord knows the why fully, but there are some observations which may be helpful. I can only give what amounts to my opinion.

We would be foolish to suppose that all the blame is always on one side. I am personally very "sold" on the position claimed by many of the churches of our fellowship. I just don't know of any group anywhere which *in theory* holds a better, more scriptural position. I rejoice in the liberty I have to declare the whole counsel of God and to worship according to N. T. pattern. But it does not take an especially brilliant person to know that practice may fall short of profession—in ourselves and in others. We do have our problems. Some preachers are more committed to the word than others. Some elders are dictatorial and others are weak-kneed. Church members do not always know what it is all about and may be unfaithful to the Lord, much less good representatives of any distinctive claim or position. We can be selfish, too demanding, dense in our understanding, etc. One coming among us expecting to find a high degree of perfection is probably in for a let-down. There is no defense for such a situation except the fact that it is the failing of all mankind. There are no perfect churches when it comes to performance. God does His work through fallible and sometimes—very—imperfect human beings. We ought never to let up in an effort to grow into the fulness of Christ, and it is very sad that sometimes offenses come because of Christian failure, but it is dishonest to deny that shameful and disappointing occasions arise.

On the other hand, lest we chasten ourselves unduly for losing the "here today, gone tomorrow" individual, we need to be aware there may be imperfections in him which caused the shift. No one cause is at work, of course. In N. T. times there were those who were "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 3:7), always in a state of change. There were those who made "shipwreck concerning the faith" (1 Tim. 1:19), having thrust away faith and a good conscience. There were those who supposed that "godliness is a way of gain" (1 Tim. 6:5); hence, they were looking for that which supplied funds, prestige, power, social position, or whatever else men seek in life. Some preached "Christ even of envy and strife" (Phil. 1:15). All of these factors, rooted in the temptations of the devil and the lusts of the flesh, are still at work. The first century had no monopoly on them. There are those individuals who change jobs frequently, and there are those who change religious positions and churches frequently, always looking for something to satisfy and never quite making it. There are those looking for a place where they can be a "big" man—outstanding, achieving, exalted. Possibly many who are thus motivated never realize what makes them tick.

Again, I have noticed that some who break out of a rigid legalistic background tend to go to an opposite extreme. This is a common trait. Many doctrines have arisen as an extreme reaction to an extreme doctrine. In denying the errors of one position, man often tends to "jump off the deep end" in the other direction. Breaking out of the limitations of a narrow, legalistic concept and becoming aware of the grace of God and freedom in Christ, men sometimes veer to the extreme of excusing almost any kind of conduct or belief. They come to believe that God is love and His grace is great, so therefore what man does is not too important. Steering a straight course in the word of God is not always a matter of choosing the middle ground, but we do need to be careful about the extremes. It is understandable that one who comes to realize the glories of God's grace should revel in it, but it is a grievous error to cast away the restraints that go with it.

A factor which has been at work in our particular fellowship is that some have become interested in our position primarily in one point. An example is the teaching of prophecy. In their enthusiasm for the one topic these may have become associated with some of our churches. In reality their position on other important matters was overshadowed by the concern for the one issue, there never was a full acceptance of the position occupied by most of the churches as to standing on N. T. truth.

Of course there are still other possibilities. Our rearing—the kind of teaching we had, the influences we have been exposed to, the whole approach to life that we have learned—may color what we do and how we act. Peer pressure—the influence felt from our relatives, our associates, and the people closest to us—tends to affect how we look at things, how we see even religious truths and how we respond to them. These factors tend to make us see things differently and give us different sets of values as to what is important. Sometimes we (those who stay, and those who go) allow them to set aside what God says, and we are just sure that God did not mean that, or at least did not consider it important, because it runs counter to so much human experience or custom. It is never easy to struggle against the current of life about us, and some find that they do not care for the struggle.

There is a danger that I see as men of capability come among us, shine for a while, and then move on. It is the danger that some will decide that there must be something radically wrong with "us," not just as to human imperfection but as to the plea and position. Both individually and as a group we can think more highly of ourselves than we ought, but we can also fail to think well enough of ourselves. There are those individuals in ordinary life who are ineffective and defeated because they do not think well enough of themselves. The need is to "think soberly" (Rom. 12:3), making sound evaluations, neither imagining qualities which do not exist nor despising the ones which do. From time to time we need to rethink the correctness of standing on the whole counsel of God, seeking to be just Christians, members of the one body, faithful to Christ above all else. There is a danger that, seeing some abandon part or all of the plea of being N.T. Christians, others may suppose it is not right or is not worthy of pursuit.

All of us from time to time probably need the lesson our Lord taught Peter (John 21:19-23). We must be concerned about others, seeking their salvation initially and their restoration if they fall. We do not want to develop a self-only concern in spiritual matters. But there is a point where we must be ready to do what is right ourselves, follow the Lord ourselves—no matter what others do! Told by the Lord to follow Him, Peter wanted to know, in effect, “What about John?” What was in store for him? What was he to do? Perhaps Peter even wondered if John would be pulling his share of the load. Jesus answered, in effect, “Don’t worry about John; *you* follow me!” If any position we occupy is not right according to the word of God, then we ought to abandon it, but if it is right, then we must needs follow it no matter how God may use another, who goes with us, or who turns aside.



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

“No Law, But Death”

For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.—Romans 5:13, 14 NKJV

In the beginning God had given a direct commandment (law) to the first man and his wife—“Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat.” And He had given a consequence for disobeying—“For in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” They disobeyed and they immediately became “dead in trespasses and sins” (Spiritual death) and their bodies became subject to physical death. Of the two kinds of death the worst, of course, is the first I have listed here. The consequence of continuing on in that kind of death is eternal death, eternal separation from the presence of God and in the lake of fire for all that eternity. We have been trying to point out all along that all who do not trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for his salvation are headed in that direction today. Please do not be one of those. Come to the only source of salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who died on the Cross for your sins that you might be made alive in Him. What a wonderful transfer—He died that we might live.

What Paul is reminding us of in Romans 5:13 and 14 is that we have no further record of such a direct commandment (law) from God until He gave the Law to Moses and Israel on the mount. Yet, he

reminds us, the universal law of death (physical) continued to operate right through that time. That might seem to be a problem until we stop, as Paul does here, to consider that you can't have the consequence of sin unless you have sinned—or, to state it more simply, you can't break a law that does not exist. If there were no speed laws for our highways, I could drive 90 miles an hour without breaking the law. But once it is set at 55, to drive 60 would be a punishable breaking of the speed law. So, just remember that God had said that Adam's death was the result of breaking His direct commandment. What, then, caused those that followed after Adam to die? They did not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. There was no tree for them to eat from, and they already knew the good and the evil (and unanimously chose evil for their paths). Why did they die?

It is strange that many people do not want to follow Paul in his argument here. He is simply telling us that those people died as a consequence of Adam's sin, not of personal sins they had committed. They did thousands of things that were contrary to God's will, but God had not expressed His will to them in these matters. To be sure, they knew they were doing wrong, they deserved to die for personal sins. But God did not "impute" that sin to them since He had not expressly stated it. To "impute" is to "put to one's account." God did not mark those sins down as worthy of death at that time—yet they died. Why?

That is the very point that Paul is emphasizing here about Adam's sin—it made all of us sinners. As his offspring we inherited his nature, and that nature was one of sin. As a consequence all of those people we are discussing entered the world as dead in trespasses and sins and headed toward physical death. I don't like the term "original sin", but that is the term that is used so often concerning this. It is obvious to anyone who has read the Bible through even casually that the "original sin" was the sin of Satan and those angels who chose to go with him and who now are kept in torment or are serving Satan and eternally separated from God. Remember, the lake of fire, according to Jesus, was prepared for the devil and his angels, not for us. We simply chose to go to the place that God prepared for the devil and his angels because we will not accept the one way out, through Christ Jesus our Lord. May you not be among those. I am so very glad that I am not one of those—not because of any righteousness of my own but because Christ's righteousness is imputed to me—I stand before God not in my sin but as in Christ. I may not look (or write) like Him to you, but that is the way God sees me, praise His blessed Name.

In closing may I point out that Adam is here called a type of Christ, but he is a type by contrast, not by comparison. The only comparison is that he acted for all mankind. But the contrast is that when Christ acted for all it was to bring life to us and Adam's act brought death. Which do you choose to follow, the "type" to eternal death or the real One to eternal life, an eternity that is so wonderful that it can not be fully described in human language—a life without any sorrows, tribulations, regrets, etc., of this life and without any human limitation. Don't fail to gain this life, I plead.

"A Mighty Blow with a Broken Stick"

Billy R. Lewter

God delights in using ordinary persons to do extraordinary things. All He needs in our availability. Yet, many Christians are deeply discouraged because of an accumulation of failure, frustration, and disappointments.

A few simple, but profound principles may help us realize that even such discouraged, earthen vessels as we sometimes are can still be used greatly by God. What we need is a theology, or psychology, for losers.

First, most of us over-estimate our failures and under-estimate the good God has done through us. Few of us evaluate and judge ourselves accurately. We are prone to turn our eyes upon ourselves, and measure all things in terms of ourself. Pre-occupation with self brings discouragement. Unless we are occupied with God, our minds drift unconsciously to our problems and defeats until we lose our perspective of God's purpose.

God's purpose includes unique personal endowment of abilities, potential, understanding, and responsibilities. In our circumstances He is conforming us to Jesus Christ and has selected just the things for each experience to do that perfecting.

God's purpose takes into account every dimension of life: genetic, physical, emotional, environmental, our place in history, our gift of the Spirit for service, and our unique place in His kingdom for this life and eternity.

Realizing God's involvement should help break the shackles of self-centered discouragement. It should enlarge our perspective of God's purpose and especially His methods. It should give a deep down inside recognition of being accepted in the Beloved (Eph. 1:6), competent in the Holy Spirit, and worth the life of Jesus to God.

Second, God doesn't have, or need, perfect people to accomplish His work. He has chosen the weak and insignificant to put to shame the strong, so that none may boast (1 Cor. 1:27). It seems that the persons with the greatest impact in God's kingdom have not been those who were conscious of success, but those who were constantly aware of their need to depend on God. His strength was made perfect in their weakness.

Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Blessed are they who see themselves as they really are—as Peter did when the cock crowed, as David after Nathan the prophet exposed his sin, as Paul when the light from heaven blinded him, as Isaiah when he saw the holiness of God, as John when he saw the vision of the glorified Jesus. Blessed are they! Or, "Congratulations to the person who is so grieved over his spiritual shortcomings that he cannot rest until he has found God, and his soul is satisfied." God reveals Himself most clearly and uses more fully those who let Him fulfill His promise to provide strength.

Third, even if we were all that we want to be, and should be, we still couldn't merit God's love and grace. No amount of success, ability, influence, status, or wealth can deserve God's favor. Success in God's sight is not based on external achievement, but internal attitudes.

Probably no sin is so appalling to God as that of pride in one to whom God has bestowed some good thing (for example Lucifer). When a person forgets that all he has and can do is a gift, with responsibility, from God, he becomes an abomination to God (Proverbs 16:5). Our only security is in what God has already done. His love and mercy is in no way dependent on our performance.

Fourth, the hand of God may be seen in both success and failure, as He works all things together for good for those committed to His purpose. The question is not whether we think we are succeeding or think we are failing, but simply whether we have fully committed ourselves to seek and do His will.

Moments of success do bring a feeling of amazement at what the Lord can do, and a sense of humility and reverence in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. These moments help shape and change the direction of our lives, and increase our trust and obedience.

Spiritual growth also comes from continual discovery of God's grace and forgiveness after we have failed. It may be at these moments of *rediscovery* and revival that we are closest to God. Kierkegaard said, "In his failure, the believer finds his triumph." Francis Bacon said, "We learn from our mistakes, not from our successes."

In everything God speaks to us. Perhaps in times of failure we listen most attentively. This of course doesn't mean we should continue in failure that grace may abound. The focus should be on commitment to God's will, the only goal worthy of our striving. Such a focus should help overcome the fear of failure, the devastating influence of the past, and Satan's attempt to direct our attention to ourselves.

Fifth, all through the Bible, and church history, God has used ordinary people, unrecognized by the world, to do extraordinary things.

For example, Moses was an 80 year old shepherd, broken in spirit, when God called him. Later, after much success, he still battled discouragement and once asked God to let him die. Elijah and Jonah later made the same request. David was a humble shepherd, least in his father's family. Amos was an unimportant shepherd and dresser of sycamore trees, neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet. Peter was a boastful, impulsive fisherman, similar in personality to the meaning of his name, Simon or "shifting sand". Because of Jesus he became Peter—a rock. Jeremiah particularly was one with whom it is easy to identify. He was an emotional person with great conflicts, who felt he was a failure because he couldn't see results. Yet Jeremiah was God's spokesman in one of Israel's darkest hours. He accomplished God's purpose whether he felt like he had or not. His life and message is still a tremendously moving inspiration.

God has a high calling for you and me today. He wants us to provide hope to the discouraged, enlightenment to those in ignorance,

comfort to the anxious, direction in times of crisis, and order to those in confusion. When we put Jesus at the center of our thought life instead of ourselves, when we make a commitment to actually do His will in the work before us, when we consciously depend on His strength and forgiveness, the plague of discouragement will disappear. Because He anchors our soul, we can experience peace and pain simultaneously. And God can strike a mighty blow with a broken stick—like you and me.



When The House Is Ablaze, Don't Argue!

Alex V. Wilson

He was an amazing preacher, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, as we saw last month. He would be the first to say, "Give glory to God, not me," and of course that's true. But he was usable.

"From 1948 until 1968 when he retired, the congregation averaged perhaps 1500 on Sunday mornings and 2000 on Sunday nights" in London. He preached 45 minutes or longer in the mornings and hour-long expositions at night, "and not a minute too long," agreed many of his hearers. His Friday evening Bible studies attracted over a thousand people to his verse-by-verse expository messages (he took 12 years teaching the Epistle to the Romans). Let's pray the Lord will raise up many powerful proclaimers of His Word, though of course none will be exactly like "the Doctor."

But now let us focus not on how he preached, nor on the multitudes to whom he preached. Let's concentrate instead on his views, especially regarding unity amid diversity of beliefs. The quotations are from a memorial issue of a British magazine, *Evangelical Times*.

Stand for Truth, with Arms Wide

"He was far from being the kind of man who is spoiling for trouble. He abhorred the negative approach of those who were always looking for errors to attack. At the same time he did not shirk the responsibility of standing for the truth, even if it was painful to do so and even though it earned him criticism and misunderstanding."

"He was no narrow controversialist, but where the gospel was being undermined he was ready to do battle. Even when it was men whom he recognized as godly who were saying or doing things which were ultimately destructive of the gospel both he and they preached, he was ready at the cost of misunderstanding to oppose them. *He taught us the difference between the Judaizing enemies of the gospel in Galatians chapter one, and poor, wavering, inconsistent Peter in Galatians chapter two.* That is, between the OPPONENT of the gospel on

the one hand, and the true believer who (because of his woolly thinking or because his heart rules his head) COMPROMISES the gospel. The enemy of the gospel the Doctor would attack with all the vigor of his polemic. His brother in Christ, who was betraying the gospel by ignorance or weakness, he would also resist, but he still remembered that it was a brother, not a foe, with whom he was contending.

"To contend is one thing; to be contentious is another and the latter he tried to avoid. To engage in controversy for controversy's sake was never his desire. His primary call was to preach the Word, to call sinners to Christ, to lead Christians to holy living, to promote spiritual growth and unity in the churches."

"He gave warnings about not separating over secondary issues. As he once expressed the matter, *"When the house is on fire what's the use of arguing about the best bedroom?"*

Two Examples

Here are examples of how Lloyd-Jones himself applied the principle just stated. He came to Westminster Chapel in 1938 to assist G. Campbell Morgan, a preacher and writer famous throughout the English-speaking world. Morgan was "Arminian" in his theology, and his preaching "did not deal in the doctrines of the Reformation" such as God's sovereignty, man's depravity, election, and perseverance. "Lloyd-Jones was in the tradition of the Puritans and the Reformers. Yet the two men respected each other's positions and talents and their partnership of five years (until Morgan's death) was entirely happy."

A preacher in England told how the Doctor "drove me to a fresh study of the whole Reformed/Charismatic issue. So it was to him I went, full of excitement but also trepidation, with an address I planned to give at an important Bible Conference, calling for a new *rapprochement* between Reformed and Charismatic evangelicals. I had more than encouragement from him—he positively glowed! 'I am with you 100% and without reservation,' he exclaimed, and he followed up his encouragement with constant and fervent prayer."

May we too learn to distinguish between the heretics of Galatians chapter one and the weak and mixed-up brethren of chapter two, and act accordingly. For, "when the house is on fire what's the use of arguing about the best bedroom?"

GLEANINGS

Larry Miles

THE GREATEST ENEMY OF PEACE

Pride does not come through our animal nature, for it comes direct from hell. It is purely spiritual. It is the utmost evil. All other sins are fleabites in comparison.

—C. S. Lewis

THE LORD OF GLORY

But the Prince of Peace was also Lord of Glory (1 Cor. 2:8) and there was no way for diety to remain in the grave. God raised Him

to sit up at His own right hand, and when Paul addressed pagans in Athens he argued that the resurrection was proof enough that Jesus was the appropriate one to judge all men (Acts 17:31). And in Col. 2:15 he contends that Jesus' death and resurrection "got rid of the Sovereignities and the Powers, and paraded them in public, behind Him in His triumphal procession." It is a beautiful metaphor. The shameful tree became the victor's triumphal chariot, before which His enemies are driven in ignominious defeat."

—Leroy Garrett in *Restoration Review*

A CATHOLIC RELIGION

Sir, Ours is a catholic religion. It is not Roman Catholic or Greek Catholic, but ours is very catholic. We have a catholic Bible, in that we accept no human creed as our rule of faith and practice, but the Scriptures only, which all believers can accept. We have a catholic name in that we call ourselves Disciples or Christians, on which all believers can unite. We have a catholic baptism, immersion, which is admitted by all to be Scriptural. We have a catholic creed in that we base our faith upon that grand proposition that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. So, sir, you will never make a sect of us.

—Alexander Campbell to N. L. Rice
in the Campbell-Rice Debate: 1843

AN ANCIENT PRAYER

From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O God of truth, deliver us.

—Unknown

JESUS WAS THE GREAT PEACEMAKER

Jesus was the great peacemaker. He prayed for peace and He died for peace. If in the face of death He prayed for the unity of His community, that they love one another even as He loved them, should the modern church, each of us, pray and work for the oneness of all God's children?

—Leroy Garrett in *Restoration Review*

THE IMAGE OF CHRIST

It is the image of Christ the Christian looks for and loves, and this does not consist in being exact in few items, but in general devotion to the whole truth as far as known.

—Alexander Campbell

OUR OWN INTERPRETATIONS

While we condemn others for having a standard other than the Scriptures, we make our own interpretations a standard if we are not very careful.

—Reuel Lemmons, *Firm Foundation*, Oct. 30, 1979

DO YOU HOLD THAT BAPTISM IS NEITHER A PART OF THE GOSPEL OR APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE

Strictly speaking, I think it would be true that baptism is neither part of the gospel or the apostles' doctrine, but this would have to be

explained, lest one run the risk of being misunderstood. The gospel is made up of facts, historic facts that add up to glorious news. And that is what the gospel is, good news, facts about what God has done for us through Christ. Baptism is neither news nor fact, but a command that is related to the gospel. It may symbolize the gospel, but a symbol is never the real thing. Baptism is the ordinance that God has given whereby we respond to the gospel.

There are several instances in scripture, such as Rom. 6:3-4, where teaching *about* baptism is part of the apostle's doctrine. But baptism itself, which is an act, is neither gospel or doctrine. As such one does not preach or teach it. It is a command to be obeyed. One may of course teach *about* baptism, showing its implications and significance, relating to the gospel.

—Leroy Garrett in *Restoration Review*

PEACE

Peace is such a precious jewel that I would give anything for it but truth.

—Matthew Henry

Until next time, *MARANATHA!*

Some Basic Facts About Japan, Its Reception of Christianity

by Motoyuki Nomura

Part II

Japan needed western technology and advanced civilization of Europe/U.S.A. Christianity came to Japan with them, the ruling class took advantage of Christianity in such areas as education, medicine, prohibition movements, etc., but not in structure elements of the nation such as politics.

It was at this time that the first pioneer missionaries arrived from the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement in America, namely, the Garsts, Smiths, Snodgrasses, McCaleb, Bishops and Misses Wirick, Hostetter, Scott and Millie. There are others but these should suffice.

The Japanese people were again elated at the fresh message of Jesus Christ as were the oppressed people of Hideyoshi's day 300 years before them. The Tokugawa Shoguns ruled the nation with swords and oppression. Now again, the common people heard God's message and realized that they were free men in the sight of God, and that God loves individuals. This was an astonishment for the average Japanese. Once again Christianity in Japan seemed to prosper, but about 30 years later our Meiji Emperor gave a flat "no" to the Christian message in issuing his notorious edict on education in 1890. Since then, evangelism in Japan has not been an easy task, and the basic attitude of our ruling class toward the Christian Church and its message has never been changed. It has been unfriendly and times openly hostile.

During the Pacific War, persecutions against Christians were severe. Most of the Disciples of Christ and the conservative Christian

Churches and their national leaders yielded to the military government's control by joining the united or federated churches of all denominations called Kyodan. Non-instrumental segment churches closed down as their missionaries went back home during the war days.

During the pre-war missionary endeavor period, that is between 1880 to 1930s, the Disciples of Christ group concentrated their work on an educational institution in Tokyo. The school still exists but it is not now directly connected with the Disciples but it is now loosely connected with the Disciples in America.

As stated before, before or during the war, the military government forced all churches/denominations to join the United Churches in Japan (Kyodan). Those churches who refused to join were ruled out and their properties confiscated. After the liberation in 1945, many of the churches withdrew from the Kyodan and resumed their former denominational function. The Presbyterians, Methodists, Disciples and some other groups stayed with the Kyodan Church.

Non-instrumental churches in Japan before the war were in three districts, namely Tokyo, Ibaraki Prefecture and Shizuoka Prefecture. The congregation which Eugene Snodgrass, Miss Penrod, Miss Loduska J. Wirick started in Tokyo was carried over by such men as McCaleb, Bishop, Klingman and Vincent. The work was then handed over to a native man named Hiratsuka. This work was called Kamitomizaka church in Tokyo. When the Pacific War started in 1941 Hiratsuka was 70 years old., and he handed the church over to a Methodist preacher named Saito hoping that this younger Methodist preacher would carry on the work of the church of Christ. Today we still have this Kamitomizaka-Zoshigaya amalgamated church on the site of Bro. McCaleb's work near Ikebukuro, Tokyo, but is now managed by Mrs. Saito and two other preachers from Kyodan and Methodist group, plus a young man, who do not believe in Biblical faith. Mrs. Saito at times preaches too.

The work in Ibaraki was started by the Bixlers, the Rhodeses, the Moreheads and the Fox twins in the 1920s. Excepting the Moreheads from Nashville, TN, the four original missionaries came from Louisville fellowship. The Moreheads gave strong influence to the Bixlers, the Harry Robert Fox, Sr. family and the two families later went to Nashville to attend David Lipscomb College. Bro. Rhodes remained in the Louisville fellowship throughout his life both in Japan and U.S. The Moreheads started a Bible School in Ibaraki which became the prototype of today's Ibaraki Christian College, which was started by the churches of Christ in U.S.A. after the Pacific War.

The Shizuoka work was started by Miss Sarah Shepherd Andrews around 1918 when Bro. Ishiguro introduced her to a fishing village. He was a convert of Bert Wilson Hon from Kirkman, Ohio in 1910. Later Ishiguro went to Los Angeles and worked among the Japanese immigrants and started a work which became the Westside Church of Christ. Sister Andrews established four or five congregations inspite of very feeble health. When WW-II started, she was so sick that she could not return to U.S. on an exchange ship. She remained in Japan and died after the war. Three of her churches with properties went

into two wrong hands and we have practically lost these facilities.

After the war, the main-stream, non-instrumental churches of Christ started sending missionaries to Japan during Gen. MacArthur's occupation. These men were fresh out of colleges, such as Harding, and came to us with legalism of the Churches of Christ. This later gave us plenty of problems, as it was a very poor substitute for the dynamic Gospel of Jesus Christ.

With the termination of the American Occupation, Japanese soil again became infertile to the Christian Seed. Since the 1980s the work became extremely difficult and much pain and patience required to win souls to Jesus Christ. This trend has been intensified by ultra-nationalism and right-wing attitude of the ruling class in Japan. Once again, shintoism and Emperor Family are coming back into the political structure of pre-war days. We are expecting a bit of turbulence ahead for the church.

While the Disciples segment centered their efforts on educational endeavor, namely a Drake School or Seigaku school in Tokyo, our conservative segments mainly devoted themselves to personal evangelism and church establishment. Missionaries such as McCaleb and Bishop were, however, not fully aware of the need of training nationals to carry on their work. So when the war came and many missionaries would return home, the works gradually terminated. Missionary properties fell into the wrong hands most of the time. I know a lot of discouraging true stories of this nature but for lack of time and space, I shall presently refrain from revealing this unfortunate condition that happened.

After the war, many missionaries sent a great number of likely Japanese youth to various Church of Christ schools in U.S.A. I can account for about 200 who went to school with me and Bro. Nakahara. Today, none of them remain in faith/church in Japan. Both Bro. Nakahara and I were fortunate to attend Kentucky Bible College (Later, Southeastern Christian College) in Winchester, Ky., where we were able to learn the Word of God under such teachers as the late Frank M. Mullins, and others. Today, we two are still actively engaged in His vineyard and this is a 20th Century miracle and a proof of God's grace. I am so proud of that little school in Winchester which unfortunately, no longer exists.

Christian population in Japan is about 0.5% I believe. If one counts only born-again believers, the figure will be smaller. This percentage includes all denominations and sects such as the Mormons and Jehovah Witnesses. Being a Christian means standing against the stream, and being a true disciple really means standing almost alone. Neither the government nor society is friendly to Christian Church in Japan. It is a constant lonely battle in ones daily life. To win a soul is a task itself, but to help him stay faithful is a much more difficult job. Marriage and job problems are severe. Raising children within the Christian faith is another toil, when the rest of the whole community is not only non-Christian but rather anti-Christian. Financially, the small church is always weak no matter how dedicated the few members are. Working for Jesus is like trying to overthrow the pyramid with your two hands, but this is our joyous ministry.

After the Pacific War, the churches of Christ, mainly the mainstreamers, sent many young missionaries to Japan. Unfortunately not many from the premillennium segment. This was at a time that there was bad feeling between the two divisions. The missionaries from the mainstream branch had vowed to nulify the work and to displace the workers of the premillennial group in Japan. There was a good bit of unpleasantness for a time but the old workers continued to stay and work in Japan. However, the younger and new men who came, did not remain loyal, left the premil fellowship and joined the mainstream. Sooner or later they left Japan and went back to America, leaving a disrupted condition in Japan. I came to the church of Christ fellowship through one of these men, Dr. Fred Scherman, a dental missionary, introduced by O. D. Bixler and supported for many years by Highland Church of Christ. Dr. Scherman was instrumental in sending me to U.S. to study Bible and Bro. Orville Bixler performed the same service to Bro. Shichiro Nakahara. Bro. E.A. Rhodes was a quiet man and stayed out of the prevailing controversy as well as in the pre-mil conviction all the way through. He was considered a man of great love, and many Japanese brethren loved and respected him. He was the only missionary who was able to avoid the post-war missionary power struggle. He died in Princeton, N.J. recently as you know. I was much influenced by his spiritual life. Today Bro. Rhodes' church in Yokohama has fallen into wrong hands and will be a liberal church soon. We preachers in Japan are concerned over the situation and are praying.

Pre-war Japanese churches of Christ were promoted by the Louisville Fellowship mostly until the Moreheads came from Nashville around 1925. Bro. Morehead is a fine Christian and loved Bro. R.H. Boll and Bro. E.A. Rhodes. I met him last May in Nashville and he told me so. But Bro. Morehead's coming to Japan turned the wheel of missions from Louisville to the a-mil group, the mainstream, such as Harding College and others. I believe that something has gone wrong with the Louisville Fellowship for its lack of dynamic missionary passion and vision. I am really concerned. Bro. Rhodes, twenty years ago, told me that his brotherhood was dying because of lack of Missionary passion and vision. And I am afraid that he was right. The fact that the premil brotherhood could not maintain Southeastern Christian College is another reason that I am praying. Most of the other premil. denominations throughout the world are prospering. I don't know why our brotherhood tends to become an inward growing body. How and why did we lose that vision of mission work? The leaders of the larger churches are constantly coming to Japan to see the work. Their young missionaries come to Japan from time to time, and their quality is much better recently. Apathy, indifference and ignorance usually kill missionary work slowly. Where is the glory of missionary promotion that drove and stimulated the whole churches of Christ in U.S.A.? The Louisville premil churches were once the very vehicle by which churches of Christ U.S.A. carried out their missionary work. I am sad.

As to my work in the western part of Tokyo is concerned, we have met in our house for about 20 years. I used to work for Tokyo YMCA

English School, teaching English as well as Bible. This was until 1973. I taught from 9 A.M. till 9 P.M. daily, and this was a unique way to gain students and present Jesus Christ. I invited them to my home, gave them food and fellowship. Most of them were working students who came up to Tokyo from various parts of the country to earn money. They were lonesome and hungry for good fellowship. Many came to know Jesus Christ and in this way I was able to support myself and the work.

We live in a very small house. The building was never intended to house so many guests and visitors. We still meet here for fellowship, worship and various community service activities. We have fed more than 20,000 people since we started the work here. This informal cottage meeting or house-church plays an important role in this big city, for people are hungry for fellowship and personal contacts which they do not often get in attending a big established church. Out of this fellowship, a handful of committed Christians were added to His Body, and we are quite happy. We started an extended ministry for the war-displaced squatters in Seoul, Korea in 1973. We promoted a nation-wide drive and raised \$70,000 to help the Christian squatters to be re-located in an agricultural area under the leadership of the Church. This was a quiet but very unique modern exodus story of an Asian church, and many have been surprised how a small body of committed Japanese Christians can do so much for the suffering millions in Asia. We learned many lessons from our poorer friends. We thought we were helping them, but they helped us more in understanding the deeper meaning of Jesus Christ and His Cross—particularly the meaning of suffering.

We meet in our house here. My Mother owns the land and property. The lot is about 1656 square feet in area. The minimum unit area is about 36 square feet, and is today worth about \$4000 to \$5000. Mother bought this land when it was much cheaper. On this piece of land we had our two houses built, one for our residence and one for church activities. These houses were rather poor quality, and heavy usage, plus termite damage, have left our buildings in poor condition. The residence is beyond our ability to repair because of extremely high cost. We hope that the Lord will return before the house falls down into pieces. Typhoons and earthquakes also hasten the life of the house. We do not allow this to prevent us doing our best for the Master.

We have a handful of faithful members of the Body. Most of them are of the lower class people, but they really love the Lord and are always willing to share with other friends in various parts of Asia. They are dynamic givers, generous sharers and I am very proud of them. I really don't know how they can make such sacrifices from time to time considering their social and financial status. We really praise the Lord for them. On Sundays we have 7 to 15 members and regular guests. We have our small Sunday School classes. Money-wise we are hopeless and helpless, but spiritually we are a happy people. One housewife was baptized last December and we are praying that a young couple will accept the Lord soon. The work is very slow, but patiently we do our best because He is our Lord and in Him we have hope and strength.

One time, our church members distributed some 30,000 handbills to every door in our community. It took about two weeks. As a result, we had one response and he did not come back. Since that time, we try to reach people through personal contact. We also take good care of community people and their problems too in order to identify with the community. We emphasize help to our Sunday School children in their daily needs, such as study and play. We have our own Bible retreat programs in the summer. At this last summer's 4 day, 3 night session we had 55 youngsters. This was our 15th annual camp. Our work is slow and we need extreme patience to win a soul for Jesus Christ. Social pressure is severe and we have many difficulties and obstructions that tend to discourage our efforts for the Lord.

Our friends outside Japan think that ours is a rich country. They judge from the big exporters such as Mitsubishi, Hitachi, Toyota, Datsun-Nissan, Panasonic, Nikon, Canon, Sony, etc. which are extremely rich. But they do not know that the average Japanese people are not rich at all. A handful of rich capitalists do not represent the vast majority of the Japanese masses. The Christian population is very small and we are the minority of minorities. This is one of our problems. Our little house-church members are generous givers. It's offerings to charities is always higher than the average middle-class church in Japan. Everyone does his best to support our church activities, but there is a limitation. Japan is one of the worst parts of the world as far as inflation is concerned. We pay 8 to 10 times more for the same amount of meat, about twice as much for rice, and we are rice eaters. Fish is expensive. The cost of gasoline does not affect me, since I do not have a car although the cost of a liter (1/4 gal.) is about 70¢. About 4 gal. of kerosene is about \$7.00 or more, and winter is near.

There is a Shinto shrine about 300 yards away from us. The shrine is a center of community life and every household pays a fee to the community organization. From these fees and dues they support the shrines activities. We have just had a harvest festival. Community women and senior citizens meet here. Youth clubs and firemen organization are supporters of the shrine, as are the chamber of commerce, political organizations and police. Of course we, as Christians, cannot take part in these activities. Shrine and wine drinking are inseparable. Thus we make ourselves aliens and consequently this means a lot of pressure. This shrine activity is country-wide and the churches do not have the answer to this social problem.

Well maybe I have spoken too much negatively. Personally, I am a bit tired after having worked for over 20 years without a vacation. I would like to rest for a couple of years to renew myself for a better service tomorrow. I have spent good and faithful days for the Master I am not regretful but rather grateful. He is so good.

I would like to talk to you face to face to explain some of the joys and sorrows as we work for the Kingdom. Apathy and indifference among the churches, and the loneliness and discouragement on the part of the missionaries are great tools for Satan to attack and weaken His Kingdom.

I am presently studying the history of the American missionaries to Japan of the 18th and 19th century and am publishing the information serially in Japan, and it is being very well received. I would like to spend a couple of years in USA to do further research. But how? I don't know.

Thank you for your interest and prayer for us.

It Happened in Hamburg—1944-45

by Ernest Dapozzo

Part III

“Uncertainty! The human soul that can support despair, supports not thee.”—Mallet.

Uncertainty through the day; suspense that awaits the breaking of the dawn. Every moment kept on edge by the fear of what may be. What will be the final end of this nightmare? Would the Germans, in a final desperate defense move, send us to the front to dig trenches? It looked that way. French prisoners were already being sent to the vicinity of Cologne.

One day nearly all my comrades refused to eat the soup—which was nothing more than boiled water. And then they stopped working—which would have gravely injured our production guarantee. The German police came running, and not far behind, here came the work officials dressed in military uniforms and making all kinds of threats. As we were falling into formation, all sorts of doubts and fears crossed our minds. Around the perimeter of the area we saw military vehicles moving into position; armed with machine guns, they awaited orders to take us away. Where? Into the unknown...

There was in Hamburg a very influential personage by the name of Bartholomay. He stood up in our defense with much tact. One more time we came out of a painful situation. Following this incident, Herr Bartholomay intervened on our behalf a number of times. He finally volunteered to take the responsibility of our production and—wonder of wonders—the direction of the camp itself.

In the meantime, the city was in a state of effervescence. Everyone was building barricades, but nobody knew where to build them. Would the attack come from the west, or from the east? We were assigned to build anti-tank obstacles. Our work conditions were still deplorable—but how much more for the young Russian women who worked with us. All day long, and regardless of the weather, those poor women had to swing the pick and shovel. I noticed that many of them had to protect their legs from the cold by wrapping them in old newspapers held in place by a strand of wire.

FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH

The desire to see my children again increased with the passing of time. Anxiety became an obsession. Occasionally one of my companions would exclaim, “Ah, just to see my loved ones—even if were only for a single minute, and that at a distance!” Another sat down every evening and wrote a tender letter to his wife. He always asked

about the children and gave advice in caring for them. When he had finished it and signed it, he looked at me with tears in his eyes and tore it up, saying, "Oh, how I suffer, not being able to communicate with my family!" Every evening he would sit down and again begin his letter. That man was fifty. Sometimes he would offer a word of explanation. "You see, dear Dappozzo, I love my wife, as though today were the first day of our love." I carried a profound respect for this dear comrade, were it for nothing else than his having much suffered and his having much loved. When I think of the discord that reigns in certain families, I say to myself that many Christians could follow his example.

I kept on reminding the Lord of my needs, because it is written:

*Casting all your care upon him
for he careth for you (1 Pet. 5:7).*

One sleepless night I prayed—as usual—that God would help me to go to my family. Suddenly I became aware of an impression of rest and confidence in my heart. So strong was the impression that I immediately concluded: "Yes! I shall see them. I shall go to Switzerland—soon, if the Lord will."

There was conceived the scope of this little book. It should bear witness to the help and the faithfulness of God toward me—a help and a faithfulness manifested in a marvelous way.

The next morning, encouraged by this new assurance, I informed my companions of my intention to request a visa for Switzerland. Naturally they didn't take me seriously, and they made fun of me. I took a pencil and wrote these words on a cabinet:

*If ye shall ask anything in my name,
I will do it (John 14:13)—Jesus*

"Do you believe this?" they exclaimed sarcastically.

"Certainly! God will provide the means to leave this country and to reach my family. It is true that the authorities here are powerful, and they have me in their chains. However, the All-Powerful God breaks chains at will, and nothing can resist His will and His plans."

The same day I compiled a formal request to see the proper official about obtaining a visa. When I arrived, some of the clerks recognized me and signaled me to come on in. They asked what I wanted, and I simply replied, "I would like to get a visa to visit my family in Switzerland." The response I received was not the response I expected. The clerks looked at each other, and the office rang with laughter. One said, "Have you lost your reason? Or do you think that maybe your God will give you a German visa?"

"*Jawohl!*" I replied with assurance. They went talking among themselves, but I didn't understand what they were saying. I stood there at the counter, asking myself if I should leave or if I should stay and absorb their insults. Finally one of them seemed to wake up to the fact that I was still there, and he asked the others.

"What are we going to do with this?"

"All he has to do is fill out the forms," they said, "but that won't get him anywhere. It's ridiculous."

"Let's say useless," another one added, turning his remarks to me. "As for going to Switzerland, every one of us in this office would like to go to Switzerland, but we know that only the office of the Reichsfuehrer S. S. is authorized to issue visas for a neutral country. Because of the espionage problem, it is certain that nobody will cross over into Switzerland without being approved by the Reichsfuehrer S.S. Himmler in person. We are at war, gentlemen, and more than ever we've got to be on the alert."

(Heinrich Himmler was second in command to Adolf Hitler. The SS troops and the Gestapo were directly responsible to Himmler—these were the Nazi "black shirts", the elite guard. Himmler and his subordinates were notoriously ruthless.—Ed.)

At the name of Himmler, I could just feel the confidence draining out of me. The clerk gave me the forms to fill out in five copies. This done, I returned the forms to the official. He shook his head in unbelief, checked my identification, and dryly informed me, "We will route your paper through the proper channels in Berlin, and we'll see if God is alive or dead. We'll keep you informed."

As I went down the stairs, a name haunted me: HIMMLER.

Another temptation came to shake my confidence: Those clerks probably didn't even send my application to Berlin; they just dumped it in the wastebasket.

Had I deceived myself? At that very instant, a paper boy passed by. The front page was monopolized by a huge photograph . . . I caught my breath. . . Staring at me from the newspaper was the Reichsfuehrer. There was no mistaking this repulsive profile. Dressed in his distinctive SS uniform, Himmler was photographed in a swearing-in ceremony of young (female) SS troops.

This is the man who controls my destiny. I tried to envision him sitting in his office. He has my application in his hand. Will he sign?

Fortunately there came to me this verse from the Bible: "*With God nothing shall be impossible*" (Luke 1:37). What a great promise! And what vast and marvelous horizons it opens before our view!

*The name of the LORD is a strong tower;
the righteous runneth into it, and is safe (Prov. 18:10).*

"No, my destiny doesn't depend on Heinrich Himmler—BUT ON GOD HIMSELF." The doubts of the day were fading away.

That evening I was again with my companions at the camp. All of them were interested in my visa application, and they questioned me in chorus.

"Did you get the visa?"

"The papers are on their way to Berlin."

"Are you sure?"

"All I can tell you is that the Lord is working on it." With that, I made a little mark on the cabinet beside the words that I had written that morning.

More questions. "Do you plan to put down a little mark for every day?" At my affirmative reply, they shook their heads doubtfully.

"That would be OK if you had a bigger wall," said one.

"You ought to make your lines smaller; that way, you'll have more room."

The air raid alarm put a stop to the jokes, and every man scurried out to find the nearest possible refuge. When I got situated in a shelter, I began to do some figuring in my head. I think I need to allow at least a month, I told myself. Yes, it will take a month to go to Berlin and back. A month isn't too bad. I can stand another month.

Life continued at the camp, but under much pressure. The police department was manifestly more nervous in dealing with the men at the camp. We were given a new responsibility—burying the dead, victims of aerial bombardment. They were buried in the common graves at Ohlsdorf and in the cemetery of Hamburg; none welcomed this chore. Nobody gave a second thought to the solemn services of the past, when there were flowers and wreaths, music and singing, prayers and condolences. There was no time for ceremony. The sheer number of bodies to be disposed of required attention to the task.

To us, it was a job to be done as soon as possible. There was no wood for biers or coffins . . . not even a measure of privacy in a rough grave. Thin bodies, together with parts and limbs, were gathered and grouped. When the trenches were nearly full, they were covered with earth.

One day they announced to us that there would be no work duty on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. All personnel would remain in camp. Naturally, they didn't give us their reason, but we guessed what it was about: The reserves of prime materials were being exhausted. Hamburg's supplies were so low that it could not have sustained a prolonged attack. The lines of communication were paralyzed. In broad daylight, transportation came under heavy bombing and strafing.

A month had gone by since I had filed application for a visa. On the side of the cabinet, thirty little pencil marks underscored the Bible verse. And yet without any kind of answer. Every evening, my companions reminded me: "Have you made your little mark today?" It would be three long months before I heard anything. In the meantime, winter had come again. Snow blanketed the landscape, covering the ruins in white, but it also created such a sense of desolation that I longed to be free from such an inhospitable place.

One evening our company was overwhelmed by consternation. A companion had brought into the camp a newspaper with these chilling headlines: *Von Rundstedt launches formidable offensive in the Ardennes. Enemy in rout abandons quantities of material. Advance continues.*

The *Lagerfuehrer* (camp director), an ancient Navy officer, was jubilant. For some time, he had softened somewhat, in view of the turning of events. Now he was on the up-swing again; you would have thought him to be twenty years younger. Gesticulating, he explained how the Wehrmacht had made such-and-such a move, and now was just 38 miles north of Paris. We looked at each other terrified. "That's Compiègne!" said one.

You could read across their faces delusion and depression. "Will

we never get out of this prison?" added another, and immediately went into a seizure.

This brief success on the western front was enough to galvanize the energies of the Nazi party. Once again young people were seen in the streets, wearing the Swastika.

CONFLICTS

One morning I was notified to report to the office for alien affairs. "It's about your visa," they said.

This news made my heart beat faster . . . after three months of waiting. It was not without emotion that I found myself behind the same counter, facing the same clerks. Seeing me enter the office, they recognized me and smiled. I was sure that the visa was there, probably in a drawer. Evidently, there was some little formality to take care of, and then I would finally be off to Belp. "I'll be there for Christmas with my family," I thought.

After intentionally making me wait a long time, the official held out to me the forms that I had filled out.

He said, "Your application has been sent back from Berlin. Your request has been rejected." Looking at me intensely, he added, "God is dead!"

For a moment I was so stupefied that I couldn't even formulate a minimum response. I collected my wits and reacted: "No sir. Jesus Christ is Conqueror and He is alive! I'll file a new request." He gave me the forms and I filled them out for the second time. When I had finished and signed them, I extended them toward the official, but he refused to accept them.

"We wouldn't have the slightest idea where to send them," he said. "Don't forget that your application has been rejected. Do you understand what I'm saying? Why don't you try sending the papers to your God?"

"*Jawohl*," I said, and went out. Now I really didn't know what to do. The forms were in my pocket, and that wouldn't get any results.

That evening my companions smothered me with advice and reproof. "We told you from the beginning. Putting little marks on the wall isn't going to get you any thing." I looked at my Bible verse and the row of little perpendicular lines. How long the row was getting to be! But I couldn't erase that Bible text. It had to remain, and I had to keep on believing, even when all other reasons for hope were gone. I took my pencil and made another tally-mark.

"You're crazy!" My companions told me. "Wake up! Think! Come to your senses!" A companion who would later die in a bombing raid, reasoned thus: "Believe me. I'm fifty years old; I have experience. There is no hope in this project of yours. The best thing you can do is to forget it; save yourself a lot of useless pain."

The days kept on passing by, and the line of marks on the cabinet kept on getting longer.

The temptation was great; questions came into my mind uninvited. "Has God forsaken me? Am I still His child, or is it just an impression, an imagination. Am I really born again?"

On another occasion, similar thoughts slipped into my mind. "Yes,

that's the way it must be. God has abandoned me, He is right. I have no merit to be His child. If certain things hadn't happened in years past, maybe He would hear me now." Some days I was so downcast that I envied those who were dead. However, when evening came, I made a new mark on the wall.

Reflecting on a passage from *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, I regained my spiritual stability. I relived the episode of Christian and Hopeful in the Castle of Doubt, and once again the joy of my salvation was restored.

"Yes, Lord. Every disobedience and every transgression has received its just retribution. Yes, Jesus is Victor and He lives. Hallelujah! Be praised, O Lord, for your love and your infinite fidelity.

CHRISTMAS . . . AT HOME

Christmas arrived with a store of memories of childhood, but the nostalgia carried with it a note of suffering. In the big camp dormitory, some of the companions sang:

"It's Christmas at our house—It's Christmas in France."

There was no fire to warm us on that icy December. Combustibles had become rare, and it was prohibited to light a flame. Almost all the companions, stretched out on the straw, were left to their dreams. All thoughts went to their loved ones, so far away. For six months we had had no word from home. The front was so arranged that mail from France could not get through.

I slipped out of camp and headed across the rubble toward Eppendorf. I knew that at Abendroahsweg there was a little chapel called Bethanien (Bethany). When I arrived there, the celebration had already begun. The chapel was packed. I soon sensed an ineffable joy that filled the room; it was the joy of Christmas. The light from the pine tree reminded us that "I am the light of the world." This festival was too much for me; the tears flowed unbidden. And when the little children sang "Silent Night," with difficulty I restrained the tears.

I noticed that many of the worshippers were dressed in mourning (usually a black arm band; if not, a suit or dress of black. It usually indicates a fairly recent bereavement.). The preacher, a true man of God, brought a touching Christmas message of the love of God. He was a German, and those who surrounded me were Germans, but I saw in them only brothers in Christ. I knew that they were not the cause of this terrible war that was dividing the peoples. On the contrary, they suffered as I did because of this state of affairs. "*On earth peace, good will toward men.*"

Among all the children of God gathered there, there were no noticeable social differences. Most of them no longer had homes; others had lost everything in the bombing. They gave me the impression of a close-knit family—a spiritual family, among whom Christ lived and moved.

The celebration continued with some magnificent hymns and a program that, I am sure, would not have been well received by the Nazi authorities. I marveled at such courage. Here is a line or two from the preachers. "Brothers, let us humble ourselves for the wrongs of our leaders, that God may grant to our people the grace to turn to

Him with all our sin and misery.”

Finally, the festival came to a close with a chorus.

The evangelist stood by the door to greet each one leaving. When I passed, he appeared to be surprised by my French military uniform. He shook my hand and then asked straight out, “Are you a child of God? a redeemed one?”

At my affirmative reply, he shook my hand again—with more vigor. “For us Christians, there are no frontiers,” he added. “We are one in Him. Right?”

In that moment, the Spirit of God was drawing our hearts together. “Yes,” I replied. “We are brothers.”

Others gathered around me. They wanted to know who I was and where I came from. Some asked to see pictures of my wife and children. The sister who was the director of the Martinistrasse Hospital invited me to come back the next Sunday to dine in that institution. Finally I had found a family.



Studies in the Book of Acts

Larry Miles

“Saul Meets Jesus, The Lord Of Glory”

Acts 9:1-31

INTRODUCTION

We have now come to the chapter that really starts off the narrative about the main character in the rest of the Book of Acts. As the reader will notice, our study for this month centers on only the first 31 verses of the 9th chapter. Verses 32-43 will be covered in the next article. We ask that the reader have his or her Bible ready as the events in the life of Paul come into view.

SAUL'S LIFE PRIOR TO THE EXPERIENCE ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

At this time we want to cover some of the events in the life of Saul of Tarsus prior to his becoming a Christian. We must go to other scriptural sources for our material. In Philippians 3:5, Paul wrote,

“...circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee.
In Acts 25:4-5, Luke writes,

So, then, all Jews know my manner of life from my youth up, which from the beginning was spent among my own nation and at Jerusalem; since they have known about me for a long time previously, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion.
In Acts 22:3, Dr. Luke writes,

I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated, under Gamaliel, strictly according to the laws of our fathers, being zealous of God, just as you all are today.

In Galatians 1:13-14, Paul wrote these words.

For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure, and tried to destroy it; and I was advancing beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more zealous for my ancestral traditions.

The reason that we have taken the time to cite these references is that Luke, in the account in the 9th of Acts, does not give us much detail. In Acts 22:3, Paul cites his birthplace as Tarsus of Cilicia. Concerning this city, Gareth Reese writes,

Tarsus was then a center of Greek learning, almost rivaling Athens and Alexandria; and on account of its situation on a navigable river (the Cydnus River), and near the mountain passes leading into the interior of Asia Minor to the north, and of Syria to the east, it was a center of extensive commerce.

It seems that Saul received both a Greek and a Jewish education. He was versed in the history of both cultures. Also every Jewish boy would be taught a trade. According to Acts 18:3, Saul's was tent-making. We're told that he was a Roman citizen. This would come in handy for him in later years.

Paul tells us that he was brought up in the city of Jerusalem. He studied under Gamaliel. It is evident that he was well versed in the doctrines and traditions of the Pharisees. It is thought that Saul was a member of the Sanhedrin. This comes from Acts 26:10 which reads,

And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prison, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.

Whether Saul of Tarsus was a member of the Sanhedrin, we can only guess. It is with this background material behind us, that we begin our study of the 9th chapter of Acts, verses 1-31.

SAUL PERSECUTES THE CHURCH: ACTS 9:1

After the death of Stephen, the persecution of the Lord's people became greater. This persecution was led by Saul of Tarsus. Saul was not content with speaking out against the Way. He sought to erase, from the face of the earth, the followers of Jesus, the Nazarene. He was not content to battle the saints in Jerusalem alone. He wanted to pursue the followers of Jesus even to Damascus.

SAUL SEEKS LETTERS OF AUTHORITY FROM THE SANHEDRIN: ACTS 9:2

Saul of Tarsus, a zealous defender of the Pharisees, thought that he was doing the will of Jehovah God in opposing the Way. Concerning Saul's motivation in this manner, Robert L. Maddox, Jr., in the *Layman's Bible Book Commentary*, has this to say,

Not content to harass the Christians in Jerusalem, Saul received permission from the high priest to go to Damascus to arrest and extradite followers of the Way, both men and women, back to Jerusalem for trial and judgment. Glad to have such a zealous advocate on their side, the high priest and his cohorts gladly gave Saul the necessary papers.

Thus Saul, with the backing of the Sanhedrin, left, with a company of men, bound for Damascus, to further persecute the saints of the Living Savior.

SAUL'S JOURNEY TO DAMASCUS: ACTS 9:3

Saul had left Jerusalem with the backing of the Sanhedrin. J. W. McGarvey had this to say about Saul's trip to Damascus,

The distance from Jerusalem to Damascus is about one hundred and forty miles. The most unusual route to travel was northward along the dividing ridge of the mountain range through Bethel and Shechem to Jezreel; thence westward to Bethshan on the bluff leading down to the Jordan valley; thence up that valley to a stone bridge across the Jordan which is still standing to this day; and thence along the elevated plateau east of the Jordan valley to Damascus. During the last day's journey the road passes along the eastern base of Mount Hermon, whose snow-capped summit bounds the horizon on the left.

As Saul neared Damascus, Luke tells us that "suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him." What was happening to Saul of Tarsus?

SAUL MEETS JESUS, THE LORD OF GLORY: ACTS 9:4-19

Here in verse 4, Luke tells us that after the appearance of the light Saul fell to the ground. He heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, Why are you persecuting Me?" Here, Jesus Christ makes it personal. Saul had not only been persecuting mere mortals, he had been persecuting the Lord of Glory Himself. To persecute Christians is to persecute Christ.

In verse 5 Saul asks the voice to identify himself. The answer comes back, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting." J.W. McGarvey wrote these words,

It is impossible for us, who have been familiar with the glory of the risen Christ from infancy, to fully realize the thoughts and feelings which flashed like lightning into the the soul of Saul, on hearing these words. Up to this moment he had held Jesus to be an imposter cursed of God and man, and His followers blasphemers worthy of death; but now this hated being is suddenly revealed to him in a blaze of divine glory. The evidence of eyes and ears can not be doubted. There He stands, with the light of heaven and the glory of God around him, and He says, 'I am Jesus.' Stephen was right and I have shed innocent blood.

In verse 6, Saul is told to go to the city and "it shall be told you what you must do." Saul of Tarsus was not saved on the Road to Damascus. This is clear by the text and other sources in the New Covenant writings.

Verse 7 informs us that Saul's companions heard the voice but saw no one. It is possible that, although they heard the voice, they did not understand it. Verse 8 tells us that Saul got up. His eyes were open but he was blind. He was led into the city by the hand. We're told in verse 9 that Saul went three days without sight, food, or water.

In Acts 9:10 we're told of Ananias. He is introduced as a certain disciple. The Lord appeared unto him in a vision. Ever ready to serve the Risen Lord, Ananias said, "Behold, here am I, Lord." In verse 11 we see the instructions that Jesus had for His servant Ananias. He tells him to go to the street that is called Straight and inquire at the house of Judas for Saul of Tarsus. We're told that Saul is praying. Verse 12 tells us that Saul has had a vision of the upcoming arrival of Ananias. In verse 13, Ananias tells the Lord of Glory that he has heard about the person of Saul and his background. Continuing in verse 14 we have the statement that Saul did what he did by the authority of the chief priests.

In verse 15 and 16, we read these words, "But the Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My Name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My Name's sake.'" Although Ananias is afraid to go to Saul because of the persecution here in these two verses we see the purpose of God for Saul. Even though Saul had been persecuting Jesus and His followers, Jesus still had plans for Saul. Saul was to do great things for the Lord of Glory.

In verse 17, Ananias left his home and went to seek out Saul of Tarsus. He then laid hands on Saul. He informed Saul that it was the Lord Jesus that had sent him, the same Jesus who appeared to him on the road. He told him that his sight would be restored and that he would be filled with the Holy Spirit. Nowhere up to here does it say that Saul was saved.

In connection with verse 18 we want to consider Acts 22:16. Acts 9:18 reads as follows, "And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he arose and was baptized." Acts 22:16, "And now why do you delay? Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His Name." We're known as a people who stress the teaching of the whole counsel, so we should be willing to let the entire teaching on salvation be known. The New Testament teaches that certain conditions must be met before we can be saved. That there are conditions required does not negate the doctrine that salvation is completely by grace. To receive this grace of God, we must meet certain conditions. We do not teach a law-gospel as some do. We can know that we are saved NOW! We do not have to wait until eternity to see if the scales are tipped in our direction. Saul of Tarsus was saved in the same way you and I are today. Saul believed that Jesus was Lord. Because of this faith, Saul repented of his past sins, and he had a lot to repent of. Saul was willing to follow the commandments of Jesus by being immersed into His Lord. Saul received the forgiveness of his sins. And last but not least Saul received the promised indwelt Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the one who enables us to live the Christian life. He is a person. We praise God that we in the "pre-mil" group have always been taught that the Holy Spirit is a real person not one who is identified with the Bible. Yes, some have gone so far as to say that the Holy Spirit and the Bible were one in the same. Another way of putting it is "The Holy Spirit does not operate outside of the Word of God." We're sure any honest Bible Student will admit that the Holy Spirit does not operate contrary to the Word, but they are not the same. So much for the personal commentary. Let's get back to the life of Saul of Tarsus.

SAUL BEGINS TO PROCLAIM THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST: ACTS 9:20-22

Only a few days after his conversion, Saul began to proclaim Jesus as Lord. Verse 21 informs us that those who heard him were amazed. They knew of Saul's past life and his hatred for the followers of Jesus and his contempt for Jesus Himself. Verse 22 tells us that Saul continued to increase in strength and continued to confound the Jews by proving that Jesus was the Christ.

SAUL'S JOURNEY TO ARABIA: GALATIANS 1:15-17

We must, at some time, account for the time that Paul spent in Arabia. In Galatians 1:15-17, we read the following, "But when He who had set me apart, even from my mother's womb, and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up unto Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus."

This seems the logical place to put these events. We place them here in the first phrase of Acts 9:23. It seems that shortly after his conversion, the Lord led him to Arabia. Paul tells us that it was not through any human that he was called to preach. Paul got his Gospel directly from God, not through the intervention of men. We must assume that while he was in Arabia he received direct revelations from the Lord of Glory. It is thought that the time spent there was close to three years. Paul mentions that number in Galatians 1:18. There he says that it was three years after his conversion that he went to Jerusalem. We must return now to Acts 9.

SAUL'S ESCAPE FROM DAMASCUS AND THE JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM: ACTS 9:23-29

"After many days had elapsed." It is here that many writers have put the events that we have outlined in the previous paragraph. Saul returned to Damascus, the place of his conversion, ready to proclaim that Jesus was the Christ. He had received his call from Jesus Himself. Because of the influence he was having in his preaching, the Jews decided it was time to silence him for good. In verse 24 we're told that Saul became aware of the plot to kill him. The Jews were watching the gates daily and also by night. They figured that if he tried to leave they would kill him. In verse 25 we see Saul of Tarsus escaping from the city of Damascus by being lowered in a basket through an opening in the wall.

Verse 26 informs us that Saul was now in Jerusalem. The apostles did not want anything to do with him. They did not think he was a disciple. In verse 27 Barnabas stood up and defended Saul of Tarsus. He told them how Saul met the Lord and how he had testified for the Lord in Damascus. Verse 28 tells us that Saul was speaking boldly about Jesus. We find Saul dealing with the Hellenistic Jews. It tells here that they were attempting to kill him. What would happen?

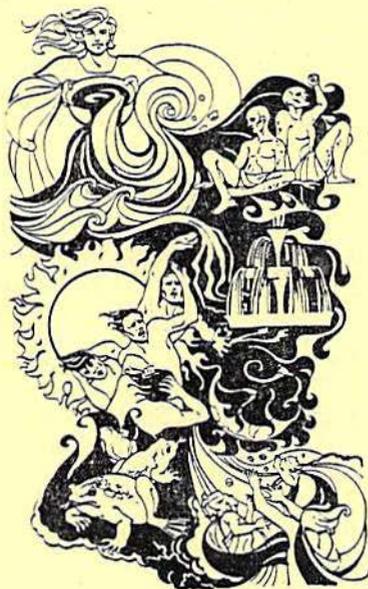
SAUL GOES TO TARSUS: ACTS 9:30-31

In verse 30 we're told that after the brethren discovered that the Hellenistic Jews were attempting to kill Saul they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus. There Saul had a fruitful ministry. According to Galatians 2:1, it was to be fourteen years later when Paul came back to Jerusalem. We do not read about Saul again in the Book of Acts until the 11th chapter.

In Acts 9:31, we read that the churches in the area were continuing to enjoy peace and increased growth. Our next article will finish our 9th chapter of Acts. It will be called "Peter's work in Lydda." We ask all who read to study this passage in preparation for the next essay. Until next time, **MARANATHA!**

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