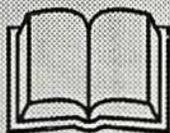


"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The *Word and Work*



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

SEPTEMBER, 1993

TELL ME A STORY

In This Issue:

- The Chevy that wanted to be a cadillac
- The tadpole that didn't believe in "dry"
- The family that welcomed a kleptomaniac
- The builders that threw away the blueprint
- The casino operator who found a Sure Thing

CHUCK THE BLUEPRINT!

J. B. Phillips

"Look at the mess the world's in! Think of the pain and misery in millions of lives, and the fear and insecurity all round And then tell me there's a God of love! Don't make me laugh--or is it cry?"

All right. But just suppose for a moment that all the workers on a building-site said; "Chuck the blueprint! Every man for himself, let's work out our own ideas!" When you saw the finished house (if it ever was finished), you'd say, "Tell me there's a designer behind all this? Don't make me laugh!"

That is what has happened in the world for a good many centuries and it is still happening--hence the mess. What proportion of all the people in the world, do you suppose, are following the Designer's Blueprint? A pretty small number. Many, of course, don't know about it, many don't bother to consult it, and a lot of people prefer their own ideas.

If the result is pretty chaotic, can you fairly blame the Designer?

Well, where is this Master Blueprint, this Design for Human Living?

It's to be found in the New Testament. There we can read of a God who broke through from the Real and Permanent World into this life of time and space by becoming a Man. He was thus able not only to give men the Blueprint for Living but to live it out in person. In fact you might say that He personally was the Blueprint. And it becomes pretty plain as you read that if only men would live according to that design the world would quickly recover and become an infinitely better and happier place.

If only! But men don't bother to read the plan. They don't give it the concentration they give to the Lottery or the crossword. Maybe they find it difficult and give it up, or they're not prepared to abandon their own little plans "Chuck the Blueprint!"

And so the world gets driven into a corner, a nasty dangerous corner, and there's no way out except by people scrapping their own selfish plans and trying to follow the Master Plan.

At Present there is only a mere handful who have studied the Plan and are trying to co-operate with the Designer.

What about you? Do you say "Chuck the Blueprint!" . . . and then try and shift the blame for all the mess on God, the Designer?

--From *Is God at Home?*

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

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TELL ME A STORY

Alex V. Wilson

For the first time, most of the contents of *Word and Work* are fictional. For using fiction we have good precedent. At least during a part of His ministry, Jesus "did not say anything to [His hearers] without using a parable" (Matt. 13:34).

As one time in church history, many Christians frowned on writing and reading fiction. "Why waste time on imaginary people and events that never happened?" But later most realized that dramas, novels, etc. can sometimes make "truth" come alive better than factual reports. Regarding war, for instance, someone contrasted the research paper with the short story: "If a million men are killed, it's a statistic; if one man is killed, it's a tragedy."

Best-Sellers as Mirrors

An interesting but sad reflection on the spiritual decline of U.S. society is seen in some of its best-selling books. In 1664 the best-seller in the English Colonies of North America was *A Call to the Unconverted*. Written by the outstanding Puritan preacher, Richard Baxter of England, it contained 142 pages of dynamic explanation of Ezekiel 33:11! It was a seven-point sermon, expounding that great verse, "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" And more North Americans bought it than any other book that year.

The Christian influence continued off and on for nearly three centuries. The two most popular novels in 19th century America were *Ben Hur* (written in 1880) and *In His Steps* (1896). (Read them if you haven't already.) The latter remained the dominant 20th century best-selling novel right up until the late 1950's, when it was replaced by *Peyton Place*! The latter is a lewd and depraved book. By and large, that kind of book has dominated the market ever since, with the exception of *The Late Great Planet Earth*. Yet in recent years scores (or hundreds?) of Christian novels have been written. If you don't believe it, visit your Christian bookstore.

By the way, this month's *W&W* is a good one to lend or give to your friends, especially those who may not be following the Lord closely. Several of the articles present the Good News of eternal life offered by Jesus. And being in the form of fable, parable, etc. may attract more attention than usual. Some extra issues are available @ \$1.00, including postage.

THE CHEVROLET THAT WANTED TO BE A *CADILLAC*

(An Allegory)

[This is an address given at a Christian Business Men's Convention in Phoenix, Arizona some years ago. The author, Richard Woike, is President of the Richard Woike Associates, Inc., Beverly Hills, CA, and Chairman of the Board, Houston Fearless Corporation.]

When a business man gets up in front of a bunch of men like this (I understand there are almost 800 men here) and opens his Bible, some folks say, "Why doesn't he act like a business man instead of a preacher?" I want to assure you right away that I am not going to preach a sermon. I enjoy reading my Bible. As a matter of fact, by the simple method of reading three or four pages a day, I have made a habit of reading it through once a year for the past sixteen years, and I go about recommending to other business men that this is the best investment of time I know of.

But, I have discovered that in this era of television, people don't use their minds the way they should. In the old days, when we read books, we used to visualize what we read. Now "they" do the visualizing for us. Just for a few minutes, then, I'd like to take a very familiar verse out of the Bible and ask you to do some pleasant mental exercise with me. Perhaps you'd like to close your eyes so that you can see the picture a little more clearly. I know that some of you do this on Sunday morning when the minister is preaching, and I'm sure that if he notices, he understands that you are just visualizing what he is saying.

I have a good precedent for what I am about to do, for many years ago another peddler by the name of John Bunyan wrote a book called "Pilgrim's Progress," which is simply an allegory about the life of a Christian. I am going to borrow Bunyan's technique and give you an allegory to illustrate this Bible verse: "*If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new*" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

My story concerns an old Chevrolet. How old? Well, if you must be exact, it was a 1926 Chevy. It had running boards, and no trunk, and the spare tire was strapped on in back, and the windshield went straight up and down. It was a good solid car, mind you, made of real steel--and far enough off the ground so that you could see where you were going, and it had lots of character. Its owner was proud of the

Some of you men know exactly how he felt. It's a funny thing how Christians succeed in confusing this issue of being a brand-new creation. We urge folks to turn over a new leaf, and polish up the outside of their lives. We even try to make Christians out of people by selling them on the idea that if they stop smelling like alcohol, or stop smoking, that this will enable them to be Christians. Of course this method doesn't work for men any more than it does for automobiles.

One day a new idea suddenly occurred to the Chevy. Downtown, his owner had been using a parking lot that charged \$2.50 a day. Right across the street there was a \$4.00-a-day parking lot. Naturally, there were many more Cadillacs in the latter.

"Let's go to the Cadillac parking lot," he suggested rather firmly, that morning. And, though his thrifty master balked at the added cost, that's where they went for the next few weeks. It seemed to work, too. Just being among so many Cadillacs seemed to make the Chevy feel like a Cadillac. "This Cadillac environment is just what I need," he confided happily to his owner one evening. "Why, those Caddies just accept me as if I were one of them."

But this beautiful dream came crashing into the dust one day when the Chevy heard a child cry out, shrilly, "Look at the old Chevy parked right in there with all those nice Cadillacs." So mortified was he that from then on he wanted no part of the new parking lot.

This did not prevent him, however, from perpetrating an even greater piece of strategy a short time later. It was December, and he overheard the owner mention that he would be getting new plates the next day. "New plates?" he asked. "That means you'll be filling out registration papers, doesn't it?"

"Why, yes," answered the puzzled owner. "What do you have in mind?"

"Well," came the unexpected reply, "suppose that this time when you fill in the papers, where it asks for a description of me, say that I'm a brand new Cadillac."

"How can I do that?" cried the distressed owner. "That would be perjury."

"Who's ever going to find out?" asked the Chevy. "It'll make me feel better to know that if anything ever happens to me, at least I've been registered as a Cadillac."

So nothing would do but that the unhappy owner, feeling as guilty as a check forger, filled out the registration blank for the 1926

Chevrolet by inserting a description of the car as a new Cadillac. Fortunately, no detective trailed him, and he and the car were the only ones who ever knew that the state's rolls had been padded by one non-existent Caddie.

Of course you're having no trouble in following our little allegory. You've seen folks who associate with Christians on the theory that you can become a christian by association. You've even seen some folks get their names on a church roll by committing a slight error in providing information to the human beings who keep the registration records. They fool the people (sometimes), and they try to fool themselves, but you and they both know that they can't fool God.

Our Chevy, naturally, didn't profit by his deception, and one day as he was parked in another part of town, he noticed a female car nearby who was obviously concerned about him. He knew she was a she because she had her name right on her hubcap--Mercedes.

"What's the matter, little one?" she inquired, tenderly. "You look just miserable. Can I help? Just tell me all your troubles, because I love to listen to the troubles of others."

With such an invitation, it didn't take the Chevy long to unburden himself.

"Look," he said. "My trouble is simply this. I'm a 1926 Chevrolet, and I want to be a brand new Cadillac, because I want to be able to carry the President of the United States around in me. Obviously he can't ride in me the way I am. I've tried everything I can think of, and still I know I'm not any nearer to being what I want to be than when I first started."

"Splendid, splendid!" gushed Mercedes. "You came to the right place for guidance, because that is exactly the kind of a situation I can help you with. You need to think right thoughts. As a matter of fact, since you want to be a Cadillac, you must think Cadillac thoughts. From now on repeat slowly, every time you find a Chevrolet thought crowding into your radiator, these words: 'Every day, every moment, every second, I am becoming more and more like a brand new Cadillac.' And after awhile, you'll be one!"

It seemed so easy, and so tangible, that for at least two weeks the little Chevy tried it religiously, even though most of the time the rattles of his rusty body and squeaks of his well-worn springs seemed to drown out his aspirations of Cadillac-hood.

Finally, he came to himself, and realized that all the wishing and all the protestations of being something he wasn't were doing abso-

lutely nothing about changing his real condition. One night he thought the whole thing through and reached a great decision.

He greeted his owner the next morning with a firm declaration. "I have decided," he said, "that I want to be a brand new Cadillac, but that I've been going at it the wrong way. I want you to take me down to 1775 Broadway at the corner of 37th Street, and I want to go right to the Head Man of General Motors. After all, he makes all the Chevies and all the Cadillacs in the world, and if there's anybody who can help me, he can."

By this time the owner knew there was no use in arguing, but he did weakly mention that the Head Man was probably too busy even to think about a 1926 Chevy. His protest being ignored, they soon found themselves wheeling down Broadway, past Columbus Circle, and right up to the Main Entrance of the General Motors Building. As they approached, the owner was glad that he hadn't pressed his point too much, because he saw approaching them as they ground to a halt at the curb one whom he recognized as Robert Stemple, the Head Man of General Motors Corporation. There was a smile of welcome on his face, as if he had been expecting them. "What can I do for you?" he asked.

"Now, wait a minute," I can hear some of you hard-headed business men exclaim, "you're letting this allegory of yours run away with your imagination. After all, you don't expect the President of a big company like General Motors to be waiting at the curb to welcome every customer that comes along."

In this particular case, believe it or not, my allegory is borrowing its facts from the Biblical account of the Prodigal Son, which assures us that when the son came to himself, and started back home, thinking up all sorts of speeches to try to win his father over, he was amazed to see his father, while he was still a long way off, coming to meet him. No, sir, I can't exaggerate the fact that the Head Man is personally and vitally interested in every old chevrolet that wants to be a new Cadillac.

So the 1926 Chevy had his invitation to tell all that was on his heart, and he took full advantage of it. Hardly had he finished telling Mr. Stemple his desire to become a brand new Cadillac than he rejoiced to hear the words, "Why, yes. We'll be glad to do that for you."

With that the Head Man asked the owner to step out, and put one of his own men behind the wheel. "Now," thought the Chevy, "comes the exciting part. They'll probably ship me out to Detroit and fix up all my squeaks and rattles and enlarge my body and gold-plate parts of me, till I hardly recognize myself."

But he was wrong. Instead, the new driver took him through the Holland Tunnel and up a steep hill, till he saw the name of the place--Hoboken. He drove him into a yard with a sign on it, "JUNK."

Next thing he knew, they took off his wheels, removed his interior, smashed his glass, and then suddenly, when he least expected it, dropped a five-ton weight right on his top . . . **BLOTZO!**

When he woke up, he knew, somehow, that he was different. Different? Yes, exceedingly different. Suddenly, his owner came out to the garage. "Well," he asked, "and how does it feel to be a brand new Cadillac?" He sat down in the driver's seat, turned the ignition, and suddenly there came the sound of 300 horse-power purring in beautiful coordination. He backed out of the garage, and silently they rode down to the center of town--ready, willing, and able to pick up the President of the United States and to display him to all who would look.

This ends my allegory. I can't explain to you what Robert Stemple did to turn in that disreputable, worthless old 1926 Chevrolet for a brand new Cadillac. It took Robert Stemple himself to do it, I guess, and then only because he's the Head Man, and he has the power to do miracles like that. Didn't it cost anything to make this change? Well, it didn't cost the Chevy and his owner anything, but you may be sure that under General Motor's meticulous Cost Control it had to be charged to somebody's account. In this case it was charged to the Head Man himself, Robert Stemple.

In your case and mine, it costs us nothing to be made over into a brand new creation, but it cost God a great deal. His Word tells us that He so loved us He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. Jesus Christ paid the price for your transformation.

The thing that the Chevy couldn't understand was that he was completely scrapped before he became a brand new Cadillac. Like us, he thought that they were going to use him as a base, and sort of do him over. And unfortunately, there are a great many people today trying awfully hard to trim off a bit here and add a little there in order to prove to themselves, and the Lord, and the world, that they are becoming Christians. Paul had it exactly right when he said, "*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*" (Galatians 2:20).

"IF ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATURE:

OLD THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY; BEHOLD, ALL THING ARE BECOME NEW."

THE BURNING OF THE NORONIC

(A True Story)

200 Burned To Death!

W. Roy Stewart

The Noronic pulled into Cleveland and on to Detroit to pick up the last passenger for Toronto. She stood in the harbor, the waves dashing against the hull, people running up the gang plank, others standing on the pier waving to their friends telling them to have a good time when they got to Toronto and to drop them a card and give some friend a good word.

She pushed her nose out into the great lakes, the black smoke rolling from her funnels, the band playing, some were singing, lovers holding hands leaning over the rail watching the rolling water and pieces of driftwood go by. Others went to their cabins, some to the bar, some to the dance floor, some to a comfortable chair to watch the stars shining like giant cameos pinned on the bosom of the sky and to feel the cool crisp September wind.

Some time that night while the Noronic was tied peaceably to her pier at Toronto she caught fire; about 200 people burned to death. The Captain and other members of the crew ran from door to door knocking and kicking on them crying "The boat is on fire, get up," "Get up; the boat's on fire!" They did not have time to make explanations; they didn't have time to argue; they didn't have time to entreat; they were trying to save others but must save themselves in the meantime. In reading the account in the newspapers, I noticed five classes of people were on the boat:

1. Some were very angry and freely expressed their indignation. One lady said, "I wonder who could be so stupid as to cause such a rumpus." Others said, "We thought this was a first-class steamer, and for such conduct to happen is outrageous, and we will report it to the Captain tomorrow morning."

2. Some were highly amused at the rude awakening. Like others they thought it was a case of drunkenness or a practical joke, and they were heard laughing over the occurrence, and they kept up their glee until the flames, sweeping through the corridors and through the gangways, cut off their escape.

3. Some heard the cry, and came to the door, but seemed to be about half asleep and they wanted to hear the cry more clearly; if it was very serious they would hear it again, and went back to bed.

4. "Some," a young man said, "were partying and I doubt if they ever heard the cry or smelt the smoke. They were dead drunk. They had "tarried at the wine too long," they could not hear the only cry that could save them, and slept on and up to the moment of sudden death, opening their eyes in another world.

5. Some heard the cry and believed it and sprang into complete or partial or no apparel and made their escape. These are the ones that told about the other four classes.

When I read this I said, "This is the same way the world is treating the message of the Lord Jesus Christ, the same way they are treating the sermons today, when the messenger of the Lord preaches against sin." There are those who become very angry when they are told they are living in sin and danger of hell fire--it seems to infuriate them. Like Naaman of old they turn away in a rage from such messages and meetings.

The second class--the amused ones. They are highly tickled at the fervor, the rush, the drive, the power, the excitement of a real revival. They seem to get entertainment out of God's way of warning and saving souls. While sitting in a hotel lobby behind a newspaper listening to a group of women discussing my revival, one of them said, "It really *amuses me* the way that he gets fired up over his sermons."

And then there is the third class. They hear the warning and then cease to hear. There was a time when the Gospel was felt to be a message from God. Then it began with them to lose its clearness and force--it seemed to be receding. After a while it seemed to be a mere sound. They say, "I am going to Christ," but they wait--and every time they hear the truth and resist it, the truth becomes weaker and they grow stronger to resist it--but today you can stand and preach the claims of Christ and warnings about sin, and you can hold up before them the purity of the cross, and they will say, "What did he say?" It doesn't affect them any more now than a sociological message or a political speech.

The fourth class never seem to hear anything from the spiritual and heavenly side. No warning affects them. No thundering of the law moves them. They don't seem to have even a thought or interest or anxiety concerning another world. Oh, we find so many in this class wherever we go, that at times we are almost disheartened and we feel appalled at the thousands of people who never seem to hear a single message--it makes no difference who preaches or what is

The frog looked mischievous. "I'm not sure what psychosomatic phenomena are. But if my legs are an example, then I'm all for psychosomatic phenomena." And as if to underline his remark, he vigorously propelled himself in a swift circle before settling down beside Bubu once more.

But then he asked Bubu, "You mean that my legs are in some way unreal?"

Bubu was at home now. "Not at all. I'm not sure, of course, what you mean by 'real,' but if you mean what I think you mean, I would say that your legs are the real result of your faith in something unreal. I noticed that you began to develop them about the same time you started talking about your fantastic 'world' of 'air' and 'sunlight' and 'insects.' I can only conclude that your belief in this unreal subjective experience of yours is responsible for the creation of your real legs."

The frog began to look interested. "You mean that unreality plus faith equals reality? It raises some interesting issues."

Bubu was not to be put off. "Exactly," he cried, swelling visibly. "Take hypnosis, for instance. If I were to hypnotize you and then tell you that you had been drinking heavily, you'd start behaving like a drunken frog."

"But that wouldn't be real drunkenness and there would be no alcohol in me."

"No, but the change in you would be real. What's more, I could produce actual physical changes in you. I might, while you were still hypnotized, tell you that I was about to strike you a heavy painful blow. I could then touch you lightly, and my touch would produce a real bruise. Your belief in an imaginary blow would have produced a real bruise."

"And my legs are like the bruise resulting from an imaginary blow?"

"Precisely."

The frog hated to say it, but he could see no alternative. "Then why, Bubu, don't you go to a hypnotist and get yourself a pair of legs? That would be better than a bruise and much more useful than your tail. I got rid of my tail soon after my own legs began to function."

Bubu's swelling subsided. "It has to be admitted," he said, a shade too casually, "that there are at present limits to what hypnotists and psychologists can do. But that's because our techniques haven't ad-

vanced sufficiently. The principle of the thing remains. Once we've developed more powerful psychotherapy, we shall be able to produce the same miracles as you.

"Though for myself," he continued, "I prefer to be intellectually honest. I refuse to exploit the cheap benefits that come from living in a world of fantasy. I cannot sacrifice my integrity and believe in what I know to be untrue, even if by doing so I could gain a pair of legs. In any case, your exhibitionistic cavortings don't appeal to me." The tiny tadpole's dignity seemed pitiful, as he quivered beside the frog's vigorous young body.

Something akin to pity filled the frog's eyes as he looked at him. "But Bubü," he said quietly, "the world up above that I talk about is real. I can't explain it, but in a sense it's more real than the watery universe we live in."

"More real to you."

"More real to anybody, Bubü."

"But not at all real to me."

"A Metamorphosis was a kind of gateway into a new world The vital Question is whether you're willing to follow the evidence where it leads."

The frog had lost his bantering manner entirely. "Bubü, the world would be there whether I could feel it or not. It's still there even though you don't believe in it. Right now, as we talk, soft breezes blow across the surface of Little Pond. A burning sun pours rays over the bodies of animals, birds and plants. Other frogs like me are leaping across dry ground."

"It's very beautiful," the tadpole said precisely, his tone belying his words, "but I don't even understand what you mean. What, for instance, is 'dry'? No, don't try to describe it again" (the frog had been about to interrupt). "You've failed to give me any but the most *mystical* concept whenever I've asked about it. Can dry be weighed? Does

dry have length or depth? Can dry be touched? Does it have color? To all of this you answer 'No'.

"As far as I can gather, dry seems merely to the essence of 'otherness,' the opposite of all we've come to accept as being fundamental to the watery universe we know. I shall believe it when you can produce solid evidence."

The frog stretched out a webbed foot. "My legs, Bubu, aren't they evidence?"

The tadpole made a gesture of impatience, but the frog continued, "The universe we inhabit is evidence of 'the other world' as you call it. Our world grows grey when clouds cover the sun. The surface of our pond is thrashed into a fury when rain dashes upon it from the world above."

It was then that Bubu's eloquent tail wiggled its derisive contempt. "Ignorant people have always explained purely natural phenomena in terms of myth. Science has adequately explained these things. There's no need to postulate a 'dry' world populated by mysterious suns, moons and clouds."

"Bubu, I've seen clouds. I've been warmed by the sun. I--"

The tadpole's annoyance nearly choked him. "Show me!" he cried. "Show me this sun. Show me a piece of dry."

There was a pause, filled only with soft underwater sounds.

"I have to admit," the frog said finally, "that it's impossible for me to show you the sun. If you are to see it, your eyes will have to change. There's a verse in the Sacred Book that says, 'Except a tadpole metamorphose, it cannot see the kingdom of dryness.' I'd like you to see and know what I see and know. I hope one day to take you hopping with me between blades of grass. But if I took you right now, just as you are, you'd die. You couldn't stand the exposure. You don't have the right kind of life."

"A few moments ago you told me that my belief in these things had produced my legs and lungs. Maybe. But that's far from the whole story. It's just as true and far more important for you to see that without my lungs and legs I could never live on land. My conversion, or my metamorphosis, was a kind of gateway into a new world. The more I saw of it, the more I changed and the more I changed, the more I was able to see"

There was again no answer. The tadpole's tail was scarcely waving at all.

"The vital question," the frog continued, "is whether you're willing to follow the evidence where it leads. You'll not be given more evidence until you use the evidence you have."

Bubu said something that sounded like "Humph."

Again there was silence.

The frog stretched his legs uneasily. "It's so stuffy down here," he said, "I have to go up for a gulp of air more frequently these days. So if you'll excuse me . . ."

Underwater etiquette is not very rigid and the frog darted away without finishing his sentence, thrusting powerfully upward through sunbeam curtains toward the surface of a world that did not exist.

Several minutes passed before Bubu moved. The wiggles of his tail had ceased. Finally with another "Humph" he slowly emerged from the cover of a weed and moved in the direction that the frog had taken moments before.

Perhaps weighty problems occupying his mind accounted for the slowness of his movements. He might have been thinking of the brilliant remarks he could have made had he thought of them in time, or gloating over the masterly way he would put the young frog in his place at the next meeting of the Philosophical Society.

His actual thoughts will never be known, for in his preoccupation he hadn't noticed the swiftly moving black shadow inches above him.

The duck's bill churned violently downward. Bubu was sucked by thrashing whirling eddies. Immense jaws clamped upon his tail, while his body tugged helplessly in the water. He felt himself jerked powerfully upwards. Upwards, and oh, unnameable dread, through the surface and into the Great Beyond.

Terrible light and suffocating nothingness surrounded him for a brief second. Sounds of unbelievable intensity battered his tortured hearing apparatus. Then, with a swift toss of the duck's head, came hot darkness.

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THE GOOD SAMARITAN

John R. W. Stott

(A message delivered to doctors)

The Parable of the Good Samaritan has an obvious appropriateness to this service. It contains an account of rudimentary medical treatment or first aid being given to a roadside casualty. Doctors have naturally seen it as a kind of Christian charter for the medical profession. Further, the parable portrays that love which alone is truly Christian and should inspire all our philanthropic endeavors. It is a kind of sermon on the text "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." It defines what is to be both the *object* and *degree* of the love God requires of us-whom we are to love and how much we are to love him.

Whom Are We Required To Love?

According to the law of Moses (Lev. 19:18), we are required to love our *neighbor*. Jewish casuists seized upon this word and misinterpreted it. They tried to escape the inconvenience of the commandment by restricting its application to their fellow countrymen. They argued that Leviticus 19 is concerned with their duty to their compatriots and coreligionists. So they dared to elaborate the command in the form "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy."

It is this casuistry that Jesus referred to in the Sermon on the Mount when He said; "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies..." Jesus was not quoting from the law of Moses. You can search your Old Testament from beginning to end, and you will find no commandment to hate enemies. This injunction was one of the traditions of the elders, not a commandment of God. And Jesus emphatically repudiated it. The command to love our neighbor, He said, was intended to be inclusive not restrictive. Your "neighbor" in the vocabulary of God includes your enemies.

This teaching of the Sermon on the Mount was given a dramatic turn in the parable of the Good Samaritan, in which a Samaritan did to a Jew what no Jew would do to a Samaritan. A Jewish traveller became the hapless victim of mountain brigands. As he was making the twenty mile descent from Jerusalem to Jericho, along a road notorious for desolation and danger, these Bedouin brigands ambushed him. They robbed him, beat him up until he was half dead and left him to perish. A little later three men walked by, a Jewish priest, a Jewish Levite and a Samaritan. What was common to the three men was that they saw him; what was different was that only one came to his aid.

Which of the three was neighbor to the victim of the robbers?, Jesus asked. That is, which of the three recognized and treated him as a neighbor? And the answer was "He who showed kindness to him."

The neighbor we are required to love, therefore, is anybody in need, whose need is known to us, irrespective of any other qualification. He may have no claim upon us. He may be neither related to us nor connected with us. He may belong to another race, rank or religion. He may just be "a certain man," as in the parable, with nothing whatever to distinguish him. Nevertheless, his need and our knowledge of his need constitute him a neighbor we are to love.

In this teaching Jesus picked on an ingrained failing of human nature, namely that we tend to serve those we like, and neglect those we do not like. The color bar and class distinctions are two obvious examples. They have sometimes crept into the Christian church, to our everlasting shame. We thank God that under the provisions of the National Health Service, no-one is debarred from the best medical treatment on grounds of color, class, creed or income. Yet, in medicine as in the church, it is easy to take more trouble over people who are rich, famous, handsome or nice than over the poor, the uneducated, the unattractive and the aggravating.

How Much Are We Required To Love Him?

The answer to this second question is that we are to love our neighbor *as ourselves*. To make self-love the standard of love for others may sound like a low standard, even a cynical one. But actually it is a very high standard, because we love ourselves a great deal and take a lot of time and trouble in looking after ourselves. We sometimes call ourselves "Number One," and Jesus told us to love Number Two (our neighbor) as much as we love Number One!

As a matter of fact, there is a higher standard still. Jesus called it a "new commandment," namely to love others not as we love ourselves, but as Christ loved us. And Christ loved us more than He loved Himself, because He sacrificed Himself for us. But whether we take self-love or Christ's love as the standard, it is a very lofty one. It indicates how costly, how sacrificial our love for our neighbor is to be.

The Good Samaritan in the parable exhibited just such a love. When he saw the man, he had compassion on him and went over to him. He poured a mixture of oil and wine into his wounds (a common ancient remedy, regarded as both antiseptic and soothing). He bound up his wounds, presumably with bandages torn or cut from his own clothing. He then lifted him onto his beast, took him to the nearest inn, and for the rest of the day cared for him personally. The following day he paid the innkeeper to continue the treatment, promising on

his return journey to reimburse him for any extra expenses he had incurred. It is certainly unusual (although not unique) to find a doctor paying for the treatment of his patient, instead of vice versa!

What the parable of the Good Samaritan teaches is that there are no limits to the love that God requires; no limits to its breadth (for it embraces everyone in need, indiscriminately); and no limit to the lengths to which it will go in costly service of the person in need.

What are we to say when we are faced by this standard to love our neighbor as much as we love ourselves? I think we must say three things.

a. By ourselves we cannot love like this

Jesus told the parable to a lawyer who asked "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" When the lawyer recited the great commandments to love God and his neighbor, Jesus complimented him, saying "Do this and you shall live." And many people imagine that the way to obtain eternal life is to become a Good Samaritan; that all we have to do is to love God and our neighbor and we should inherit eternal life. And so we should, if we could love God with all our being and our neighbor as ourselves. But we cannot, and we never have done! And nobody else has either; there is no truly "Good Samaritan" on earth. It cannot seriously be maintained by a careful student of the teaching of Jesus that He meant we could obtain eternal life that way. No. Both the law of Moses and the teaching of Jesus lay down the standards required, and thereby (far from conferring eternal life) actually condemn us because we cannot attain these standards. The lawyer knew perfectly well that he had not loved his neighbor as himself. That is why, his conscience aroused, he tried to wriggle out of his predicament by asking "Who is my neighbor?" He hoped that by circumscribing who his neighbor was whom he had to love, he might just manage to scrape through. But when Jesus taught that the love of neighbor God requires is indiscriminate in its object and sacrificial in its exercise, he knew (as we must know) that it is hopeless to obtain eternal life in that way. We love ourselves best, and our neighbor only next best.

b. Only Jesus Christ has ever loved like this

Indeed Jesus of Nazareth is the only wholly Good Samaritan there has ever been. The love that is set forth in this parable, indiscriminate and sacrificial, is the love of Jesus Christ. So the early Church fathers and the sixteenth century reformers saw that the parable of the Good Samaritan is in one sense a parable of man's earthly pilgrimage. Every man is travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho, down from the city of destiny to the city of destruction. We ourselves are on this very road. On our journey we are violently assaulted by the powers of evil,

who rob us of our manhood or womanhood, strip us of our righteousness, and leave us bruised, bleeding, half dead and perishing. Is there no one to save us? The law (represented by priest and Levite) cannot. But there is One who can and He is a stranger from a foreign land. He took pity on us and came where we are. He identified Himself with us in our need, taking our nature upon Him and bearing our sins in His own body. Now He binds up our wounds, clothes our nakedness, carries us to safety and cares for us in grace. Fanciful? I think not. The love of the has been perfectly exhibited only in the birth and life, ministry and death of Jesus of Nazareth. He has loved us irrespective of our merit, and irrespective of the cost to Him. He has loved as no one else has ever loved.

c. Therefore we need Christ

Douglas Jackson, the Birmingham surgeon, has put it admirably in a chapter of the book *Ideals in Medicine*: "No one can love like Christ except Christ be in him." This is another version of the Apostle Paul's dictum that love is the "fruit of the Spirit," i.e. produced in us by the Holy Spirit of Christ.

It is one of the many tragedies of contemporary Christendom that this truth has been largely forgotten. People are trying to reinterpret Christianity in modern existential terms. They are trying to eliminate from its supernatural element. But the Christianity of the New Testament refused to be thus reinterpreted, let alone replaced. Authentic New Testament Christianity is unashamedly and inescapably supernatural. It speaks of "Christ in you the hope of glory," "Christ dwelling in your hearts by faith," "I can do all things through Christ who inwardly strengthens me." There is no need to reinterpret this; it means precisely what it says. The living personal Jesus Christ is able through His Spirit actually to invade the human personality and to transform it from within. Those who have never experienced it may scoff if they will. But it remains what the New Testament offers, and what humble Christian believers in every generation have claimed. Jesus still says; "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev. 3:20).

To this the parable of the Good Samaritan has brought us. We are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves. We know full well that by ourselves we cannot. But Jesus Christ has loved and loves like that. And if we allow Him to enter our lives, we can begin to love with His love. Only then can we obey His command, "Go and do likewise."

--Used by permission

MY EXPERIENCES WITH A KLEPTOMANIAC

Don Hillis

I would never have dreamed he was a thief! Our acquaintance had all been so friendly and casual. It started one evening at my front door. It was a Tuesday in August. "An entertainer turned salesman," was his smiling approach to me. But I was not one to be taken off my guard so easily. I prodded him about his background. "Who are you with?" I asked. It came out that he had ties with several of the largest distilleries. He also had an account with a prosperous tobacco company. "At present," he continued, "I'm an agent for a leading national magazine."

So I let him come into the living room and listened to him for a couple of hours. On learning of his connections, I took pains to tell him of my Christian faith and love for Christ.

"There is no place in my life for such things as liquor or tobacco," I told him deliberately. "As a Christian, my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit." I was sure these words would bother or affront him. But no, he was totally undisturbed by my convictions. He would hold his views, I could hold mine. This status quo was to mark all our subsequent discussions.

In a light-hearted moment he slipped off on an off-color story. I was quick to inform him such things did not go in my home. In fact, I cut him off sharply.

As you can imagine, I had reservations on the truth of many of his stories. Still, I must admit his experiences often excited me. After having an interesting evening together I invited him to come back the following night. "I may have a helpful influence on him," was my naive hope.

It took my wife's words to remind me that his return visit conflicted with our church Midweek Prayer Meeting. "I should attend," I confessed, "but I must stand by the invitation I have given this friend." I shared with her some of the things he had said to me. Well, to put it lightly, she was reluctant to accept him. "I just don't trust him," she would say. She grew steadily more concerned as he took up more and more of our family life.

My entire day was boring in comparison with my evenings with this character. He had an imagination that was captivating. I would sit and laugh myself sick at all his crazy experiences. There were other

times that my hair would stand on end. His scrapes with the FBI and the law were absolutely breath-taking.

If his stories were true, he was also an "extra" in motion pictures. But he couldn't talk about this without including sex. This forced me to cut him off time and time again.

Leave My Children Alone

Then he began to affect my teenage son Charles and my nine year old daughter, Eloise. They just couldn't wait to catch his latest quip or some hair-raising tale. They would have stayed up all hours if we had allowed it. All this distraction was hurting their studies and did their health little good. I began to worry about this fellow's presence in our home.

And then it came. The "straw that broke the camel's back." One day several of my best books turned up missing. I searched in vain for them. "This fellow may be something of a thief," I concluded. "If he is," I continued, "who can tell what else he's taken from us?"

It all looked very suspicious. The next day I was so wrought up about it I decided to check on him next door. Sure enough, he had taken things there too. I was amazed by his subtle maneuvers. They certainly confirmed my wife's original point of view.

In one home he had entered as a religious teacher. "He has revealed the truth of our modern cults," they said. Another neighbor, a salesman down the block knew him as an efficiency expert. "He's showing me the latest gimmicks," he called after me. "The sort of thing a successful salesman can put to use." He certainly has a lot of ways of getting in, I concluded.

To all of these people I suggested a check of their belongings. Most of them found something missing. At one friend's home I noticed no more Christian magazines. In another the Bible had disappeared. I was surprised to hear that their Sunday and Mid-week church service time was spent with this fellow. As I left this house the husband told me their family altar was missing too.

A few days later I met this fellow entertaining at a neighbor's. He paid scant attention to me and I was glad for it. I had come to talk with their teen-age daughter about her faith in Christ. Well, this fellow monopolized the whole evening's conversation. He stole all serious thinking from her mind and heart. I was sick about it. Finally, I just had to say a word to the girl's mother about this lack of courtesy. "Oh," she exclaimed, "it's that way all the time." I found also that she had a five-year-old boy who was emotionally mal-adjusted from loss

of sleep, all from this fellow's visits. I walked home deeply concerned about what I might do.

A Thief In The Woodpile

At long last I realized my visitor was afflicted with kleptomania. Like an inveterate thief, he had stolen my books, magazines and time. But the chief things missing were my close friendship with Christ and the evenings spent in talking with my friends and family. I'm sure that others are having similar experiences.

Some have lost things of real value, not trifles, but precious family things they once enjoyed together. Spiritual, social and intellectual experiences have been taken from them, replaced by only a moment's crackpot amusement.

This fellow is not at our home now. Though, if I could keep him in his place, he would be quite harmless to have around. Kleptomaniacs are not always deliberately bad. Even this one might profitably drop in with his tidbits of news and light word or two. But you must keep your eyes open, or such a person will continually steal things from you.

I still see him now and then at my neighbor's. And he still keeps them laughing or excited hour after hour. I've been trying to recall his name so you will be alerted about him and his many subtle methods. It escapes me, and I'm not sure now that he gave it. But I will never forget his initials. They were "T.V."

I wonder what T.V. has robbed from you: Time? Devotions? Good reading? Wholesome conversation? Church attendance? Check your list--and see! You may be very surprised at what you'll find missing!

This sly character reminds me of a wild horse. You have to sit tight with a firm hold on the reins or he will run away with you. If you don't control him, he will control you. When you learn to treat T.V. like Paul treated his body, then he will be kept in his place. "I buffet my body--handle it roughly, discipline it by hardships--and subdue it--lest I myself should become unfit--not able to stand the test--unapproved and rejected as a counterfeit." (1 Cor. 9:27 Amp. N.T.). With this type of treatment T.V. will stay in its place. Better than that you will experience the joy of keeping your affection on things which are above.

THE CASINO SUPERVISOR WHO FOUND A SURE THING

(Part One)

Joe Domico

I grew up in South Jersey (that is, the Philadelphia suburbs and the Jersey Seashore). My grandfather came to America from Italy with his mother, father and grandparents. My mother also was the daughter of Italian immigrants' children who had settled in South Philadelphia, a predominantly Italian section of the city. Both of my parents' families moved to Westville, NJ, which is right across the Delaware River from South Philly. Like most Italians I was raised Roman Catholic, went to Catholic schools and learned all the teaching of Rome. It was just religion and tradition: something was missing.

After dropping out of high school, I enrolled in Casino Gaming school. Atlantic City, only 40 miles away, was about to get legalized casino gambling. I was going to get a "career." Getting licensed took quite a long time because the State Gaming Commission checked Italian people very closely for obvious reasons (i.e. stereo-typical Mafia connections). But I was hired at Bally's Park Place Casino-Hotel.

Less than a year later, I was hired as a casino supervisor in the now defunct Playboy Hotel/Casino. I was only nineteen. For someone in the world, this was a dream come true. I did not know that this dream would be a nightmare. I was young, in a management position, around sex, drugs and immorality of the worst kinds. I soon became an abuser. Casinos themselves have every kind of perversion and corruption that one could imagine. I had everything that the world would say was successful, but something was still missing. That vacuum in my heart was becoming more obvious. I began attending Catholic "mass" for a few short weeks, but there was nothing there. It was still the same. I was still dead in my sins.

It was then I began looking into the Word of Life. My roommate had a Bible. I began to read the New Testament. My friends thought I was crazy--too many drugs or maybe a mental problem. I learned about a living, loving God sending His one and only Son to destroy the works of the evil one and give me a future and a hope, including a purpose in life. Later, I heard the gospel: the completeness of Christ's work on the cross, the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus and all that He did for scum-of-the-earth like me. It was good news!

On June 9, 1983, after 23 years of sinful living, I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior and was immersed into Christ by an evangelist of the South Philadelphia Church of Christ. Interested in what God said, and being an ignorant-of-the-Word Roman Catholic, I decided to read the Bible--the whole Bible--and that I did. I read it from cover to cover in the latter part of 1983. The Lord put a hunger and thirst in me for His Word. The evangelist who immersed me and discipled me always encouraged me to read and study the Word. Because of reading what God had to say in the Scriptures, with the Holy Spirit as my guide, I was firmly convinced in my own mind that God would fulfill all of His promises to Israel and that "Jesus shall reign from David's throne" (Lk. 1:32-33). It was not because someone preached it or taught it to me--it was God at His Word.

All the false teachings and the truths I had heard beforehand fell into place like two puzzles, those which agreed with the spirit of the Word and those that did not. Everything was going great. After a struggle with the flesh, I resigned my casino position. Then the Lord blessed me with a beautiful young Christian girl who helped me with the baby Christian struggles. We went to Bible studies almost every night. Together we grew in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior. After a time, we realized that we were in love. She is now my wife and the mother of three beautiful children.

This has been a short account of my coming to meet the Lord. There is much joy in the journey as I walk with Him. I have learned that religion could not help me. What counts is to have a relationship with the One who loved me and died for me. There are so many things to be joyful about in the Kingdom of God. But of course there are obstacles too. Next month I will tell about some of them.

QUESTIONS ASKED OF US

Carl Kitzmiller

Our young people are asking questions related to evolution. What about the days of creation? Can you give some help?

Most of our young people are exposed repeatedly to evolutionary teaching. Science courses in public schools, reference works, magazine articles, TV programs and many other sources may often be controlled by a strong evolutionary bias. Some courses of study can be expected to be saturated with material based on this theory. In the hands of a faithful Christian teacher who is alert and informed evolutionary materials may not pose a terribly great threat, but there are relatively few of these. Too often the teacher may not

have any objections to the material and even Christians may not be faithful and/or informed.

Moreover, the evolutionary theory has been so widely accepted that those who oppose it are made to seem to be old fashioned, uninformed, lacking in brilliance, etc. We find ourselves opposing not only a false theory but also a propaganda campaign that equates it with education, sophistication and mental stature. In terms of numbers, popularity and the mass of material affected by evolution, we face a giant Goliath set on the destruction of the faith of the Bible believer. A sermon now and then or a Sunday school lesson, even in the hands of competent people, has a great psychological barrier to overcome with many young people. They have been sold the idea that the opponents of evolution are just not "up" on things. Such preaching or teaching must usually be very general and thus leaves a lot of unanswered questions, which may be mistakenly seen as an inability to answer the questions.

Evolutionary teaching is often quite subtle. Even a relatively inexperienced young person can recognize a blatant "man is descended from the monkey" (or something else) as evolutionary teaching. But in a variety of ways the whole theory has been woven into the fabric of our learning, so that even the pre-schooler is taught tainted things. So subtle is this that over the years principles based on evolution may be accepted by the person who supposes that he does not accept the theory. School children (and many others) do not have the wisdom, the means nor the ability of proving for themselves all they are taught. They accept things presented as facts. Learning cannot stop to question everything. Perhaps the single most deceptive thing about evolution is that it is treated as fact, not theory. Yet it is theory. There are some very vital gaps in the theory that have never been bridged. It has not, and we venture to assert cannot, be established as fact. Still the theory with all its implications is generally presented as fact.

The amount of material involved and the specialized nature of some of the related knowledge is so great that the average person probably feels incompetent to sort out truth from falsehood. There are, however, many good books and materials available to those who can delve into the various issues. It is probably important for Christians to learn as much about the basics as they can. Even so, we are not left to a "blind faith" in rejecting the theory. It is not true that all scientists, all brilliant people, all informed people accept evolution. There is a growing number of high ranking scientists who reject evolution. There are many brilliant and informed people who are not evolutionists. Some of these have formed organizations for promoting creationism over evolution. There are answers which satisfy those who are able to look at these issues critically. From the standpoint of scholarship, evolution is not a one-sided issue.

Sooner or later, however, we must come to the Bible testimony and what we will do with it. Though there have been attempts to harmonize the Bible and the evolutionary theory, it is a futile task. The "days" of creation are seen

as long eras. and the creation of man is seen as a process instead of an outright act of creation. The truth is that the Bible and the theory of evolution stand opposed. This is true even if we accept the Genesis account of creation as primarily figurative. God, not chance, is seen by the Bible as the Creator and Giver of life. We really do have to make a choice which we will believe.

Now the Bible-believer is not without foundation for his faith, but in the final sense his acceptance of the Bible is an act of faith. We cannot go back and watch the world created or see man given life, thus knowing by sight just how it happened. We can check the Bible testimony about a lot of things, however, and in those things we can establish its reliability. The Bible record for reliability is unsurpassed. Theories and notions have arisen and have failed, but the Bible record has always been vindicated. We believe therefore that its account of creation is true. Now evolution is also a system of faith. That's right! Not faith in God or the Bible, to be sure, but faith in man's ability to read the signs. You see, the evolutionist was not present at creation either. He depends for his ideas on what he can observe about present and past conditions. And there are some points where his faith has to leap a considerable span. The evidence is missing, even assuming he is reading it right. In short, his viewpoint is a theory--a guess. It is based to some extent on what he sees as evidence, but it also calls for a lot of credulity. A point too often missed in these matters is that it takes no more faith to believe in God and the Bible than it does to believe in evolution, and the foundation is a lot firmer for the Bible-believer.

For many of us the answer to evolution lies in establishing the trustworthiness of the Bible. It is understood that there is a place for challenging the various major and minor points of evolution and for showing that creation by God is intellectually respectable. We owe a debt of gratitude to those whose scholarship is such as to challenge successfully the false ideas proposed by the evolutionist. But if we cannot do this, we need not surrender or go through life fearing that the next great discovery will prove us wrong. An assurance of the reliability of the Bible is important not only to opposing evolution but also for a lot of other issues. And while young people may not have had the depth of experience at seeing the Bible vindicated, they are as capable as any others of receiving the truth of its reliability. "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching . . ." (John 7:17).

The Bible-believer needs to be careful to distinguish between the record given in the Bible, which is inspired, and his own interpretation of that record, which is not. We should not adopt an interpretation of the Bible which unnecessarily opposes apparent facts. As discoveries are made it may be found that the Biblical accounts allow for such, and that there is a harmony possible.

Concerning the days of creation, one "problem" has been that much of the evidence seems to point to an earth much older than the Bible account suggests. This age "problem" is not a reason to surrender to evolution at all, however. There are several possibilities. (1) There is a possibility

that there was life of various sorts on the earth before the six days of creation. This may have ended in judgment, leaving the earth waste and void. In other words, the earth was renovated in preparation for man and the animal life of the six days of creation. Sometimes called the gap theory (filling a supposed gap between verses 1 and 2 of Genesis 1; cf. Isa. 45:18 Am. Std.), this can neither be affirmed nor denied, as I see it. (2) Some have proposed that the days were long eras. Certainly they cannot be established as 24-hour days (the sun was not put in order until the fourth day), but there are some serious problems with this view. The presumption seems to be that they were days. God speaks and it is done. His creation does not require long time. (3) A very real possibility is that in creating God created age into the earth, etc.--i.e., He created the oil, coal, even fossils and they were not necessarily formed over long ages. He certainly created age in Adam in that he appears fully grown. (4) Some believe that the flood of Noah's day may account for many upheavals of the earth, rearranging the strata, creating fossils, etc. Many of the supposed signs of great age could have been created by this great display of God's power. (5) There is a very good possibility that man is mistaken in his dating of the various rocks, etc. A lot of circular reasoning takes place. Moreover, the dating procedures are based on present conditions and knowledge and do not allow for changing conditions. Unknown factors no longer present may have greatly altered the readings.

In short, the age of the earth demanded by the evolutionist may be very greatly in error, but it is not impossible to harmonize true discoveries with the Bible account. Personally, I refuse to set aside the word of God in favor of the guesses of men, however learned. One of the greatest helps we can give our young people is to help them understand that much that is set forth in support of evolution is little better than guesses, and to help them recognize the reliability of the word of God.

[Additional Note by the editor:]

Regarding the above, just a few days ago I saw an article from the magazine Arizona Highways. It said there used to be a sign posted at Charlsbad Caverns claiming the caverns were at least 260 million years old. "In 1988, the sign was changed to read 7 to 10 million years old. Then, for a little while, the sign read that it was 2 million years old. Now the sign is gone."

In other words, "geologists don't know how long cave development takes. And, while some believe that cave decorations such as . . . stalactites take years to form, Trout says that through photo-monitoring, he has watched a stalactite grow several inches in a matter of days."

Strange how the earth is getting younger and younger. The whole point, of course, is that many scientists realize their former theories about the universe's age may be vastly overestimated.

Voices from the Fields

**Earl, Sr. & Ragena Mullins
P.O. Box 1509, New Albany, IN 47151**

July, 1993

In June/July we spent three weeks in Russia. In that short time we witnessed five baptisms: a young boy about fourteen years of age, an elderly lady, and a school teacher with her 10 year old twin daughters. (Her husband was the Communist party leader of this area of Moscow. He is an unbeliever and an unemployed rocket engineer). The simple New Testament Gospel is having an impact, the seed is being sown and people are being saved.

We witnessed the baptisms at a church that meets in a technical school at 6:00 each Sunday evening. We worshipped each Lord's Day with this group and also worshiped with a church that meets at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon at another school. This latter church was started by some from Pepperdine University in California. It is led by three young American men, students of the college, who saw the need of the people and felt compelled to stay in Russia and help. This congregation is made up mostly of college age young people. They expressed a need for the presence of older men and women and were very interested in our continuing to meet with them should we return to Moscow.

Christians who can teach English (using the Bible) have a wide open door into the school system. Also anyone who has knowledge of simple business procedures such as are taught by Junior Achievement would be welcome into the school system. Christian ethics and morals could easily be taught in this. Christians with special skills such as sports, medicine, music, art, crafts, etc. would be welcomed into the Christian Culture Centers each of which has direct contact with up to 100 schools, all elementary through high school (a total of eleven grades).

We learned late in our visit of a school in Moscow, where children of an American couple attended for a few months, that the principal was very interested in having Bible taught in the school. There are many opportunities presently open. Recent news that laws are being made to prohibit entrance of missionaries not already affiliated with existing churches, makes "tent-making" missionaries more vital in the continuing ministry of the church.

We are greatly encouraged by what is going on in Russia, in other parts of the world and in our own country. However, just where, and how, the Lord desires to use us, Earl and Ragena, is uncertain as far as

our understanding of His will at the present time. Please pray that we will enter the doors He opens and that He will close the doors through which we should not enter.

Moto Nomura

Yamanashi-Ken, Japan

August 24, 1993

Two nights ago, a strange sedan came up to our way. A couple and a kindergarten boy got out of the car. It seemed to me they were looking for something, and started going up the hill toward the mountain through the weeds-covered trail in front of us. I talked to them, and she with Korean accent started saying that she was looking for a church, but could not find a western style church building with a cross on its roof!

I invited them in, started talking with her in her own native language, a big surprise to her. Her husband is a Japanese. She kept asking me if I were really not a Korean man. I told them that we meet here on every 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sunday. I also told her that we have another Korean mother, Mrs. Shimura, attending our services, and so I called her up. The two ladies talked to each other in their own language, and she promised me that she would come back again for worship services. I loaned her a Korean video-tape. This will make her come back at least one more time to return the tape. They live in our own community, about 2/3 miles away from us. So, God is slowly using us for His glory here in the ultra conservative rural village. For a Korean woman who used to attend the largest congregation in Seoul, the True Purest Gospel Church with 150,000 members each Sunday, a strange Japanese house-church without any cross on the roof must have been difficult to understand. She said she found out that there must be a Christian church in the community because she saw our sign posted on two telephone/ electric power poles by the roadside near the Bethany Home. ✓

The falling dollar value to lower than 100 yen is a great threat to us. When we moved into this area \$1 was worth about 250 to 270 yen, thus the monthly house-loan was about \$500 to \$550. We, therefore, thought we could somehow manage it and serve Him. But now we have to have at least \$1,400 or even more to pay the monthly loan back. By the time Bank of America in Tokyo deducts/charges its monthly fees and tax, a dollar becomes less than 95 to 99 yen!

(Funds may be sent c/o Victor Broaddus, Box 54842, Lexington, KY 40555)

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Jack Blaas

Missing Periods Found!

You may have noticed in recent issues that many periods & quite a few commas got lost. We finally found them & here they are:

.....

Actually their absence was due to technical problems which we are trying to solve. Please pray for us & bear with us. Many thanks.

Good Advice

Someone said, "Resist the Devil so vigorously that he will feel like a lion in a den of Daniels."

Good News

David Tapp reported at the Louisville-area church leaders' lunch that as a result of a leadership training class of Fisherville, 7 men (none of whom taught before) now take turns teaching the adult class. And 2 of them filled the pulpit for him when he was away. One of these brothers, 34 years old, formerly lay in a coma for weeks as a result of a car wreck. He is still bound to a wheelchair, but now sometimes leads at the Lord's Supper & teaches class. He sets a great example to everyone.

More Good News

A report of the High Lysine Corn Projects from Jan. to mid-July '93 shows that 8,524 bags of this high-nutrition food have been sent out to feed the malnourished. Each bag provides about 80 meals. The corn has been sent to Mexico, Sudan, Kenya, Haiti, Honduras, Armenia, Ukraine and other parts of the former USSR! We continually praise God for this great ministry

spearheaded by Hollace & Iva Sherwood, Rt. #1, Box 408, Mitchell, IN 47446. Write or call them (812:849-2640) for more information. Donations of \$ or time are needed & appreciated.

Sad News

For vacation this year, our family traveled to Maine, camping (in a trailer). We had a great time. It was beautiful. The glory of the Lord was being shouted by the creation all around us. But as we traveled, we couldn't help noticing all of the closed down churches. The churches that do exist, we found out, did not believe the Bible, or that Jesus was the only way for salvation. What's worse is that these dying, liberal "churches" (Congregational/ UCC) are the descendants of the Pilgrims and Puritans.

Religion is not dead in New England, however. Like Old England, the area is in a post Christian era. New Age and the Cults are prospering. This puts a burden on our hearts. The New Agers have a burden also. There is a chain of stores called Enchantments. These innocent looking stores sell everything from crystals to sorcery manuals. Isn't it interesting that the New England intellectuals are so easily accepting these crazy claims of polished satanism, which we thought was only "big" in California.

Please pray for the Lord to send workers into the fields. The younger generation is searching for truth, but being fed a lie. Of course we have a burden for the Northeast, but we really need help. As you know, I murmur occasionally about the weakness of the church here.

But further north it is even worse. We are thanking the Lord for what he has given us. So please keep praying for this area. (From the newsletter of Joe & Anne Domico, Gateway Church, Box 170, Westville, NJ 08093)

Maple Manor - Adult Division

We are looking for a few good women!! We plan to resume the Volunteer Beauty Parlor. We will be needing some ladies who have free time on Wednesdays to be on the hair dressing teams. If you can spare some time, please call Jan Potts, (812) 246-4866.

Due to the fact that I am no longer preaching on a regular basis, I am free to visit your congregation as a guest speaker on behalf of Maple Manor or to fill in if your regular minister is to be away. My home phone number is 246-2918

-- Ray Naugle, Administrator

Dugger Church of Christ

Our Minister, Bro. Dan Ford, has resigned due to our need of a full time minister which is a need he cannot fulfil at this time. First of all we ask for your prayers in this matter as we pray for our sister congregations in the Lord.

Second, we ask for your assistance in seeking the person the Lord wants in this position. If you know of someone interested we would appreciate your contacting us. (P.O. Box 555 Dugger, IN 47848)

Elders: Steve Home 812-648-2261

Lloyd Turpen 812-847-7590

Other Churches Seek Ministers Too

Other congregations include Locust Street Church, c/o Carl Kitzmiller, 1503 Skyline Drive, Johnson City, TN 37604. Pleasant Grove Church, c/o Rt. #1, Box 192, Switz City, IN 47465. Denham Springs, c/o Harry Prather, 468 Cochershas Rd, Denham Springs, LA 70726. Also the Ross Point Church of Christ, Rt 1, Box 176 AC, Baxter, KY 40806.

Linton, Ind. Church of Christ

Sunday night after church we had a Planned Famine. Seven people, the birthday folks and their guests, were seated at the feast table by a hostess who lit candles. They were treated to a chicken dinner.

Twenty people or so picked ticket #2 and sat at the Middle Class table, and had a peanut butter sandwich, an apple and two cookies. Those with ticket #3 sat at the Famine Table where they were to be ignored for awhile. These eight only had unopened, unusable government food.

After everyone had time to consider their plight, Jerry gave a good lesson on the problems faced by those in the Mississippi flood. (1) Those who still have everything. (2) Those whose homes and lives were "only" messed up. (3) The people that have lost everything--homes, peace, security.

We were challenged to reach out to these people in Christian love and help them as we would want to be helped if the flood was here instead of there. (Matthew 7:12)

Central Louisiana Christian Fellowship

November 15-18, 1993

"HE CAME AND HE'S COMING AGAIN"

Studies from Matthew

Monday

7:00 P.M. He Came The First Time Julius Hovan

Tuesday

10:00 A.M. The Characteristics of a Kingdom Citizen
Bill Colwick
11:10 A.M. The Attitude of a Kingdom Citizen Dick Lewis
1:15 P.M. Workshop on Missions Victor Broaddus
7:00 P.M. The Mysteries of the Kingdom Paul Kitzmiller

Wednesday

10:00 A.M. The King's Mission Randy Coultas
11:10 A.M. The King's Glorification David Johnson
1:15 P.M. Workshop on Missions Victor Broaddus
7:00 P.M. "What Shall Be The Sign of Thy Coming?"
Benny Hill

Thursday

10:00 A.M. The King's Rule in Reference to Israel
Antoine Valdetero
11:10 A.M. The King's Rule in Reference to Nations
Dennis LeDoux
1:15 P.M. Workshop on Missions Victor Broaddus
7:00 P.M. The King is Coming Emory Grimes

Glenmora, Louisiana 71433

Phone (318) 748-4243 for Housing or Information