

"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The Word and Work



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

JANUARY, 1998

Consider This:

*"A man that is coming,
though far from the goal as yet,
is better than one who is going away,
though far nearer the goal as yet."*

-- R. H. Boll

REALITY CHECK

A large prosperous downtown church had three mission churches under its care that it had started. On the first Sunday of the New Year all the members of the mission churches came to the city church for a combined Communion service. In those mission churches, which were located in the slums of the city, were some outstanding cases of conversions--thieves, burglars, and so on--but all knelt side by side at the Communion rail. On one such occasion the pastor saw a former burglar kneeling beside the judge of the Supreme Court of England--the judge who had sent him to jail where he had served seven years. After his release this burglar had been converted and become a Christian worker. Yet, as they knelt there, the judge and the former convict, neither one seemed to be aware of the other.

After the service, the judge was walking home with the pastor and said to him, "Did you notice who was kneeling beside me at the Communion rail this morning?"

The pastor replied, "Yes, but I didn't know that you noticed." The two walked along in silence for a few more moments, and then the judge said, "What a miracle of grace." The pastor nodded in agreement. "Yes, what a marvelous miracle of grace." Then the judge said "but to whom do you refer?" And the pastor said, "Why, to the conversion of that convict." The judge said, "But I was not referring to him. I was thinking of myself." The pastor, surprised, replied, "You were thinking of yourself? I don't understand." "Yes," the judge replied, "it did not cost that burglar much to get converted when he came out of jail. He had nothing but a history of crime behind him, and when he saw Jesus as his Savior he knew there was salvation and hope and joy for him. And he knew how much he needed that help. But look at me. I was taught from earliest infancy to live as a gentleman; that my word was to be my bond; that I was to say my prayers, go to church, take Communion and so on. I went through Oxford, took my degrees, was called to the bar and eventually became a judge. Pastor, nothing but the grace of God could have caused me to admit that I was a sinner on a level with that burglar. It took much more grace to forgive me for all my pride and self-deception, to get me to admit that I was no better in the eyes of God than that convict that I had sent to prison."

--Author unknown: taken from the
"Locust Street Laborer," Johnson City, Tenn.

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

Dennis L. Allen, Missions

Jack Blaes, News

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JANUARY, 1998

No. 1

In This Issue

Editorial -- Alex V. Wilson	2
The Tell-Tale Heart -- Frederica Mathewes-Green	4
Alzheimer's Fails To Fray Couple's History Of Love -- Frances Meeker	7
The Last Days: Apostasy or Revival -- Dennis Pollock	10
Christian Education: A Necessity -- Paul A. Clark	14
Questions Asked of Us -- Carl Kitzmiller	15
What The Bible Teaches About Christ's Death -- A. V. W.	18
Grace And Obedience -- R. H. Boll.	20
We Stand In Christ's Triumph -- A. W. Tozer	24
Making The Most of Interruptions -- Joyce Broyles.	26
Bro. Henry Harding Promoted To Glory -- Harry Coultas	27
Voices from the Fields	28
News and Notes - Jack Blaes	31

Some Things Change; Some Things Stay the Same.

Alex V. Wilson

It may be a cliché, but it's still true (like many clichés): Times change. This was brought to my attention when someone gave me this list of "Rules for Teachers, Barren County, Kentucky, 1872." Here they are:

Rules For Teachers - 1872

- 1) Teachers each day will fill lamps, trim the wicks and clean chimneys.
- 2) Each morning teachers will bring a bucket of water and a scuttle of coal for the day's session.
- 3) Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs to the individual taste of the pupils.
- 4) Men teachers may take one evening each week for courting purposes, or two evenings a week if they attend church regularly.
- 5) After ten hours in school, the teachers may spend the remaining time reading the Bible or any other good books.
- 6) Women teachers who marry or engage in unseemly conduct will be dismissed.
- 7) Every teacher should lay aside from each pay a goodly sum of his earnings for his benefit during his declining years so that he will not become a burden on society.
- 8) Any teacher who smokes, uses liquor in any form, frequents pool or public halls, or gets shaved in a barber shop will give good reason to suspect his worth, intention, integrity and honesty.
- 9) The teacher who performs his labor faithfully and without fault for five years will be given an increase of twenty-five cents per week in his pay, providing the Board of Education approves.

That was then; this is now. The "now" we face was pointed out by John Stackhouse, Jr., in *Christianity Today* (2/3/97).

On a flight from Chicago to Minneapolis, I had been talking with my seatmate. A young executive on her way to a new job, she had told me a little about herself She had earned university degrees from

Ivy League Dartmouth College and from the internationally recognized School of Business at the University of Chicago.

She, in turn, had asked me about my work, and I had joked that some of my introductory students could not place "Jesus Christ" and "the apostle Paul" in the correct chronological order. "**Who is this 'apostle Paul' you're referring to?**" she asked me, utterly sincere, completely unaware that this ought to be an embarrassing question for a well-schooled American to ask.

Incredible? Nope, true. Many Americans live in a post-Christian age. A Christian businessman I know sent out a letter to prospective clients, most of whom are professional people living in our country's so-called Bible belt. In his letter he mentioned "our Judeo-Christian heritage." Two of the executives in his company responded by asking him "what does that expression mean?"

Times change. This month we have a couple of articles about subjects that were not issues at all thirty-five years ago: Abortion and Alzheimer's Disease (a true story of sacrificial love).

Other articles this time are on topics which have always been momentous. Trends toward apostasy in some churches and revival in others. Living lives rooted in Christ's triumph (by A. W. Tozer, always challenging). Trusting God's grace and obeying His commands (by R. H. Boll, always balanced and insightful). Teaching God's Word with relevance and power.

That last article mentioned is by Dr. Paul Clark. He preaches in Johnson City, Tennessee, and teaches at Milligan College there. For years he was chairman of its education department, after being dean at our Southeastern Christian College. His article (the first in a series of at least three) comes with added urgency. For in the past few weeks he has undergone two major surgeries on his back. There seem to be indications of malignancy, so be much in prayer for Paul and his wife, Barbara, and his congregation, Mountain View.

Consider This:

**"A man that is coming,
though far from the goal as yet,
is better than one who is going away,
though far nearer the goal as yet."**

-- R. H. Boll

The Tell-Tale Heart

Frederica Mathewes-Green

In Edgar Allen Poe's classic horror tale, "The Tell-Tale Heart," a murderer dismembers his victim and hides the pieces under the floorboards. When the police call to investigate, he prides himself on his cleverness--but gradually becomes unhinged, at last screaming out the location of the corpse. He was undone by the sound of his victim's heartbeat drumming in his ears.

Why, after so many years of legalization, does the abortion debate continue in America? Why haven't we accepted it as matter-of-factly as we do any other "surgical procedure"? I believe that it has something to do with a tell-tale heart. Deep inside we know; someone dies in every abortion, a tiny growing child with hands and eyes and a face and a beating heart. Four thousand times a day that beating heart is stopped--but in our conscience it seems to go on.

I didn't always feel this way. I was an abortion advocate in college, and before the Roe v. Wade decision my car sported a bumper sticker that read, "Don't Labor Under a Misconception--Legalize Abortion." But that was when I thought that abortion merely discarded a "glob of tissue." I didn't know that that tissue was shaped remarkably like a baby, and that it was alive. I didn't know that the crude process of abortion sucks the child out piece by piece, through a narrow tube and into a bloody bag.

But once I learned, my stand against violence had to include abortion as well. I simply could do no other. For the tell-tale hearts are our own as well; we cannot deny the beat of compassion that wells from within, that urges us that something is terribly wrong in our land.

The abortion business makes at least 500 million dollars a year in this country, performing over a million and a half abortions. Only a tiny fraction of these are done for reasons of health, rape, or incest. Nearly half of all abortion customers are coming back for a second (or third or fourth . . .) abortion.

Are these women callous, contemptuous of the lives they have begun? Yet who would choose abortion if she had any other choice? The procedure itself is ugly and degrading, a mechanical vacuuming of the womb's interior; she must pay for this privilege several hundred dollars in cash, and knows, at some level, that its only purpose is to destroy her child.

In the process she runs risks from puncture and infection to colostomy, paralysis, or death; abortion is an unnatural invasion to reverse a healthy process, so even legal abortion will always have its risks. Then there is the psychological trauma, sometimes delayed for years, which accounts for a number of grief-stricken post-abortion women flooding into the Pro-Life Movement.

It seems clear that no woman would have an abortion if her alternative did not appear even more forbidding. Like an animal caught in a trap, trying to gnaw off its own leg, the aborting woman can see no other escape except this route of violence and despair.

In defending the path of abortion, Supreme Court Justice Blackman wrote, "Millions of women... have ordered their lives around [access to abortion], and... this right has become vital to the full participation of women in... American life." We recoil to think that something so hideous could have become necessary to our lives. How can it be that we must sacrifice our children to succeed? Is such a sacrifice laid on men? Is any other oppressed or marginalized group required to have surgery in order to participate in American life?

Abortion may not have helped women, but it has helped those who would be inconvenienced by her pregnancy and her child. It is easier for a sexually irresponsible man to pay for a woman's abortion than to marry her, or to pay child support for 18 years. It is not out of concern for women's welfare and dignity that Playboy so enthusiastically supports abortion on demand.

The relentless demands of careerism also have little patience with parenting. It is easier for an employee to abort her child than for management to worry about providing maternity leave, health insurance, child care and time off for Mom to go to the school play. It's "easier" on everyone if the woman has an abortion—easier on everyone, that is, except her and her child. No wonder our hearts are uneasy.

Abortion is cruel to children, and it is not much kinder to the women on whom it feeds.

For these reasons, many pro-lifers have turned their time to practical aid for women facing the abortion dilemma. There are approximately 2,000 crisis pregnancy centers in America, places where a woman can receive help with housing, medical care, food and clothing, and legal aid, as well as job and budget planning for the years ahead. All these services are offered free, donated by volunteers who are for the most part women just like her—mothers who care about other mothers in need. No matter how one feels about abortion, we can all consider lending our aid to these woman-helping agencies by volunteering time, or laundering donated baby clothes, or opening a guest

room to a woman whose family has rejected her. Sometimes all a woman needs is the knowledge that someone cares, that they will stand by her as she tackles a challenging and courageous path.

I have faced this path myself—not as vast a crisis as some women must endure, but still daunting to me. My husband had just lost his job when we found out I was pregnant; we knew we would have to move cross-country, but had no idea where. We already had two children under five. Gary and I walked around the block in the late afternoon, choked and fearful. I thought about the tiny, trusting heart already growing beneath my own. Our lives felt out of control; what could we offer this child?

But we did find a job, and we did move, and Stephen was born in our new home, a joyous day among midwife and friends. Twelve years later he's the portrait of boyhood, bold and busy, full of plans and projects. Yet Stephen also has a tender streak that betrays him when he spots a stuffed animal or see a sentimental show. *Of all the hearts that love me, his is the one that loves me with the most unfettered, blind devotion; to him, Mom is perfection on earth.*

I think of all the thousands of women today whose children will be pulled out of them bit by bit, children who are as much like them as any mother and child can be. At some point, that tiny new heart will beat its last. *Who can say whether that would have been the heart that, in all her lifetime, would have loved her best?*

Stephen comes in, flushed and grimy from running in the afternoon sun. He interrupts me as I sit at my desk, impulsively flinging his arms around me in a baby-bear hug. My head rests against his slender chest. I can hear in there his tender heart, beating faster now than the wings of a bird.

[This article first appeared in the January 1992 issue of Parenting Magazine]

We squander health in search of wealth,
We scheme and toil and save,
Then squander wealth in search of health
And only find the grave.
We live and boast of what we own,
We die and get a stone.

--Anon.

Alzheimer's Fails To Fray Couple's History Of Love

By Frances Meeker

Fifty-four years ago, Betty Bergner, a Kansas farm girl, and Jim Bill McInteer, a Kentucky boy training to be a preacher, stood side by side and promised to take care of each other "in sickness and in health" until they were parted by death.

As a preacher's wife, she continued at his side for decades, doing her own special part for the Church of Christ ministry.

After all these years, nothing--not even the ravages of Alzheimer's disease--can separate the couple who will celebrate their 54th wedding anniversary on Sunday.

"It is my prayer that I outlive her so that I can take care of her, and the children won't have to," says McInteer, 76, sole caregiver for his wife, also 76, who has had Alzheimer's for 10 years.

"And I want to keep her at home so she won't be in a strange place and be puzzled by her surroundings," he says.

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive, degenerative disease of the brain in which brain cells die and are not replaced. It results in impaired memory, thinking and behavior, and is the most common form of dementia.

McInteer, previously minister of Nashville's West End Church of Christ for 35 years, is director of 21st Century Christian bookstore and publishing company.

He still stays busy in the ministry, guest preaching nearly every Sunday and holding three- and four-day gospel meetings in different parts of the country.

"I like to take her everywhere I go and she never does or says anything embarrassing," the minister says.

McInteer recently asked Betty's doctor if there was any danger he was doing her an injustice by "dragging her around" almost everywhere he goes.

"The doctor said I wasn't and then I asked him if he had any instructions for me as how I should do this," McInteer says. "The doctor responded that he didn't and that instead, he was learning from us."

When he preaches, McInteer usually asks a woman in the congregation to sit with his wife. She seems to listen to the sermon but often tries to go down front when he gives the altar call.

“I think she realizes that it is a call to accept Jesus and she feels like somebody should respond,” he says.

Betty, with her white hair and stylish dress, is a regal figure who usually sits at the head table with her husband and other dignitaries at luncheons.

After a half-century as a minister’s wife, she continues her role, even though she often is not aware of her surroundings, friends of the couple say.

‘Such an inspiration’

“Jim Bill and Betty are such a precious couple and such an inspiration and good example for young people getting married,” says Anne Leaver, who with her husband, Walter, have been friends of the McInteers for more than 40 years.

“Theirs is what a marriage is supposed to be,” Leaver says. “I truly believe that through her sickness, he loves her even more.”

Leaver admires the way McInteer takes care of his wife when they attend luncheons and dinners, including cutting the meat on her plate.

He also takes her shopping for clothes and then dresses her appropriately for whatever occasion they are attending, even down to her jewelry and other accessories, Leaver says.

“And I see her reach out and pat his hand,” Leaver says. “You can see how much they love each other.”

Winston Moore, a family friend and business associate for more than 50 years, says he has never heard McInteer complain about his situation. “We think it is too hard on him, taking full care of Betty, being involved in his business and preaching gospel meetings all over the country,” Moore says. “But we can’t tell him anything. He has a strong will that most people don’t have. He does what he has to do. Any other man I know would have cracked up by now.”

Evelyn Mayhugh, secretary for McInteer at 21st Century Christian for 12 years, says that Betty often sits in her office during the workday. “She doesn’t communicate with me or anybody else very much while she’s here,” Mayhugh says, “but when Jim Bill walks back in the office, you can just see her face light up.”

McInteer's love for his wife also is obvious as he recalls their years together. He especially likes to tell of when they were students at Harding College, a Church of Christ-related school in Searcy, Ark.

They were married three years later at Betty's home church in Isabel, Kan. with Dean L.C. Sears of Harding College performing the ceremony.

Keeping a routine

McInteer tries to keep their home and activities as normal as possible so Betty doesn't have to adjust to change. Because they frequently entertained in their home throughout their married life, McInteer still gives luncheons or dinner parties for their family and friends, usually cooking the meal himself. They also still make hospital visits together.

McInteer takes his wife to the beauty shop once a week to get her hair washed and set. "The rest of the week, all I have to do is just comb it for her" he says. "It has a lot of natural curl in it."

He does the laundry and cleaning, having a couple come in to clean only once every two weeks.

"I tease her sometimes, so once I asked her why did I have to do all the work while she does nothing," he says. "She replied that she had done it long enough and now it was my time."

Each night, McInteer gently helps her to bed, reads the Bible to her in which she often comments, "That's good, that's good," prays with her and kisses her good night.

"I'm the last thing she sees at night," he says, "and the first thing she sees in the morning."

Condensed from *The Nashville Banner*, July 17, 1997. Jim Bill is Homer N. Rutherford's nephew & Florence Collins' cousin.

Know the 10 warning signs of Alzheimer's disease:

- Recent memory loss that affects job skills.
- Difficulty performing familiar tasks.
- Problems with language.
- Disorientation of time and place.
- Poor or decreased judgment.
- Problems with abstract thinking.
- Misplacing things.
- Changes in mood or behavior.
- Changes in personality.
- Loss of initiative.

THE LAST DAYS: Apostasy or Revival?

Dennis Pollock

It used to perplex me greatly. Some were saying that in the last days there would be a great revival and outpouring of God's Spirit. Others insisted that there would be perilous times and a great falling away by the Church. Both pointed to the Scriptures and current situations in the Church to prove their points.

One day, as I was reading the Bible and wrestling with this dilemma, my attention came to rest on one of Jesus' parables. Although I had read it many times, it seemed this time to bring fresh light and revelation. Within this parable I found the answer to the last days dilemma that had perplexed me.

A Spiritual Insight

The parable, found in Matthew 13, compares the kingdom of God to a field which was planted with wheat. While the wheat was still in its earliest stages, the farmer's enemy came along and planted useless weeds called tares throughout the field. When one of the farmer's workers asked whether he should attempt to pull out the tares, he was told:

No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." (Matthew 13:29, 30)

As I read the words, "Let both grow together," I realized that both the wheat and the tares would be ripening, maturing, and increasing side by side. Jesus tells us later in the chapter exactly who the wheat and the tares represent "The good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one" Matthew 13:38).

Thus we can determine from this parable that as our world draws closer and closer toward its ultimate appointment with Christ, we can expect that there would be a dual ripening--the church increasing in strength and vitality while the world grows increasingly corrupt.

The Increasing Tares

If this principle is true, we should expect to find an increasingly evil world in the last days, one which is headed toward anarchy and lawlessness at a breathtaking pace. Does the Scripture indicate that this

will be the case? Listen to the words of Jesus: "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold" (Matthew 24:12).

Paul, in his description of the last days, says, "Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers ... unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good ... lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (2 Timothy 3:2-4). If this describes the nature of men individually, we can only conclude that society, as a whole, will be unspeakably depraved.

Is this happening today? Are we really so much worse off than we were a generation or two ago? We are seeing occasional articles which suggest that things are better than ever. One columnist ridiculed those who long for the "good old days." His argument was that we have all sorts of comforts and luxuries our parents and grandparents couldn't have dreamed of. And he is right--if mere creature comforts make up the totality of life.

Let's look a little closer. In the last thirty years in our nation we have seen an explosion of knowledge and wealth. Yet with all these "benefits" we have also seen a 560% increase in violent crime, a 400% increase in illegitimate births, a quadrupling of divorces, a tripling of children in single parent homes, an eruption of teenage suicides, while our schools are falling apart and the kids' SAT scores have plummeted.

Television shows today routinely include dialogue which would have sparked outrage in days gone by. Actors appear nude in drama series, while the sitcoms are steeped in sex-related humor. Radio shock jocks compete to see who can use the most vile and obscene language. Dennis Rodman writes a book about his sexual escapades and decadent life, and is rewarded with million dollar endorsement contracts.

While sexual immorality, violence, and murder have always been with us since the fall of Adam, we are seeing these at new levels and in greater numbers than ever before. The terrible wars of this last century have resulted in more death and destruction than all the previous wars in earth's history. Pornographic filth rolls off the printing presses by the ton. There have been more divorces in the last fifty years than all the rest of the years of man's history on the earth. Already we have seen more babies killed by abortion than all the men who have ever died in all the wars ever fought on our planet.

While we are not doing anything that hasn't been done before in some form or another, the sheer weight of the sins we are committing is unsurpassed. Never has so much evil been done by so many. The tares are maturing.

What About The Wheat?

So for the picture seems pretty gloomy. But not all the news is bad. Jesus' parable didn't just refer to the maturing of the tares; He tells us that both the wheat and the tares will grow together, until harvest time. Since the wheat refers to "the sons of the kingdom," we must conclude that there should be a corresponding growth and increase in the Church as well.

The Church should be growing stronger and brighter, as the world becomes darker and more evil. This is a real problem for many. They look at various examples of apostasy, heresy, and apathy in the Church and wonder if we have made any progress at all. They point to some of the great revivals of the past and wish we could just get back to those days.

Has the Church made any progress over the years? The answer is a resounding yes! Consider the Reformation days of Martin Luther and the issues he raised. The major doctrine at issue was that man is justified before God through faith in Christ and not by works. This was considered revolutionary in those days. Today the doctrine of justification by grace through faith is taught routinely within Evangelical Christianity.

During the Wesley-Whitefield revivals in the 18th Century, the great and cardinal doctrine that they preached was that we must be "born again." This, too, was considered radical in those days. Until Wesley and Whitefield came along, the clergy seemed to know nothing of the new birth. For the most part they hadn't experienced it and did not preach it. Today the experience of the new birth is a fundamental doctrine of evangelical Christianity.

During the Finney revivals in the early part of the 19th Century, Charles Finney became instrumental in challenging people to receive Christ "on the spot." In those days, most of the American Christians were so steeped in hyper-Calvinism they would never have dared to attempt to receive Christ as an act of their will. After hearing evangelistic preaching, most would merely go on about their lives, hoping that they were one of God's elect, and figuring that if they were, God would somehow convert them.

Finney changed all that by demanding that people make an immediate decision as to whether or not to receive Jesus as their Savior. There was much resistance at first to this "radical" idea, but soon sinners began stepping out from behind their excuses of predestination and started giving their lives to Christ. Thus was born what we refer to today as "the altar call."

The 20th Century has also been a time of spiritual growth for the Church. The Pentecostal, Charismatic and Third Wave Movements have revived a belief in the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. These movements have also produced a revival in worship.

The Growth of the Church

The Church has come a long way since Martin Luther's day. But what about numbers? Here the answer is even more obvious. By any statistical survey, Christianity has been growing in record numbers in the last hundred years, and shows no signs of letting up!

In Africa there were ten million Christians in 1900, today there are over three hundred million believers in Africa. In China it is estimated that 25,000 people are coming to Christ every day! In the lands that had been locked up by Islam, more Muslims have become Christians in the last ten years than in the last one thousand years. Church statistician Dr. David Barrett states, "The kingdom of Christ is expanding at over three times the rate of world population." The wheat is maturing!

Despite an increasingly wicked world around us, we see an increasing boldness by Christians to share the gospel. You can hardly watch a sporting event without hearing one of the athletes giving praise to God afterwards. High school kids are meeting in Bible studies before school, and home prayer meetings have proliferated across the world. The *Promise Keepers* organization sponsors huge rallies where as many as 60,000 men come together for praise, preaching, and fellowship. These meetings are so popular that tickets to them are frequently snatched up months before the actual events take place.

Side By Side

Side by side the wheat and the tares are ripening. While the world is becoming increasingly foul and corrupt, the Church is headed for her finest hour. (The true Church--not the apostate, liberal, unbelieving Church).

Our Savior said, "I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). The true Church stands strong, preaching the Word, exalting Jesus, and relying on the power of the Holy Spirit.

One day, very soon, Jesus will again. The trumpet will sound and all those who are the planting of God will be harvested. We shall be caught up together to meet Christ in the air, and "thus we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

--From the Lamb & Lion ministries' LAMPLIGHTER, P.O. Box 919,
McKinney TX 75070

Christian Education: A NECESSITY

(The 1st of 3 articles)

Paul A. Clark

The Lord Jesus spoke of Christian Education in his final words as He urged us to "make disciples." What is the responsibility and the role of the brotherhood, the church, families, and individuals toward this important task? God wants us to educate both strangers and our own so that He can have effective representatives during this church age. Not only will we educate for His sake but also for the personal joy and faith of the educated. This education is done in a modern setting, is influenced by a Christian world view, includes all learning, and features children.

Our God lives in the present so that He is aware of the current complexities of educating our children and others. He knows about the explosion of knowledge and of the technology of this age. Since we live in this age, He wants us to be all things to all people as we witness for him in our churches and in our daily activities. Of course, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who was crucified and raised from the dead, is the absolute center of our curriculum. On the other hand, we communicate in a different setting and work with learners who are different from those whom the apostles guided.

In spite of the complexities recognized by a society about to begin the twenty-first century, we still have a world view meaningful to us which is basic to Christian Education. Everything we do is dominated by our assurance that God is the creator who is much involved in His creation (Acts 17: 24 - 27; Romans 1: 20; Colossians 1: 15, 16). He loved us to the extent that He gave his Son so that we can have a right relation with Him (John 3: 16; Titus 3: 2 - 7). This right relation is called a new birth which causes the Holy Spirit to be in us so that we are more effective in knowing, in doing, and in moral living (1 Corinthians. 2: 12; Ephesians. 2: 10; Romans 1: 16 - 17). At the same time, we are not God's puppets because we have a free will to decide what we will learn and how we will solve our problems.

Christian education is broad enough to include all the learning that a person needs in order to live according to a Christian life style. We should not divide education into secular and religious categories. As we have pointed out, the Christian education curriculum must of necessity include the study of God, Christ, and the Bible, but it must also include an increasingly complex study of academic basics, human relations, and abstract thinking if the Christian is to function well in the world. Christian Education should be thorough enough to prepare a student for responsible dialog and for vocation as well as instruction in the proper knowledge of the things of God. Our task is a large one

complicated by the demands on us by our place in time, but if our vision is big enough God will bless us to be equal to the task.

Even though education is possible for persons at any age, Christian Education must feature an interest in children. Someone has said that we learn half of all we will learn by age three and a half. Certainly lessons learned during those years in which a child is dependent on others for food and shelter -- from infancy to adulthood -- are important lessons. The child needs social, academic, and spiritual learning during these years to be really effective. A brother told me how much he appreciated and how unusual it was for an elder of the church to bend to speak to the children as well as to the adults after the service was over. The Lord Jesus makes clear his feeling toward children in the following passage:

And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it he was indignant, and said to them, "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God." (Mark 10: 13, 14, RSV).

Future articles will examine the content of Christian Education and the methods we use to be effective in our church community. Different social settings in which we educate will be discussed. Christian Education has been effective in our age, but commitment and thought can yield even greater spiritual growth.

QUESTIONS ASKED OF US

Carl Kitzmiller

Does God take away the sinful appetites when one becomes a Christian? For example, does He take away the taste for alcohol from the drunkard, the ambition for material things from the thief, the sexual appetite of the sex offender, etc?'

God does what He has promised to do! But let us be careful that we do not have a preconceived or false notion as to what He has promised. It seems to me that the thing God has promised to the one who comes to Christ is power for victory over sin. Christians are new creatures in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17). Those who "transact business" with the Lord come out of the waters of baptism to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). Of this there can be no doubt. The indwelling of the Spirit of God in the Christian is a fact (Rom. 8:1-10; 1 Cor. 6:19-20), and one of the great works of the Spirit in the Christian is enabling him to overcome the flesh. Moreover, one of the greatest promises in the entire New Testament in this writer's judgment is 1 Cor. 10:13--He

will not permit us (Christians) to be tempted above that which we are able to bear. He can do this by limiting the temptation or by enabling us to face it victoriously. I do not find that He anywhere promises to remove temptation in an absolute sense. In that case there would be no reason for a Christian's failure. There would have been no need for the apostle Paul to write to the Corinthian church, to those who had been "washed . . . sanctified . . . justified" (Cor. 6:11), to correct sin problems which had arisen among them. Temptation is not sin. Christians are tempted. But Christians have power to be victorious over sin.

While God is not a respecter of persons, neither does He have to be mechanical in His dealings with mankind in order to maintain that standard. He knows us individually and personally, not just as a computer figure. He knows our needs. He knows our "load limit." Just as a wise parent does not deal mechanically in the same way with each child but recognizes the make-up and need of the individual child, how much more our heavenly Father is able to deal with His children. There are those who being converted to Christ declare that their temptation for some particular besetting sin was completely taken away. I don't believe in putting God in a strait jacket or denying that He has such power. So far as I can tell there may be genuine cases in which this happens. There are also those who in a given environment and because they are expected to do so, declare the removal of an appetite but who later yield to the same and fall, showing that they were tragically deceived. The experience of many Christians is that they may have to continue to struggle with some weakness. The temptation will still be there in some measure. Like the apostle Paul with his thorn in the flesh, they may pray for removal of the problem and find the Lord's answer that His grace is sufficient. It is not the removal of the temptation that makes us strong, but the overcoming. The temptation may make us lean all the more on the Lord, finding strength for our weakness.

Now it is evident that genuine repentance will have a strong effect on the power of temptation. For example, one man does not like the thing that alcohol does to his family, his job, etc, and may want to quit drinking, but he does not regard drinking as a sin. Another faces up to the fact that he is sinning and genuinely repents before God. The latter stops making excuses and has a real change of mind toward his old ways. He can expect to have a great deal fewer problems with continued temptation than the former. The person who becomes subject to God and who in harmony with that resists the devil (Jas. 4:7) will find the devil fleeing. Decisive action, as we look to God, is one of the ways we can take a great deal of power from temptation. It may not totally eliminate temptation in a lot of cases, but there will be cases in which it will be so completely set aside that it will seem that God has taken away the taste for the wrong. God calls for us to act decisively about sin, to choose whom we will serve, and those who go limping between the two sides will have much more trouble with temptation. It is no secret that a

lot of the powerless, defeated "Christianity" we see today is because people are trying to hold to Christ with one hand and to the world with the other. What some may see as the Lord removing all taste for something may be in great measure the result of genuine repentance.

It is a dangerous doctrine, however, which says that becoming a Christian removes all the taste for the wrong. The old man, the flesh, must still be contended with. We are new creatures, but also babes in Christ who must grow up spiritually. We do have power to overcome, but we may not have learned how to use it. If the Lord always removes the taste of alcohol from the drunkard, then any slip into temptation after the individual supposedly became a Christian must prove that there was never any new birth. And that is simply untrue in some cases. We do not deny that there are those who try to play games with God, so to speak, but there are also genuine Christians who stumble. And they stumble because they are tempted. How better could we destroy a person than to lead him to expect that in the process of his conversion all his old appetites are going to be miraculously removed? He turns to the Lord in all sincerity but the temptation is still there in some measure. So, he concludes, his change was only a mockery. Certainly we want to claim every promise the Lord has made us, but to enlarge a promise beyond what He has promised is not only wrong but may have destructive consequences.

We repeat that what is promised is power for victory. The Christian never has to sin. He will never be put in the position that the only thing he can do is sin. He can never plead that there was no righteous way out. God will provide either a way out of the temptation or power to overcome. If, indeed, removal of the taste is needed or according to His will, He can surely do that. But if He chooses to exercise us unto godliness by allowing us to have a practical victory, that may be the better thing. We do not say victory is always easy. It is possible, however, to the one who belongs to Christ.

Our age has marked some sins as almost impossible to overcome short of a miracle from the Lord. Nor would we deny that there are sins which get such a hold on people that giving them up is very difficult. God's power as seen in the lives of some of the people at Corinth is still available though (1Cor. 6:9-11). Fornicators and adulterers became Christians. Homosexuals became Christians. Thieves and those greedy of gain became Christians. Drunkards became Christians. Note that we did not say that they continued to live in those evil ways as Christians. This was not a mere show of religion while they continued to live in the old ways. They were "washed . . . sanctified . . . justified." It is not declared that these were never again tempted. It is declared that God had done His work in their lives. They had repented of their sins. There was victory for them **in Christ!**

What the Bible Teaches:

FOUR FALSE VIEWS OF CHRIST'S DEATH, And The TRUE ONE

Alex V. Wilson

In our time there are several common erroneous views of the death of Jesus. We should understand them, as well as the Biblical view.

1. The Atheist View: The Cross was a TRAGEDY. It merely proves that life is absurd--a meaningless, sick joke. Jesus was a good man, and look what it got him! His death had no more purpose than the tragic assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Bobby Kennedy, Martin Luther King, or Mahatma Gandhi of India. It made no more sense than the crash that killed Princess Diana.

Thank God we know better than that. "Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor.15:3). That is, it was foretold by God because pre-planned by Him to fulfill His eternal purpose of redemption. (Acts 3:18; 4:27-28.)

2. The Liberals' View: At the Cross Jesus only set a great EXAMPLE. We should imitate His willingness to suffer and even die for His ideals. He sacrificed himself for others, and showed love even for his enemies. We should do the same.

If they stopped there, we should agree with them--for Peter does. (1 Pet.2:20-23.) We saw last month that indeed we should imitate Christ's example of sacrificial love. But many liberals go on to oppose any idea that Jesus was our substitute at Calvary, and paid the ransom for our sins, suffering God's wrath in our place. They abhor any such ideas, not only as false but barbaric. One philosopher at Oxford University said there is good reason to consider Christianity as the worst of the main religions of the world. Why? Because it rests "on the doctrines of original sin and vicarious atonement, which are intellectually contemptible and morally outrageous." But we have shown above and last month that God's Word teaches Jesus was not only our example but also our substitute. He saved us from the very real danger of divine judgment on our sin.

The remaining three views all agree that His death was indeed necessary for our salvation. But from that point onward, they disagree.

3. The Legalistic View: Christ's Cross was NECESSARY BUT INSUFFICIENT. That is, we could not be saved without it, yet our good character or correct beliefs or proper rituals must be added to it. Though they may not spell it out in so many words, numerous church-members of numerous brands hold this view. From the Pharisees (Luke 18:9-14) to Catholicism (the seven sacraments) to members of many

Churches of Christ ("the only true church"), etc., people tend to add their works of merit to God's grace. But as a discerning Filipino said years ago, "Neither what we do for the church (which many Protestants rely upon) nor what the church does for us (which most Catholics rely upon) can save us. The Lord Jesus is the only savior."

4. The Universalist View: Christ's Death was NECESSARY And EFFICIENT--FOR ALL PEOPLE, Regardless of their Response to God. This view is found not only in the Universalist-Unitarian cult, but also is quite widespread among some liberal denominations. (So view #2 above is not the only one found among "liberal" churches.) They say, "Everyone is saved by Jesus' death--whether they know it or not, believe in Him or not, or even want it or not"! Some people find it incredible that preachers and seminary professors actually teach this, but quotations can be given (and will be, when we get to our lesson on death and eternal destiny).

But Jesus Himself said, "Unless you repent, you will perish" (Luke 13:3,5). John 3:16 tells of God's wondrous love, but says that believers--not everyone--will receive eternal life. In the same chapter Jesus told Nicodemus that unless a person is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter God's kingdom. And the chapter's last verse bluntly warns, "...Whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him." Jesus also said that many people are on the expressway leading to destruction (Matt.7). Universalism obviously contradicts Christ.

5. The Biblical View says that Calvary was NECESSARY; and SUFFICIENT for All; but EFFICIENT ONLY For Repentant Believers in God's Grace. As we saw, He died to set us an example to imitate. But He also died so we could be redeemed and reconciled to God. An old hymn says, "He died that we might be forgiven. He died to make us good." For our salvation, Christ's death was Necessary: No one could be saved had He not given His life a ransom for many.

It was a Sufficient sacrifice for all, in two senses. First, sufficient for all humanity. "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." Every person in all history could be saved by the price Jesus paid--if only they would receive Him as Redeemer. Second, Calvary was sufficient for all my sins, apart from any of my deeds done to earn merit. In order to be acceptable to God, I need not add anything to His accomplishment at Golgotha. "Jesus paid it all; All to Him I owe."

His cross, however, is Efficient only for those who receive Him. The five verses given above to refute universalism (and many more could be added) all bear witness to that important truth.

Therefore, may we trust only in Christ crucified. And may we proclaim His saving-but-demanding grace far and near.

GRACE AND OBEDIENCE

R. H. Boll

In discussing the distinction between Law and Grace, and Grace and Works, we are in danger in reacting against extreme positions, of being carried to an opposite extreme. We are prone in our teaching to stress man's part, and the "conditions of salvation" just because we have seen that ignored and denied in the religious world about us. But we are in peril now of stressing those neglected features of God's truth until there is no longer any difference (in principle) between our preaching and the teaching of the Law, which Moses summed up in the words, "He that doeth the righteousness which is of the law shall live thereby" (Rom. 10:5)--a principle essentially opposed to salvation by faith. (Gal. 3:12) In that sort of teaching the perfect freeness of the grace of God and the full, free forgiveness and salvation are lost sight of; and the consequent love, joy, and peace are lost. We may come to think that salvation is a sort of fifty-fifty proposition; that we do our part and then it is up to God to do His. That position is fatal to spiritual life. The principle so adopted pursues us with its curse throughout our days. We begin to feel that our hope depends wholly and always on how well we come across with "our part"; and our part is of course the requirement of the Christian life--a requirement that grows and becomes more impossible as we strive to perform it. Duties multiply; our sense of failure and condemnation increases. Under its burden some of us drop down and decide we will just "do the best we can," and go along hoping for the best, but down in our hearts expecting the worst. Some give up entirely. Some make great efforts and swing back and forth between self-exaltation and despair. None are happy. All this is due to fundamental misconception of the gospel. It is well worth our while to look into the matter.

If Christianity is but another law, are we not doomed to begin with? For if it is only a new law that we have--why, the old was all-sufficient for ministry of death and condemnation. The law was holy and righteous and good; and therefore worked wrath. For the law is spiritual; but we are carnal, sold under sin. What use have we for another law, and one even stricter than the one we had? The old law brought men into a spirit of bondage unto fear--what better thing have we under the more exacting responsibility of the Gospel? Here we need a knowledge of the distinctive features of the gospel--*the grace of God*.

What then is grace? It is favor from God. Its essential point lies in this, that it is *free, undeserved, unmerited* favor. God justifies the *ungodly* (Rom. 4:5); hence justification is by grace. If a man were (or could be) justified by law, his justification would be because of his worthiness, and a matter of just due. Grace could not enter into that.

The man who would attempt to be justified on such a plan makes void and abandons the grace of God as the ground of his salvation (Gal. 2:21). The same is true of meritorious works. The man who would be saved on the grounds of his good works cannot be saved by grace. "To him that worketh the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but as of debt." That would exclude grace. For "if it is by works it is no longer by grace; otherwise grace is no more grace." (Rom. 4:4; 11:6). To the extent that the salvation is obtained by works it is not of grace and cannot be. God never mingles the two principles. When the king found a servant who owed him ten thousand talents, he proceeded against him according to law. But when the servant appealed for mercy, the king freely forgave him the whole debt. He did not let him work and pay off what he could of the debt, and then forgive him the rest. God never does that kind of thing; He holds you to everything and if He forgives at all, He forgives you all, freely. You may count on that and take your choice.

It becomes evident at once that if we are saved by grace at all we are saved by *grace only*--not by grace plus something else, but only by grace. Otherwise it would not be by grace at all. There maybe (and indeed there is) something we must do to *apprehend* that grace. It is impossible to bestow a free gift upon a man unless he takes it; and if there is a God-appointed way to take it, thus must it be taken. But that is merely the acceptance, and contributes nothing toward the gift, nor does it pay for it or produce it. The things a man may have to do in order to receive a gift of God's grace do not rank alongside with the grace as a procuring cause of the gift. It would be a great mistake to class those things as so, and would come very near making grace void. Our salvation is either wholly and only and exclusively by grace, or not by grace at all. If we compensate Him in any wise for our salvation by anything we give or do, it is no longer His free gift of grace. And God will have nothing of the sort.

If then we are asked what it is that God demands of the sinner the answer is, simply, *faith*. The reason God demands just that and nothing else is that faith is the one, only thing that is non-meritorious. "Therefore it is of faith that it may be by grace" (Rom. 4:16). "By grace have ye been saved *through faith*; and that (that salvation)not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works that no man should glory" (Eph. 2:8,9). By this we see clearly that what is by faith is also of grace. Faith affords no grounds for boasting. For faith is reliance upon another. It is in very nature a giving up, a surrender and submission, a looking to another for help. When I put my faith in a guide I acknowledge thereby my inability to direct my own way, and my entire dependence on the guide. When I put my faith in a physician, it is the expression of my need and helplessness. To the extent that my faith is whole-hearted and unreserved, I abstain from all self-effort, and yield myself entirely to the helper I trust in. So is our faith in Christ. It is set

in contrast with any and all attempt to attain to salvation by means of our own works and effort. "Now to him that worketh the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but as of debt; but *to him that worketh not but believeth* on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness" (Rom 4:4,5).

But it is just as obvious that in every case faith will do something. That is the essence of faith. If I have faith in a guide, I will unquestioningly follow him. I will not try to make a way or find a way myself. Where he leads me I will follow. If I trust in a doctor, I submit to his direction, take his medicine, I obey his orders. I do not try to cure myself; I leave it to him. These illustrations may fall short, but they do illustrate. If I believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, my Lord and Savior, I give up myself and whatever I know or have--my wisdom, my righteousness, my power, in fact, myself. He alone has made the perfect atonement for me; only He can cleanse me from sin, can make me a new creature, can sustain me, can save me. For all this I look to Him and to Him alone. The ground of my faith is that He is God's Salvation, God's Beloved Son, who died for me and rose again, and is able to save me to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25). Therefore I obey Him implicitly. It is by such a faith that I am saved. And it is by faith that it may be grace. (Rom. 4:16).

Again it must be clear that when it is said that we are saved by faith, it means that we are saved *only by faith*. If faith does something (as it always will and must, if it be true faith) that does not alter the matter; it is still faith and only *faith* that saves us; faith that works, it is true, but simply faith; not faith plus something else, some other thing which is not faith, super-added, but faith, purely and only. The things that faith does, (the acts of obedience of faith) are not to be co-ordinated with faith, and ranked alongside faith in the same category, as if we were saved by faith plus something else added besides. We are not saved by faith plus repentance, plus confession, plus baptism; but by faith--a faith that repents, confesses, leads to baptism, but just that sort of faith, and nothing else. It is a grave mistake to rank the steps of faith alongside with faith, as equal and joint cause of salvation. These things are not co-ordinate with faith; but sub-ordinate to it. They come out of faith if that faith be real. If one should reply that Christ says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"--that is a mode of expression parallel with "love God *and keep His commandments.*" It does not mean two different things, but one thing; "for this is the love of God that we keep his commandments." For the true love of God alone can keep His commandments; and any obedience divorced from the love of God is not to be thought of. So faith always obeys implicitly, because it is faith; if it did not obey it would be shown to be defective, or not faith at all. It is the true faith that saves; and though it involves the obedience, it is still only *faith*.

Examples of saving faith and its manifestations in obedience are many. By faith Noah wrought to build the ark to the saving of his house. By faith Israel in Egypt sprinkled the blood on the doorposts; and the angel passing over saw not only the blood but also the faith that put it there. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days. Those walls fell by faith; and they fell by grace--for wherever faith is there grace operates; and where there are there is no room for man's boasting; all the glory is the Lord's. In the New Testament the blind man of John 9 must indeed go to Siloam and wash; otherwise he shall never receive his sight. Yet it is not by virtue of his own act, nor by the water of the pool of Siloam that his eyes were opened, but the power and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus also it is not the act of baptism (as though that were anything in itself) but by the grace and power of the Lord Jesus, and through faith, that the baptized one has remission of sins.

It is supremely needful to stress that which really constitutes our salvation; the cross of Christ, the love which at infinite cost provided the salvation; the perfect freeness of the grace; and that it is by simple faith that we lay hold of all God's gift. Otherwise our proud hearts will forever plume themselves on what we have done. For the natural tendency of our perverted minds is to glory in works and to trust in what we have done or are doing, as though it were by something of our own will-power and goodness that we had attained to salvation. We are nothing--only lost souls, dead in trespasses and sins. We can do nothing--only flee to Jesus and rely helplessly on Him. As for the baptism--it is in no sense a work; it can barely be call an act. God would not let man baptize himself, lest he might think he had done something. Another must baptize him; he can but yield himself to be buried and raised. It is not by any efficacy of the water, or by the sacramental virtue of a rite or ceremony, but purely as His appointed expression of faith that baptism is at all valid with God. But this *is* valid and indispensable.

As we are saved by grace, so do we stand in grace, all our Christian life through. (Rom. 5:2) We are established in a new relationship with God. As law could not justify, so neither can it sanctify. We are no longer under bondage again unto fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father, (Rom. 8:15) Sin shall not have dominion over us, for we are not under law but under grace. And His grace is always sufficient for us, for His strength is made perfect in weakness, that the glory and praise may be His. Out of that root alone springs the true Christian life, its love and joy and peace and hope, its good works ("faith working through love") and perfect confidence and eternal good comfort (2 Thess. 2:16)--that according as it is written--"he that glorifieth let him glory in the Lord."

WE STAND IN CHRIST'S TRIUMPH

A. W. Tozer

Among evangelicals it is a commonplace to say that the superiority of Christianity to every other religion lies in the fact that in Christianity a Person is present, active, filling, upholding and supporting all. That Person, of course, is Jesus Christ.

That is what we say, and say truthfully, but my own experience has shown how difficult it is to make this belief a practical force in my own life. And a little observation reveals that my fellow evangelicals for the most part are not doing much better. This mighty world-beating truth gets lost under a multitude of lesser truths and is allowed to lie forgotten while we struggle, mostly unsuccessfully, with the world, the flesh and the devil.

The unique thing about the early Christians was their radiant relation to a Person. "The Lord," they called Him tenderly, and when they used the term they gave it its own New Testament meaning. It meant Jesus Christ who a short while before had been among them but was now gone into the heavens as their High Priest and Advocate.

It was this engrossment with a victorious Person that gave verve and vibrancy to their lives and conviction to their testimony. They bore witness joyously to the One who had lived as a true Man among men. Their testimony was not weakened by the pale cast of [philosophical] thought. They knew that Jesus was very Man and very God, and He had died, had been raised from the dead and had ascended into heaven. They accepted literally His claim to be invested with authority over everything in heaven, earth and hell. How it could be they never stopped to inquire. They trusted Him absolutely and left the details to their triumphant Lord.

Another marked characteristic of the witness of those first Christians was their insistence that Jesus was Lord and mover in a long-range plan to restore the earth and to bring it again under divine control. He is now sovereign Head of His body the Church, they declared, and will extend His rule to include the earth and the world in His own good time. Hence they never presented Him as Saviour merely. It never occurred to them to invite people to receive "peace of mind" or "peace of soul." Nor did they stop at forgiveness or joy or happiness. They gathered up all these benefits into one Person and preached that Person as the last and highest sum of every good possible to be known and enjoyed in this world or that which is to come. "The same Lord over all," they said, "is rich unto all that call upon him." The seeker must own Him Lord triumphant, not a meek-eyed Lover of their souls only, but Lord above all question or doubt.

Today we hold the same views, but our *emphasis* is not the same. The meek and lowly Jesus has displaced the high and holy Jesus in the minds of mil-

lions. The vibrant note of triumph is missing in our witness. A sad weeping Jesus offers us His quiet sympathy in our griefs and temptations, but He appears to be as helpless as we are when the pressure is on. His pale feminine face looks at us from the "holy picture" of the Catholic and the Easter card of the Protestant. We give Him our sympathy, but scarcely our confidence. The helpless Christ of the crucifix and the vacuous-countenanced Christ that looks out in sweet innocence from the walls of our evangelical homes is all one and the same. The Catholics rescue Him by bringing a Queen of Heaven to His aid. But we Protestants have no helper. So we sing pop choruses to cheer our drooping spirits and hold panel discussions in the plaintive hope that someone will come up with the answer to our scarce-spoken complaint.

Well, we already have the answer if we but had the faith and wisdom to turn to it. The answer is Christ Victorious, high over all. He lives forever above the reach of His foes. He has but to speak and it is done. He need but command and heaven and earth obey Him. Within the broad framework of His far-looking plans He tolerates for a time the wild outlawry of a fallen world, but he holds the earth in His hand and can call the nation to judgment whenever He wills.

Yes, Christian pilgrim, we are better off than the sad Church can see. We stand in Christ's triumph. Because He lives we live also. *Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

YOUR NEIGHBOR

In some sense the "foreign missionary" does not need as much faith as we in the U.S. do.

Let me explain: it is not hard for a missionary in, say Japan to realize that the people he sees worshipping a huge image of Buddha are lost and doomed and desperately need the Gospel. But is it not hard for you to believe that your neighbor is also lost and doomed if he has not bowed his knee to Christ as Lord? Your neighbor may be pleasant, moral and even religious--and yet need to be converted just as much as those worshippers of Buddha. God help us all to believe what His word says about the condition of men.

A. W. Tozer says in his book, *Born After Midnight*: "A man may be born in a sanitary hospital receive his education in progressive schools, ride in an air-conditioned car, sleep on a foam rubber mattress, wear synthetic clothing, eat vitamin-enriched food, read by fluorescent lights, speak across 12,000 miles of empty space to a friend on the other side of the world, lose his anxieties by taking tranquilizing pills, die without pain by the aid of some new drug and be laid to rest in a memorial park as lovely as a country garden; yet what will all this profit him if he must later rise to face in judgment a God who knows him not and whom he does not know?... Is that man any better off than if he had died a naked savage in the hinterlands of Borneo?"

MAKING THE MOST OF INTERRUPTIONS

Joyce Broyles

Like most women today, I lead an active life. Often, I am going in many directions at once. Wearing too many hats, taking on too many responsibilities, I often do not have the time to do them right. Each time I plan to let some jobs go, I seem to take on more. If I am not careful, it gets out of control.

I have a little note pad someone gave me that reads, "If I am so busy, why aren't I rich?" Often I asked myself that very question!

This morning was like that. I awoke on time, but just did not have the courage to get out of bed. The more I considered it, the more my head hurt until I began to feel nauseous. Too exhausted, I dreaded facing the new day and all its chores.

My Christmas holidays were supposed to be a time of rest and relaxation with my family. I had made plans to do housecleaning, visiting, gardening, and much writing. Each day, however, I was frustrated by interruptions. Instead of what I had planned, someone else had to be visited or something else had to be done.

One day, I recalled a statement made by one of my guests. He said, "Jesus' life was one big interruption." He went on to explain that each time Jesus was on his way to do something, someone stopped him and asked for a favor. From little children to old ladies, they often made his plans go awry.

Now, what I have to do is not so important as what Jesus had to do. Not minding the interruptions, He even seemed to encourage them. During the wonderful thousand days of His ministry, in each case, He made a difference in that life.

After asking God for extra guidance and stamina, I also admitted that I had a bad attitude toward interruptions. Some of those must have been God-sent, because I know I was needed. Realizing that fact helped to make me comprehend. Those were not interruptions, they were doors of opportunity. I had even prayed for them! Why had I not recognized them as such!

My list of things to do continues to grow. At the end of each day, I check off what I have done, then turn the page to begin a new list. The good things I have done that are not on my list are the interruptions that I will be rewarded for some day. I know that it is not my strength nor my personality, but just because I know Him that I can do anything worthwhile daily, through my personal expressions.

BRO. HENRY HARDING PROMOTED TO GLORY

Henry C. Harding was born May 16, 1923 to Herman and Janie (Jarboe) Harding in Perry County, Indiana. Henry accepted Christ as his Savior and Lord during his early teen years at the Lilly Dale Church of Christ.

At the age of 16 or 17 Henry and his parents moved to Louisville so they could attend the Bible classes taught by Bro. R. H. Boll and other great men of the faith. During this time Henry felt the call of God on his life to preach the Word. He was encouraged by brothers Winston and Dennis Allen, who were also attending the classes.

The Harding Family moved from Louisville to the mountains of Virginia and South Carolina where they labored in the construction business as well as ministered God's Word. In South Carolina Henry met his wife, Thelma Henline. They had two sons, David and Michael, both now living in Lexington, Ky. Henry spent several years in Greenville, S. C. ministering to the Church of Christ there and also ministered in the Jacksonville, Florida area.

In the mid 1970's the Lord led them to full-time ministry at the Rosspoint Church of Christ in Harlan County, Ky. During this ministry in November 1977 Thelma lost her life in a tragic auto accident that permanently damaged Henry's health.

Henry married Ruth Arrowood of Columbus, Ohio August 19, 1978 and continued his ministry at Rosspoint until 1983, when they moved to Mackville for a ministry of a year or so. They moved on to Bardstown and began ministry with the Nelsonville Church of Christ, a ministry that continued for 14 years.

Henry was hindered physically by the accident in 1977 and by a severe heart attack in 1991, but continued to faithfully preach Christ as long as he could make it to the church. His last 3 days of this life were spent praying, singing, and quoting scripture as he lay upon his bed at home. He departed this life to be with the Lord December 1, 1997. His funeral was at the Lilly Dale Church of Christ on December 3, where Bro. Harry Coultas conducted the service. Bro. and Sis. Sam Marsh and Sis. Karen Johnson sang lovely hymns of hope and joy at his funeral.

Bro. Henry Harding loved God's Word and faithfully proclaimed it and supported many good works of faith in the brotherhood.

Sis. Ruth Harding resides at 407 Cathedral Manor in Bardstown, Ky. 40004. Send her a note of love and encouragement. She continues to worship with the Nelsonville congregation.

--Bro. Harry K. Coultas, minister Mackville Church of Christ

VOICES From The FIELDS

Rachel Erikson

C. P. 3006 - Coxipo da Ponte

78060-200 Cuiaba, MT Brazil

Email: rachele@nutecnet.com.br

(Rachel Johnson Eriksen's parents, Robert & Corrine Johnson, were missionaries in Brazil for years, and then in Mozambique. Within about a year's time both of them plus Rachel's husband died. Her grandparents also were missionaries in Brazil, sent out by Churches of Christ in the late 1920's. And now Rachel has gone there again! --AVW)

Praises to Him: Last May I graduated from Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan with a K-8 teaching certificate. In June, Wycliffe Bible Translators accepted me to teach the missionary children. On August 11, Varig Airlines carried me back to Brazil safely with all my (big) bags! Cristy Kroeker is my new friend, prayer partner, and co-worker. We are responsible for grades 1-6 at the school.

Will you pray? For my spiritual health, safety, and growth. For my relationship with Cristy, my students and the parents. For wisdom and creativity in preparing effective lessons.

Wycliffe Bible Translators is a mission organization working worldwide. The goal is to translate the Word of God for those who don't have the Bible in their language. As a result they can know God, trust Christ as their Savior, and grow in their walk with Him. And I'm helping translate the Bible because I'm part of the team. My job is to teach the missionary children (Mks) grades 4-6. By taking on this responsibility, it allows the linguists to focus their time on translation and literacy.

Ken & Sandra Rideout Thailand (But now on furlough)

(This is Ken Rideout's 50th year of preaching the gospel, and 40th year as a missionary to Asia--mainly in Thailand, but also in Singapore, Taiwan and China. As mentioned last month, the Gallatin Church of Christ helps sponsor them. He and Sandra will have a furlough for a few months starting in Feb. --AVW)

Since October, we have been conducting monthly training sessions for the pastors and leaders on the Lahu Christian Convention. Each session has brought such wonderful witness of the moving of the Holy Spirit in the lives of these men and women. Our training has been based around four main points; *repentance* leading to *revival* defined

as moving out in evangelism, with urgent and constant *prayer*, and an understanding of the power of the *Holy Spirit* in their lives. In this last meeting it was so wonderful to see the light and joy in the faces of these men and women as they sang praises. Many have already been moved in repentance, in commitment to go into Laos to evangelize, to move into surrounding animistic villages to preach. Several have had visions specifically relating to the Lahu nation receiving the gospel. Already, mature Christians leaders have committed to indigenous frontier missions among the Lahu and Akha in places closed to the western missionary evangelist. So we are filled with joy at what the Lord has done this year and how you have helped us. Even under strong attack from the evil one, we have known the victory of God's grace through His great love and the prayers of many. "Ye shall walk through the fire and it shall not harm you."

Our contact address in the U.S. by Feb. 1 will be 1117 Kirkland Ave., Nashville, TN 37216. Telephone: (615) 228-8693. Email: Com-
puserve 100426,1002

Martin Brooks

Mozambique

Dec. 15, 1997

You may recall a few months ago when I wrote about Minister Job Chambaugh (Minister of Justice in charge of Religious Affairs) going with Don and myself to the crusade in Panda. He spoke at a prayer breakfast last Saturday. He is a very knowledgeable and humorous man. He spoke on the religious history from the time Mozambique was "discovered" by the Portuguese. He also gave his ideas on what needs to be done to reach the country for Christ. He encouraged the missionaries to learn the local languages instead of relying on Portuguese and interpreters. He also said we missionaries need to work in the rural areas and get out of the city.

I think a willingness to move in rural areas is something the Lord eases you into. Just this last week our electricity was very unreliable. Our refrigerator did not have sufficient power to run and our freezer thawed. On top of all of that water went out for one day. Murphy was hard at work in Mozambique. I don't say this to complain but rather to emphasize how the Lord slowly prepares us for what He is calling us to do. We don't know what the future holds for us in Mozambique, but we are interested in looking at some more rural areas. Which brings me to another prayer request. Actually, a twofold prayer request. We really need a four wheel drive vehicle. Even in the city the potholes eventually tear up cars. The recent rains have really deteriorated the roads. On the dirt road in the front of our house, someone came up with the bright idea of filling the huge holes with truck loads of semi-crushed glass. There are thousands of broken (not crushed) coke bottles in the road. When the puddles fill with water, we can't see to avoid the biggest chunks. This is in the suburbs of the capital city. The

rural areas are simply impassable in our Toyota station wagon. So, prayer request number one is for the Lord to provide a reliable, used four-wheel drive vehicle. Prayer request number two is for the Lord to lead us into the ministries He wants us to do and in His perfect timing. Our team has a goal of placing a family (or two) in each of the ten provinces of Mozambique. As we explore the options (which we need the vehicle to adequately do) we ask you to pray with us.

One more event I want to share involves my son, Kirk (12). He and some of his friends have recently been running around the city block after school each day. Last week, an older Mozambican boy came up to him and grabbed Kirk's arm. The boy then reached to steal a necklace around Kirk's neck. When he resisted, the boy took a cigarette and burned Kirk. He then grabbed Kirk's new watch and ripped it off his wrist. The boy then turned and walked away. Kirk came running into the Christian school where he attends to get help. He was quite upset. We are very grateful he was not hurt worse than he was. The cigarette could easily have been a knife. This event happened in broad daylight and Kirk was with another 12 year old friend. Kirk seems to be doing OK now. A Brazilian friend at school gave him his watch as a gesture of sympathy. There are some sweet, compassionate people at this school.

The whole ordeal made me realize afresh how dependent we are on the Lord's protection. I can't be with my family every minute, but the Lord is. Even if I were with my family every minute, there are events I can not stop. We thank the Lord for protecting Kirk and we are requesting prayer that we (especially Kirk) and you do not generalize this into a distrust of all Mozambicans. Things like this happen in the States too and it would be equally upsetting there. Please pray we will all learn and grow from experience.

January 8, 1998

I've frequently heard that the first term of mission work is largely spent trying to figure out what to do. Not that there is nothing to do. There are thousands of paths that could be taken, the real question is which path would have been many cultural questions to sort out. Again and again I ask myself, am I for "this" or against "that" based on Scripture or based on my background and preferences?

A few weeks ago, Don and I took Gene and Alice with us to Inhambane. Alice was the daughter of a missionary and was born in Inhambane in 1930. She remembered crocodiles and hippos in the lake behind her house. She talked about long trips to Lorenzo Marcos which was the Portuguese name for Maputo. She spoke of how her father was responsible for the construction of the Free Methodist training center near Inharrime. Her memory said to take the left fork in the dirt

road, go a few kilometers and turn left again by the large Baobab tree. Amazingly, the directions were very accurate. As we stopped to admire the large tree (the trunk was at least 10 feet across), Gene started a conversation with an elderly gentleman who remembered Alice's father and brother.

Alice began to cry as we walked around the house of her childhood. The center is still being operated by the Mozambican Free Methodists, but it is in terrible disrepair. As we walked through the house, she pointed out cabinets that her father had constructed. Memories poured out as she saw the fireplace and wooden floors. She showed us her bedroom and her father's office. She talked about the fruit orchard that was now missing and the garden near the lake. Weeds grew tall. The houses her father had constructed for students were still there, but they were abandoned and needed a lot of work to be useful again. The crocodiles and hippos were gone. The girl's dorm and medical clinic were difficult to find and what was left of the buildings needed more than a little paint. There was however a one room primary school that continues to meet on the property and the Bible school was still in operation for the local people. There did not appear to be many students.

As we walked around the training center I could not help but wonder what would be the eveue. Would our training center fall into disrepair. If there were another war and the missionaries had to leave, would the work go on? I am reading a book on the history of the church in Africa. It is written by a Catholic priest. The missionaries have come and gone several times through the ages. In many cases the people of Africa incorporated some "Christian" elements into their traditional African religions. This has resulted in the sometimes bizarre mixture of practices and religion we see today. If we were asked to leave, would anything of substance be left behind?

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Jack Blaes

Portland Christian School,
Louisville KY

In a recent supplement to the *Business First* newspaper--the 1997 *Book of Lists*--forty-four of the largest private and public schools in the Louisville area were compared. **PORTLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL HAD THE MOST AFFORDABLE**

TUITION, THE SECOND LOWEST TEACHER TO STUDENT RATIO, AND THE THIRD HIGHEST AVERAGE ACT COMPOSITE TEST SCORES! How blessed we are to have a Christian school that not only has provided a quality Christian education to so many in the past, but also is committed

and diligent in its efforts to provide a strong Christian education now and in the future. To God be the glory. -- J. R. Satterfield, Administrator

Christian Youth Encampment, La.

1998 CYE Schedule

-Junior Week, June 21-25

-Jr. High Week, July 12-17

-Senior Week, July 26-31

Lilly Dale Church of Christ

... is seeking for a minister. Please contact Nolan Williams (812) 843-5866.

Tell City Church of Christ

Tell City had the privilege to host Paul and Virginia Kitzmiller who will soon be leaving for Russia to teach English and speak the Gospel. The presentation included: Video footage of the Russian work; articles of interest, like Russian Bible and money and pictures. "Russian" refreshments such as Dark breads, cheeses, chocolates, apple butter, anything with cabbage and hot tea for a special "Russian" fellowship time!

Lovegifts to the Kitzmillers and Russian people for Christ should be sent to "Hamburg Mission Fund", P. O. Box 3, Sellersburg IN 47172

Jennings La. Church of Christ

Kudos to young people. The young people from this church family continue to shine! 22 of them made the Honor Roll. Lynn Lasserre made first team All District football team.

Adults too may shine as light in the world! Recently honored was

Stella Huff, chosen as Employee of the Month at Jennings American Legion Hospital.

The Lord takes notice, not only of what we give, but of what we have left. Christian giving is radically unselfish. People are always willing to give money if there might be some pay-back. That's why people spend so much on gambling and why many people give to politicians. There is nothing radical about self-seeking giving. In contrast, much of our church giving goes to assist the whole church and its mission rather than to benefit ourselves. We may not even get the gratification of knowing the end results. What did it mean for a hopeless family's life that your donation helped pay some bills? Whose lives are being saved by your gifts to Africa, Greece, or the Philippines? We do not always know the details, and yet we give anyway. That is radical!

Gallatin, TN Church of Christ

Calling Evil Good - Please open your Bible to Romans 1 and read verse 22-32. Note these words: fools, corruptible, uncleanness, dishonor, vile affections, lust, unseemly, unrighteousness, without natural affection, worthy of death.

Some of these words apply to any sin, but all are describing the lifestyle of the homosexual and lesbian. (The average age of death of a gay man is 43 years compared to 77 for others.)

Our president recently made history when he spoke to an organization promoting this lifestyle. He clearly condones such as ac-

ceptable to society. He boasted that the government was spending ten times as much on AIDS research as on cures for cancer and heart disease, even though thousands more die from the latter diseases.

Mr. Clinton's stand is no surprise since he told us his view before his first election. In spite of this (and several other unbiblical views) he was elected a second time.

Listen to what God says: "**Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness.**"- Isaiah 5:20. Do we not see the result: "**God gave them up.**" What goes for individuals also goes for nations - Psalm 9:17. -- Julius Hovan

Revival Success at Locust Street, Johnson City, TN

Thanks to all of those who helped to make our Homecoming Revival such a success. Our total attendance over five meetings was 198! This included 60 who joined us for our basket lunch on Sunday. Thanks to all those who provided meals for Mike Abbott. Thanks to all of the wonderful singers who brought great worship time to our revival, including Bob Singleton and Jim Potter. And the messages by Mike were sure to inspire and give us all something to think about.

Ralph Ave. Church, Lou., KY

We have much work to do in the new year. Several have left during the last year and we need to replace them. Be sure to keep the prayer list close by for very many. Our average for the year was: Sunday School (48); Church (67); Evening (32); Wednesday (35)

We can be very thankful, Sis. Elizabeth Miller put her membership

in the church during the year. We also had 3 baptized.

Youth Rally, Pine Prairie, La

Bro. Sonny Childs will lead a youth rally at the Pine Prairie Church of Christ on Sat. Feb. 14. It will begin at 9 a.m. and continue through 4:30 p.m. All young people are warmly invited. Brother Childs has a message that's exciting, relevant and Biblical.

Youth Minister Sought

The Church of Christ in Pine Prairie, La. is looking for a youth minister during the coming summer months. Anyone wanting more information may contact the youth committee by calling the following toll-free numbers: 1 (800) 599-2371 or 1 (888) 599-2303. Or you may write P. O. Box 543, Pine Prairie, LA 70576.

Pray For Asia

Pray for our brothers & sisters in Asia, many of whom face terrific economic hardships at present. For instance, the Philippine peso exchange rate was about 30 pesos to one dollar till recently. Then it fell as low as 41 pesos per dollar.

Fine Books Available Again

We recently received 27 copies of Bro. Boll's book on **Daniel** and the one on **Revelation**. Each sells for only \$8.00 plus postage (plus 6% tax if you live in Ky.). Or you may buy both books for only \$15 and we'll pay the postage (but you pay the tax if in Ky.). Both books are very helpful. And Robert Garrett has done us the favor of simplifying them by switching from the ASV to the NIV. Order these for your classes before we run out. Pray for Robert as he works on reprinting Bro. Boll's **The Kingdom of God**, and also **Hebrews**.

WEEP WITH THOSE WHO WEEP

On Nov. 16 the Portland Ave. Church joined with over 50,000 churches in 115 lands in holding "Remember the Persecuted" Sunday. Why? Because on average, nearly 20 Christians die for their faith every hour of every day, year-round! More Christians have been killed for Christ's sake during this century than during the preceding 18 centuries put together!

So our sermon and songs centered around how worthy Jesus is of our all, in life and death. And about the various places, ways and reasons that Christians are suffering for Him today. And we had a number of prayers specifically for our suffering brothers and sisters worldwide: For them to have power to forgive. For prisoners and refugees. For students. For governments. For Sauls to become Pauls. For the starving and naked. For widows and orphans. For those needing Bibles and those distributing them.

It was a solemn and searching time. But we ended by seeing God's sovereignty. He is bringing good out of horrific evils. Sudan, for example, where probably the worst persecution on earth is occurring, is also experiencing more church growth than anywhere else in the Muslim world!

And we quoted a Christian who had suffered for 32 years in a Soviet labor camp. He said, "Even a desert looks like a flower garden when you are in communion with the Lord."

O God, to us may grace be given

To follow in their train --

To follow in HIS train!