

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLIV, August, 1950)

THE FOOL HATH SAID

When a beautiful sunset bathes the earth
In wondrous golden light,
When the stars above bestud the sky
In Heavenly radiance bright,
When a lovely rose in the morn unfolds
And sends its fragrance out,
Can the fool still say, "There is no God";
Beholding these, can he doubt?

—Selected.

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

ON THE STUDY OF "REVELATION"

As if foreseeing the doubt and discredit that would be cast upon this book the Spirit of God who gave it took especial precaution to commend it to our earnest and reverent attention. The "forgotten beatitude" (as it has been called) of Rev. 1:3 still stands, valid and true even to our day:

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy of this book, and keep the things that are written therein, for the time is at hand."

It is pre-eminently a book for the church—"appointed to be read in the churches." "What thou seest," said the Spirit to John, "write in a book and send it to the seven churches." (Rev. 1:11). And that it was meant to *all* the churches (all the congregations of Christ) is clear from 22:16, where the Lord says, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches." Nor was it only meant for churches collectively, but for every individual. Over and over recurs the exhortation to each individual person: "He that bath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." That such admonition cannot be ignored without loss and injury should be evident to everyone.

Then, again, there is the repeated insistence on the Divine authority of the Revelation as the Word of God. That in the course of time men would arise who on one pretext or another would want to throw the book out of court, the Lord well foreknew. Some would pretend to spurn it because of its symbolic character; some would discredit it because it will not fit in with their ideas and their systems of doctrine; and some would reject it and deny its Divine inspiration altogether. But here, again and again, the Spirit forestalls and warns that in this book we are dealing "not with the word of

men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe." Thus, in 19:9 we read: "These are true words of God"; and in 21:5, "And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true"; or, again, in 22:6, "These words are faithful and true." Why does He re-iterate this so much? In no other book of the Bible do we find such constant re-affirmations and assurances. Then there is the solemn warning at the close, that our destiny depends on reverent regard for the integrity of this book (22:18, 19). Let all chisellers and cavillers and scoffers take heed!

DIFFICULTIES IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

But the book of Revelation presents some extraordinary difficulties to the Bible student and to the average reader. What shall we make of all this strange imagery? How are its symbolic figures to be interpreted and understood? And we hear of an array of wild theories and peculiar doctrines professedly based on this book. All that is discouraging. The natural counsel of man's wisdom would be, "Better let it alone." But God's counsel is, "Blessed is he that readeth and keepeth," and, "He that hath an ear let him hear." Which should we follow? Which will you follow?

But how shall we study the book so as to understand the message it has for us? Here are a few helpful suggestions.

1. Approach with reverent, humble faith (Isa. 66:2). The word of God does good to the lowly hearts and humble souls (Matt. 11:25, 26). If one must receive the kingdom of God as a little child, so must we receive God's word also. God's truth is veiled to the proud and self-sufficient.

2. Give God a clear page to write on. If you approach this book, or any book of the Bible, with foregone conclusions and notions in your mind, you will miss its truth. It has been well said that —

"Some read to prove their creed,

Thus understanding little what they read.

And every passage in the book they bend

To make it suit this all-important end.

Some read, as I have often thought,

To teach the Book, instead of being taught."

HOW TO BEGIN

Now as to the *method* of studying the Revelation, I will make a few suggestions which, I trust, may prove helpful.

1. Read it first for what you can readily understand, leaving the things you do not understand for further study. I would suggest that you mark on every page what is plain and obvious to you. I think you will be surprised how much there is on the surface of the book that you can easily see and understand. The whole of the first chapter, I am sure. Also, in the main, the seven messages to the seven churches in chapters 2 and 3. Apart from some questions of detail, chapters 4 and 5 are quite plain. In chapter six the meaning of the vivid picture under the sixth seal is easy to comprehend; and though you may not be able to identify the 144,000 (beware of foolish "explanations" here) nor the innumerable company

of chapter 7 there is much said that is not at all difficult. And so throughout the rest of the book. Much of it is plain enough. More will become plain in the course of further study.

2. Note the threefold division in Rev. 1:19: (1) Things "thou sawest"—recorded in chapter 1. (2) "Things that are," which are shown in chapters 2 and 3. (3) Things future, which begin with chapter 4:1. This is a simple synopsis of the book, and absolutely reliable, for it is given by the Lord Himself. This threefold summary will help much in the general understanding of the book.

3. Note the two goals of the book: the first is announced in chapter 11:15; accomplished in 19:11-20:6. The second, and final goal, is reached in chapters 21 and 22:1-5.

4. Many of the symbols are plainly interpreted; others can be easily comprehended. They are not all altogether as perplexing as at first they may appear. Thus, for example, the Dragon of chapter 12 is explained in simple speech (12:9). The Beast of chapter 13 finds explanation in Dan. 7. The "Second Beast" is later spoken of as the "false prophet" and he shares the first Beast's doom. Do not jump at conclusions as to the meaning of some of the symbolic figures. Go slow. Better it is to leave things unexplained for the time, than to force them into agreement with your own thoughts of what they ought to mean, or what they might mean. Like other parts of God's word, the Revelation will unfold itself to the humble seeking mind. And it will be worth the while.

5. Over and above the "interpretation" of the prophetic word, is its practical lesson. You can get *the lesson* of a passage, the meaning of which you have not fathomed. The desire to know and do the will of God is the key and gateway to the truth (John 7:17). "The path of the righteous is as the dawning light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

But it is not to be concluded that to understand all the meaning of all the content of this book is the prime necessity, and the first great requirement—but rather that we should *know what it says*. The blessing is not in the first place to him who understands it all, but to those "that *hear the words* of the prophecy of this book, and *keep the things* that are written therein." It is ever so with the word of prophecy. Though much of it we do and must understand, and know that God will fulfil His every word with faithfulness, yet the prophetic word also conceals much while revealing. There are always items of when, where, and how, questions of conditions and circumstances, which we cannot know. The important thing is that we have such a knowledge of what God actually said that when it comes to pass (or begins to take shape, Luke 21:28) we may recognize the time and the appointed fulfilment. The Jews probably did not have such a full knowledge of the circumstances attending the coming of their Messiah as to enable them to draw a full picture beforehand, but they could have had knowledge enough whereby to recognize Him when He did come. In this they failed badly (Acts 13:27) and the Lord held them responsible for the failure.

These few suggestions are written for mere beginners. But we

may all do well now and then to begin again on simple principles, even though we may have been far advanced. It is good for us to come back at times to God's word with minds fresh, and unpre-occupied, to begin anew to hear and learn. And withal let us pray the prayer of the psalmist, "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." (Ps. 119:18.)

THE DEVIL'S LIES

Richard Ramsey

Listen to the lies the devil tells. He says, "Oh, don't bother to read the Bible. You cannot understand it. You will only get yourself upset about nothing. Let it alone."

Again the devil lies when he says, "Oh, the Bible is just a bundle of Jewish fables and silly myths. No intelligent person would take it seriously."

However, the most subtle of all the lies the devil tells is this. He says, "You must agree that there is much truth in the Bible. But you have to pick out the truth for yourself. Just as a beautiful gift comes wrapped in a package, so also must you cut away the wrappings, so to speak, of the Bible in order to see the truth that is in it." In other words, you can believe some of the Bible, but most of it is unnecessary wrappings that must be discarded.

Thousands of years ago in the garden of Eden Satan began his temptation of Eve by throwing doubt on the word of God. Today, in the twentieth century A. D., the devil still finds the word of God to be the biggest obstacle he has to face, and he is doing all that is in his power to destroy it.

When you come face to face with the devil, your only hope of defeating him is the word of God. When Jesus met Satan's temptations in the wilderness, he used the word of God as his weapon, that is, he quoted scripture to him. And today, when sin crosses your path, you will find the Bible to be your weapon for destroying it. The word of God, living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, is the sword of the Spirit whereby you can fight against the spiritual hosts of wickedness all about us.

The Bible, then, is the weapon whereby you can defeat Satan. The Bible is the word of God which produces faith to the saving of your soul. James admonishes us to "receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." "The words that I have spoken unto you," said Jesus, "are spirit, and are life."

Friends, the Bible can produce faith to save your soul. Therefore the Bible is worth more to you than silver and gold; the Bible is worth to you the price of your eternal soul. Let no one take it away from you; let no man keep you from reading its life-giving message; let not the lies of the devil interfere with your reading it, believing it, obeying it to the saving of your soul.

—Taken from tract.

NEWS AND NOTES

Cynthiana, Ky.: "We had a good meeting in Tell City with Brother Rutherford preaching. He gave us fine Gospel lessons in the spirit of gentleness and love. We baptized a young man and his wife (he was a Catholic). We praise God for the power of His word. We are now in the midst of a meeting here at Salem church with Brother Houtz. Fine interest and large crowds so far. We are of good courage and look to the Lord for a great ingathering of souls."—Elmer C. Ringer.

Gospel Meetings Scheduled

The following meetings are scheduled for the near future:

Borden, Indiana. Howard T. Marsh will be with these brethren for the sixth consecutive year, beginning August 6.

17th and Main, Louisville. This little congregation is to have James Hardison with them in a meeting from August 6-13.

Fisherville, Ky. Orell Overman is to be with the Fisherville church from August 20 to September 2, preaching each night.

Camp Taylor, Ky. The Kentucky Avenue church will have Orell Overman with them in their fall meeting, beginning September 18 and continuing for two weeks.

South Louisville church, 5th and M, Louisville. Robert B. Boyd has been selected by this congregation for their meeting, which is to start October 4.

Antioch church of Christ, near Frankfort, Ky., is presenting the Gospel in a protracted meeting from July 31 through August 13. H. L. Olmstead of Gallatin, Tenn., is doing the preaching.

Shawnee church, Louisville. Hall C. Crowder is the evangelist for the Shawnee meeting, which is to be held from September 10 to 17.

The Portland Avenue tent meeting was unusually well attended this year. It continued for three weeks with twenty responses in all. Four of these were baptized into Christ; the others were restorations and reconsecrations. Dale Jorgenson did an excellent job as song leader.

Salem Revival

Brother LaVern Houtz, minister of Salem church, out from Cynthiana, Ky., reports a good meeting with E. C. Ringer as evangelist. He says that both members and outsiders attended well and that Brother Ringer brought scriptural, soul-inspiring messages, endearing himself and his Lord to the hearts of the people. One was baptized and two placed membership.

A highlight of the revival was an all-day meeting with a hymn-sing in the afternoon of the last Sunday. Congregations represented were Tell City, Ind., Virden, Winchester, Lexington, Alexandria, Antioch, Salem, Sunrise Christian and Newtown Christian. Ministers present were Asa Baber, Ben Rake, R. B. Boyd, Orell Overman, Nick Marsh Ed Means, LaVern Houtz, and E. C. Ringer.

Old-fashioned Tent Meeting

An old-fashioned tent meeting is in its fourth week on Sylvania Road south of Louisville. Paul Knecht, Dennis Allen, and Robert Heid have been doing the preaching and singing. Thus far three have been baptized and three others have been restored to the Lord.

Camp Taylor, Ky., "Two young ladies came forward at the worship service Sunday, one for primary obedience and the other, a baptized believer, to unite with the church. Crowds at all services continue good through the summer months. We have installed two 30-inch exhaust fans for ventilation. Orell Overman of Lexington is to conduct our fall meeting, beginning September 18."—J. R. Clark.

Kavanaugh Youth Camp

The Kavanaugh Youth Camp held from July 23 to 29 was both helpful and enjoyable. About 90 attended, thirteen of these being adults. Hall Crowder did a magnificent job as Camp Director. Bible classes, music, and chapel filled up the mornings. Rest, Recreation, a short evangelistic service, some group games, and a prayer circle took up the afternoon and evening. At various times during the day there was free time for the boys and girls. On Thursday night one

came forward for reconsecration. On Friday night in a great soul-stirring service 34 came forward for the same purpose. On Saturday another came and one came also for baptism. A beautiful baptism service was held at the lake. The camp was a glorious experience for the boys and girls. This year we had to talk some into going; next year we think we'll need two camps to accommodate those who wish to go.

Brother Jack Blaes recently closed a revival at Ebenezer church of Christ. About 250 crowded into the church for a great song rally on the last Sunday afternoon. One was baptized into Christ and two came for membership.

BIBLES — TESTAMENTS

We have just received a new shipment of American Standard Version Bibles. If you need a Bible we would like to sell you one. Write for prices and description. We have also a new supply of Testaments.

Amite, La.: "The churches in this section have been active in spreading the gospel. Oak Grove with Bro. Ivy Istre preaching held a week's meeting in June. One man in his 81st year was baptized. The preaching was good, the attendance large, the spirit fine. Bro. N. B. Wright baptized two young boys Sunday following the close of the meeting.

"Amite church held a meeting July 13 to 20; Bro. Richard Ramsey did the preaching. This is considered one of the best meetings we have ever had at Amite. The house was crowded to capacity, with visitors many. The gospel was preached in a kind, clear and forceful manner. The visiting preacher also conducted a vacation Bible school which brought three times as many children as we had anticipated. It was one of the best conducted Bible schools we have ever attended. There were no conversions but the church was greatly helped and encouraged by the good meetings.

"Cottage meetings are being conducted frequently at Ponchatoula. The burden of this work has fallen on New Orleans with Richard Ramsey leading the way. Amite and Oak Grove have been helping out in

song leading and some speaking. We believe the church must be active in extending the lines of activity, lest rigor mortis set in.

"Local churches are meeting once a month in a song rally, which is improving the song service and creating a closer tie among the congregations."—A. K. Ramsey.

Gueydon, La.: "I have been preaching in Abbeyville. I preach in French most of the time because the majority cannot understand the English. The work is encouraging, but we need your prayers."—Stanford Broussard.

Brother Stanford plans to attend Kentucky Bible College this fall. Neil Phillips recently arrived in Louisville from Africa. He too expects to enroll in Kentucky Bible College. Are you a high school graduate? Then why not come to this Christian college this fall? You will find qualified Christian teachers, good environment, and low cost. Write to Philip Bornwasser, 2500 Portland Avenue for a catalog and information desired.

Pekin, Ind.: "There have been ten baptisms in the last three weeks at the Highway Church. Thank the Lord for His saving grace."—R. R. Brooks.

Tell City, Ind.: "We closed the revival at Salem church last night with a full house. A man and his wife came for membership. One was baptized earlier in the meeting. The interest and crowds throughout were very good. I was glad to renew fellowship with the brethren. Also I received a great blessing in the work with Brother Houtz; he is mighty fine.

"We truly enjoyed the song service in the afternoon of the last day, at which time we renewed old acquaintances and made new ones from nine or ten churches in the range of 100 miles."—Elmer C. Ringe.

Jennings, La.: "Brother N. B. Wright of New Orleans conducted a revival meeting at the Jennings church during the first two weeks of June. His meetings were spiritual and very inspiring. Many visitors were present at the services and manifested a fine interest. A daily vacation Bible school was conducted during those two weeks. There were 101 enrolled in the classes, and

much good was accomplished. Bro. Wright taught a class in the Bible school, preached at 10:30 every morning and also at night. We praise the Lord for the good accomplished in the meeting. There were four baptisms, and several restorations."—Ivy J. Istre.

Meeting at Sugar Creek

Brother H. N. Rutherford closed an eleven day meeting at the Sugar Creek church August 2. Two young mothers were baptized into Christ, and two others took their stand as simple Christians, placing membership with the congregation. During the last thirty-five years Bro.

Rutherford has held a number of meetings for this congregation and is held in high esteem by all. Attendance was good throughout the meeting. His earnest, soul-stirring messages did us all good. We believe the church will take on new life and zeal as a result of this season of refreshing. Pray for us.—Dennis L. Allen.

We are glad to report that Brother Chambers has returned home again from his second operation this summer. The doctors commented on his unusually speedy recovery.

WEEKLY COMMUNION

Dr. Mason says, "Weekly communion did not die with apostles and their contemporaries. There is a cloud of witnesses to testify they were kept up by succeeding Christians, with great care and tenderness for above two centuries. . . . Communion every Lord's day was universal, and was preserved in the Greek Church till the seventh century; and such as neglected three weeks together were excommunicated. It was in the fourth century that the church began very discernibly to forsake her first love."

Pliny, in his Epistles, Book 10, Justin Martyr in his Second Apology for the Christians, and Tertullian, De Ora., page 135, testify that it was the universal practice in all the weekly assemblies of the brethren, after they had prayed and sung praises.

Neander says in volume 1, page 332 of his work. "As we have already remarked, celebration of the Lord's supper was still held to constitute an essential part of divine worship on every Sunday as appears from Justin Martyr; and the whole church partook of the communion after they had joined in the amen of the preceding prayer."

B. B. Edwards in his "Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge" says on page 1040: "We are informed by Eusebius that from the beginning the Christian assembly on the first day of the week, called by them the Lord's day, for the purpose of religious worship, to read the Scriptures, to preach and to celebrate the Lord's Supper."

One of the Lateran Councils decreed that "an annual communion at Easter was sufficient." Calvin writes concerning this latter practice, "And truly this custom which enjoins communication once a year, is a most evident contrivance of the devil, by whose instrumentality soever it may have been determined." Calvin again says, "Every week at least, the table of the Lord should have been spread for Christian assemblies."

Wesley says, "I also advise the elders to administer the supper of the Lord on every Lord's day."

A Campbell writes, "All antiquity concurs in evincing that, for the first three centuries, all the churches broke bread once a week."

WHAT AILETH THIS BODY?

Stanford Chambers

Certain publishers and writers are engaged in a sort of "round table" endeavor to bring out the facts and causes of what they aver to be a score or more parties, petty sects, and divisions among "us." Succinctly stated, the question is, "What is the matter with us?" By "us" is meant the people committed to a movement launched last century to restore primitive or New Testament Christianity in the world. This movement propagated the plea that instead of the divisions of Christendom there should be unity, and proposed that the teaching of the Scriptures and that alone be made the basis of the desired unity. It vigorously condemned the human creeds and doctrines of men as the cause of division. Now if it is found that the very people committed to the restoration of New Testament simplicity and unity presents to the world a situation of a house divided against itself; if it contradicts its own plea for unity by dividing into petty parties, the effort at correct diagnosis of such an ailment is commendable, and any sincere endeavor to remedy the situation should be encouraged. Correct diagnosis is important; applying the correct remedy is yet more important. Having been an observer of this same people for a half century, we are not averse to being of some assistance in the diagnosis though disinclined to appear in the role of an intruder. We do have somewhat to offer, and our offering is not divorced from prayer to Him who is no respecter of persons, and who "knoweth them that are His."

1. "Oil and water do not mix." The people under discussion are not accused of being a Spirit-filled people. (We think there are notable exceptions in individuals.) There is more water than oil. Few of them claim fellowship with the Spirit. Quite a few deny the personality of the Spirit. Many more deny that He indwells the Christian, and have never experienced "the love of God . . . shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit." They do not count on the Spirit's helping our infirmities, nor upon His making "intercessions for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." They stand (once strongly) for the moral teachings of the New Testament, teaching plainly pertaining to behavior, but as a people they have never been reputed for a high degree of spirituality.

2. They are a people who have laid great stress upon the externals of Christianity. By and large they have failed to arrive at what the few New Testament externals stand for. They have touched up and retouched the frame of the picture, have admired it, have called attention to its beauties, simplicity, etc., the while failing to appreciate or comprehend the contents for the sake of which there is the frame. Many of them scoff at the thought that there is anything fascinating in the deeper things of God. They just want to know their duty, and their God being a God of externals, the chief duty is to practice the same. They are a duty-bound people. They relish milk, the food for babes and the carnal (and need it all the more if the divisions exist as alleged, for divis-

ions are a sure sign of carnality). What is a frame without the picture? "The letter killeth; but the Spirit giveth life." Such of the letter as is found in the covenant of grace is for the sake of the Spirit's being thus made accessible to us. "Void of the Spirit" is a bad symptom. A body without the Spirit is dead. As a people they contend for the Scriptures and the Scriptures alone. They charge people of other religious bodies with gross ignorance of the Scriptures, the while it is easily discernible that a majority know too little beyond Acts 2:38, Heb. 10:5, and a few other passages. Moreover, for them the Scriptures must be interpreted—by the preacher, who must be a keen logician, able where need seems to arise, to interpret the passage to mean other than what it says; it must be made to correspond to logic. If there is conflict between the wording of the Scripture and logic, the worse for the Scripture. Yes, they have gained for themselves the name of "a first-principle people."

3. Debating once played an important part in establishing the principles for which the movement under discussion stood. The debates were originally provoked by challenges from representatives of other religious bodies. Debating then was largely from the love of the truth. The successful debaters produced admirers who had created in them the ambition to become great debaters like their heroes. Thus the aspect was changed and men debated from a love of debate. Then it came to pass that "anything is fair in war." It is for the sake of the Cause. Representatives of other bodies to join in such debates became fewer until now such debates are rather rare. So the men who have whetted their wits for debate turn on one another, and such debates create parties. Critics are developed, cynics, muck-rakers. Many become expert mote-finders and hair-splitters. By showing ability to point out defects in others they imagine they keep their own talents in demand.

4. Preacher jealousy, plainly to be observed among the people under discussion, has played its ugly part, and still does. Preachers become competitors, vieing with each other for places of advantage, for popularity among the people. Many become open rivals, even enemies, and do not even observe the rules of good sportsmanship. If one appears to be a formidable rival then if his head does not go to the waste basket it will be because the other is not equal to the job of beheading. A modern Timothy passes the word down the line and around, "Freeze Titus," and the mischief is set on foot. Division ensues, and by the "Stop Thief" method Titus is held responsible for the division! This observer could cite many an instance of this diabolical thing. Parties have leaders. The question, "Who is greatest in the kingdom," is rife among the people under consideration, especially among the preachers.

5. "My Lord tarrieth." Reaching this conclusion a servant who should have been in co-operation with the faithful, ministering food in due season to the household, became a wicked servant, eating and drinking with the drunken, and then turned against his fellow servants beating them over the head. And why? Because his own works were evil and the others' righteous. It is Cain all over again,

with as much religiousness as he had. Like Cain their theology is at fault. "He that hath this hope set on hi mpurifieth himself"—the hope of His coming. Remove this hope and one strong and needed incentive to pureness is gone. The wicked servant in our Savior's parable is to illustrate this fact. Many among the people under discussion have had forced upon them (unwittingly) Whitby's "New Hypothesis," a great modern factor in the promotion of post-millennialism, which places the coming of Christ at least a thousand years in the future. Post means after; so the coming of Christ cannot be until after the thousand years! Whitby only elaborated upon the theory of Origen of the third century, who offered and propagated the theory as a cheap explanation as to why the Lord had not come as all the earlier Christians expected. Post-millennialism, based upon the conclusion, "My Lord tarrith" is responsible for contributing very largely to the beating (tongue lashing and worse, ostracising and crucifying) of fellow-servants, issuing in division.

6. Unwritten creeds. The leaders of parties quickly crystalize their distinctive tenets and demand conformity thereto. "My 'doxy' is orthodoxy and your 'doxy' is heterodoxy." The whole world is badly challenged. So it is stand up and be measured. "Sign on the dotted line." A young man was once warned to conform or else "we will see to it that you have no place to preach. A few of us are determined . . ." More honorable and less destructive of fellowship would be to formulate and put in writing these requirements essential to enjoying their fellowship. The unwritten creed is a greater evil than the written creed.

And now—First Corinthians Chapter Thirteen, where we find out about something that will cover a multitude of sins. Would it cover a multitude of motes?

A FRANK ADMISSION

W. J. Johnson

Several years ago on Monday morning a preacher who teaches that the Holy Spirit moves people to speak in tongues today, relating experiences at their services, told how a certain woman after seeking twelve years got the Holy Spirit, began speaking in tongues, fell upon the floor, rolled over and over, and kicked the heater over: how a brother jumped up, grabbed the joists with his hands and swung from one to another till he crossed the house; and how a brother ran up to the pulpit to jump over it. We just had the biggest time." Then one of the group to whom he was relating the experiences said, "May I ask how you can harmonize what the Holy Spirit moved the Apostle Paul to write for our benefit with what you claim the Holy Spirit moves you to do." He promptly answered, "The Holy Spirit does not move us to do that." Then the querist said to him, "We accept your answer. You are correct. The Holy Spirit does not move you to do such things."

“WHAT’S WRONG WITH WOMEN?”

Mrs. Paul Knecht

A MAJOR PROBLEM

The above question, title to an anonymous article in *Christian Life* for July, 1950, pertains to one of the greatest problems of our time—child delinquency. Nathaniel Leverone, a member of the Chicago Crime Commission for twenty years, in a speech reported in the *Louisville Courier Journal* (Vol. 189, No. 161) told the Rotary Club that “Juvenile delinquency and the threat of communism are the biggest problems in the world today.” A scriptural answer to “What’s Wrong With Women?” would go far in solving the first of these major problems.

Children are doing heretofore-unheard-of things. Homes are failing on every hand. Little else can be expected of those who know not God, or refuse to have Him in their knowledge, but Christian homes are falling far below God’s high standards in many instances. Some of them are deplorable failures, comparable to those of the world. It is quiet common to read of youthful criminals who up to the time of the crime were faithful in attendance and active in Sunday School and Church work. Why? God has the answer to every problem that can confront the wife and mother. Why are we failing? What is wrong with our homes? What is wrong with Christian women?

GOD GIVES THE CAUSE, PLACES RESPONSIBILITY

Jehovah said through Hosea, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge . . . seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God I also will forget thy children.” (Hos. 4:6.) When homes fail, parents have forgotten God. When the *Christian* home fails it is due to a lack of knowledge or to a foolish misunderstanding of what is the will of the Lord (Eph. 5:17; 2 Tim. 2:7). There is great need for more powerful teaching for the Christian home—more articles such as the one in *Christian Life*. Neither the church nor the Christian school can make up for the failure of the home. They do a fine, good work but without home cooperation it is not enough. It takes all of God’s institutions to do His work, and of those institutions the home is the oldest.

The power and influence for the home, and therefore the responsibility, rests largely with the wife and mother. (Prov. 14:1; 1 Pet. 3:1). It comes from God (Ex. 1:21; Psa. 127:1). It is mother’s job to see that the things learned are written on the *hearts* of her children, not just on their minds.

A family once worked assiduously to beat the squirrels to the nuts on a hickory tree in the yard. At the close of day they were tired but satisfied with the afternoon’s work. Mother hurried in to prepare supper, forgetting to see that the nuts were stored away. To her chagrin early the next morning she saw a squirrel carrying the nuts right out of the basket which had been left under the tree! How simple and easy it is for the devil to take away the word of God that has been sown in the mind but not stored in the heart!

SECOND BEST?

With so much at stake it is important to discover what is wrong with Christian women. The above mentioned article in *Christian Life* puts the finger on the main cause of failure, in these words: ". . . all too many women are centering their lives around *self*, not around Christ." How true that is! It is undoubtedly the underlying cause of failure, yet many Christian women never realize it. The writer has written frankly and well. However, one statement gives rise to a question. She says, "If they had run away from a life of service and put marriage first, they asked God to help them make the most of His *second best* for them." (Emphasis mine.)

Why should marriage and the home be considered God's second best for woman? Home is her sphere by His arrangement. Why may she not have His best, right in the home? Is not marriage His basic institution? Is not the home the foundation of civilization? Will not the nation crumble when the home (seemingly now on its last legs with a high divorce rate and unruly children) is gone? Are not Christians the salt of the earth and therefore responsible (to the extent that their homes fail to be a light to others) for the failure of the world? Why should the mother of a Christian home think that God has given her His *second best*? Perhaps herein lies at least a partial answer to the question in mind. A second best job at best will get secondary consideration. How easy then for self to creep into the first place and find expression in everything else but "the one thing that is needful!"

GOD'S BEST FOR MOTHERS TOO

It is not to be understood because the Mary who chose "that good part" is not known to have been married that mothers may not make a like choice. No one, not even the preacher, has a greater need to sit at the feet of Jesus and hear His words than the mother into whose hands has been given the keeping of the home. It is to be remembered that the three women (Sarah, Rahab, Jochebed) honored in the chapter of faith (Heb. 11) were wives and mothers. The "holy women" of 1 Pet. 3:5 were not cloistered, celibate, behind convent walls; they were married women, being in subjection to their own husbands.

To assume on the strength of what Paul said to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 7:34) that only single women can be careful of the things of the Lord is inconsistent with other teaching (Matt. 10:36, 37; Luke 14:26) and examples (Mk. 14:26; 15:40, 41; Matt. 27:55, 56). Rather Paul's word to Corinth may be taken as a warning to married folk lest each let the other come between him and the Lord. The Lord our God is a jealous God. He does not want the closest earthly tie to separate Him from one of His own. Through the one thus closely united to Him God's power can work to strengthen all fleshly ties that come together in Him. Only when His power meets with unbelief does it sever those earthly ties.

GOD'S REMEDY AND PROMISE

A little jingle whose author is unknown runs like this:

God has His best things for the few
Who care to stand the test,
He has His second choice for those
Who will not have His best!

Marriage in itself cannot be classed as God's second best. Individuals are permitted to choose, but it is a choice, not between first and second best, but between two different fields of service. Married or single you can choose that good part; you can stand the test; you can have His best. How much *more* important to lay hold of the one thing that is needful when there are little feet to follow yours in the Way. And oh what a promise God gave to mothers in Isaiah 40:11: "He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and *will gently lead those that have their young!*"

SEED THOUGHTS

(More gleanings from notes taken in Brother Boll's winter Bible classes.)

GOD MADE THE WORLD

Brother T. B. Larimore used to give the following illustration. A man had a chronometer which measured hours, minutes and seconds. Some unbelieving scientists upon seeing the fine instrument asked him who made it. Seeing an opportunity to make a point, the Christian man replied, "Gentlemen, it was this way; fire broke out in my Jeweler shop. Quickly I gathered up my watches, clocks, and other jewelry and put them in a basket and took them outside to safety. Down the street came a fire truck and hit the basket. Up went the jewelry, watches, clocks, and as they came down they formed into this chronometer that you see." This story is just as reasonable as that the orderly universe in which we live came into being by blind chance, rather than by the creative hand of God. God made the world and all things therein.

IN THE CENTER

God knows each one of us as if there is no one else on earth. If I turn my attention on one person then I could not be thinking of others. We have human limitations, but not so with God. He can love each one of us in an individual way and all of us at the same time.

A native woman of Africa who had been separated from her village because of disease said to Dan Crawford as he left her, "Nobody can monopolize the center." Crawford wondered what she meant. Finally his curiosity sent him back across the creek for an explanation. He was impressed with her answer. She said, "They have separated me from my village and from my people, but they have not separated me from God. Every morning I look up and the sky comes to a peak over my head. So I am in the center of God's love. Nobody can take that from me." Dan Crawford left a wiser man.

THE PRICE OF HIS SOUL.

The goodly mantle, the 200 shekels of silver, and the wedge of gold looked mighty good to Achan when he went into Jericho. Even though they were devoted to God, Achan secretly took them and hid them in his tent. Later when his sin had found him out, he made a clean breast of the whole matter. Messengers went into his tent and brought the loot out to Joshua, who laid it down before Jehovah in the sun. We can be sure that these precious things did not look so good to Achan any more! Here was the price of his soul; because of them he would be stoned! So will it be when God lays the price of man's soul in the sun at the judgment; then it will look very small indeed. Fame, lust, pleasure, adultery, wealth may look good now, but what then, when they are seen to be a snare to your soul?

HE THAT HATH EARS

To a mule's ear a mule's voice sounds sweet. Some have ears for everything except the truth. Their ears are attuned to error as they give over to their corrupt nature. To many, error has more appeal than the truth. To those who receive not the love of the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness, God sendeth a working of error that they should believe a lie and be judged.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

The Christian life is lived by the power of God through faith. It is like walking on the water. Peter was not a good water walker. Only as he looked to Jesus could he walk. When he took his eyes from the Lord and began to look at the winds and the waves and consider his own weakness he began to sink. "Lord, save me," he cried. After responding to his cry the Lord rebuked him. He did not rebuke Peter for his personal weakness, but for his *lack of faith*. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Even so a Christian's failure is not due to weakness of the flesh, but to a lack of faith. The Christian life is lived through the power of God. The Christian life baffles science; it cannot be accounted for or explained on any ground of human reasoning, not any more than Peter's walking on the water could be explained on that ground.

A NEW CREATION

"Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new." 2 Cor. 5:17.

We are a new creation in Christ Jesus and should regard ourselves as such. Some think of themselves as old creatures still. We should rather live in the consciousness that we are children of God. We should envision ourselves as conquerors through Christ. To a Christian victory is a foregone conclusion if he has proper faith. Herein lies the true secret of morality, virtue and goodness; in this way we rise above hatred, covetousness, temptation, and every vice. As is our faith so will our strength be.

HOW ABOUT YOUR HOME?

Clinton Rutherford

(Continued from July)

II. THE SOLUTION

Is the loosening of the marriage tie as revealed in these articles one of the signs that the Christian faith has been losing its grip in our homes? How about your Home? Is Christ losing His grip there?

During the last century more read the Bible and engaged in public and private prayers, as well as family prayer, and greater numbers heard, once each week, sermons that proclaimed the Gospel. Once a week there was a day that reminded people of a dimension of their lives other than those of the surface. Now although a greater proportion of Americans are on church rolls, there is a wholesale decline of family religious practice, and young people are depending less upon the Christian faith for a way of life. So family life doesn't have what it takes to overcome crises. Are you preparing your home to overcome crises? or are you preparing for a home and its crises?

It's all very well to talk about family religion but we must do something about it. The Jews failed God and lost their country because they left family worship out even though God had pleaded with them to worship Him in their homes. (Deut. 6:5-9.) Our country, too, may well be losing countless blessings because many have neglected family worship.

Along with prayer, the family devotion has a vital relationship to the one secret which every parent is interested in knowing—the secret of obedient and disciplined children. There are four things I gained from family worship which helped me to obey my parents. First, the basis of all discipline is the power and authority that comes to a mother or father out of regular, consistent and daily seasons of prayer and waiting on God in company with the family and alone. If parents have power with God, they will have power over their children. The whip in the hands of a prayerless, spiritually lazy parent will often produce hatred and bitterness.

There is a second secret of discipline closely associated with the first: the self-will of the parent must be subdued. A willful parent cannot discipline or subdue willful children. The strong headed parent will rather intrench the willfulness of the child all the more firmly. I can remember a time when I felt my dad was a little head-strong towards me and I wanted to balk for no other reason than to balk. But I am thankful that through the family devotions and as I understood him better I realized I was mistaken. When parents and children alike see their responsibilities and relations to God in family worship there will be an entirely new spirit in the home.

Like Jacob, the parent who has the secret of discipline in his hands has been subdued; his thigh bone of pride thrown out of joint, his natural powers reckoned dead that God and His will may be all and in all. The family worship plays an important role in bringing

this about—it reminds each of their higher responsibility to God. Such a family-worshipping father or mother will say with Paul, “We are weak in him, but in dealing with you we shall live with him by the power of God.” (2 Cor. 13:4.)

Here is the source of the parent’s power and authority and the secret of godly discipline. How such a firm yet gentle and invisible power can break the self-will of the child, only those who have had praying, family-devotion fathers and mothers can know.

God’s will and word in the hearts of the parents and the word diligently taught the children, form substantial rock-bottom basis of discipline, obedient children prepared to meet many of life’s crises. Many parents daily worry and scold their disobedient children but never seem to realize that they themselves are to blame because they do not teach them God’s Word. Apart from God’s Word, there is no basis for obedience in the child.

Some years ago in Valparaiso, Ind., a mother told this story: “I was left with five children. My oldest boy became wicked and I could do nothing with him; he would lie and steal, and I began to think that I would have to put him in the reformatory. One night I dreamed that a voice came to me telling me to read the Bible with my children. I had never read the Bible with my children, though I had a beautiful one for an ornament on the parlor table. I began to read it with the children, and, oh, what a difference it made in our home. The children would gather around me as gentle as kittens, and my eldest boy, two or three days after I commenced broke down, and putting his arms around my neck promised he would be a good boy and be saved. “Truly the entrance of thy words giveth light.”

Certainly here as a wonderful example of the power of God’s Word in the lives of Children. How we need to see this power at work in our own families! How about your home?

The family worship should be the heart of the home (You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart) and the heart of the home should be its life. Parents are literally to make God and His Word pre-eminent in the home and to saturate the whole life of the household with its power. Every day should be made holy with the continuous remembrance of God and His Holy Word; every home should have a place of worship of God.

Susannah Wesley literally took God at His Word and sought to obey this command as fully as possible. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. Though she had 19 children and was the wife of a busy and faithful minister, she had daily family worship and in addition devoted one hour a week to spiritual examination and edification of each one of her children.

I am so thankful my parents took time for daily worship at home and that my mother took time for individual Bible study with me. There I learned many attitudes of life which have made me able to meet some of the problems which were bound to come and certainly gave me faith in Him who cannot change.

Right parental motivation is the fourth secret of disciplined,

obedient children. This raises an important question. What is your real and deepest motive for desiring a disciplined and obedient child? Is it for God and His glory? This motive must be first and last and all that is between. The family devotions not only help to keep this motive clearly in view, but it provides a means of putting it into effect.

In the last war, thousands of boys were rejected for service because of mental and emotional instability. Many were victims of what someone has called "s'mother love." They were never emotionally and spiritually weaned from their mothers' apron strings. Such love smothers the growing life of the child and binds it to an infantile, childish dependency. True parental love gives the child away to God, gradually breaking the child's complete emotional dependence upon the parents and turning the child to God to stand before Him, fully dependent upon Him.

The family worship is vital to victorious living. People today are fighting a desperate battle with the world, the flesh and the devil. Young people of our times face a moral and spiritual situation unparalleled to any of the problems of old. They have now problems all around them. And all around us young men and women are falling, falling! They are falling as they go off to schools and colleges where God and His Word are undermined. They are falling as they yield to the attractions of worldly pleasures. They are falling as they attempt to establish homes without God. Family worship can help supply many rich attitudes that will develop emotional maturity to face life. A real follower of Christ grows emotionally. Many of the tensions of the modern industrial civilizations are relieved by the power of God which we receive through family worship and your family will be knitted and drawn together as it has never been drawn before when you enter into family worship. Family devotions can weld a home and strengthen its foundations as nothing else will when conducted in the correct spirit. It can solve the discipline problem of some homes and in time overcome disrespect to parents. It will change the attitude of all towards work for Christ and Christian fellowship.

Satan will always hinder in every way he can the establishments of family devotion periods. He will hinder encouragement of family worship from the pulpit. He will hinder the setting aside of time for family worship in the home. He will send interruptions and discouragements. But for those who will not be discouraged, there is a place of quietness, and strength and power at the family worship which will bring blessing and salvation and victory to the entire household. How about your home? Do you draw daily upon our mighty God before whom we kneel and pray. May God fill every home of every reader with His goodness and mercy. He will if you let Him.

All brethren and friends are invited to hear the messages and to enjoy the Bible classes in the fall Preachers' Fellowship meeting. See inside front cover.

LESSONS ON THE BOOK OF ACTS

J. Edward Boyd

(Acts 10)

THE CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS

PETER PREACHES TO GENTILES. It is an amazing scene that is presented to us in the 10th chapter of Acts: a Jew, a fisherman of Galilee, preaching to a group of Gentiles, and that in the home of an officer in the Roman Army of occupation! When Peter first came in among them he said, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or visit any one of another nation" (v. 28, RSV); yet there he was, doing what doubtless would have seemed incredible to himself just a few days before. For he was a Hebrew, and so had been brought up to regard Gentiles as wholly unclean—unfit for God's chosen people to associate with unless they submitted to circumcision and other Jewish rites and ordinances, thus becoming "full proselytes" to the Jewish faith. Furthermore, the other principal figure in this scene, the one out-standing personality in this Gentile group, was a representative of the foreign power which was then ruling over the nation of Israel and against which was smoldering a resentment of such intensity that it later flamed forth into disastrous warfare. But in spite of all this, and in spite of sharp criticism which he knew would surely come even from his brethren, Peter went in among them and preached the gospel to them, "making no distinction." This is one of the great wonders of the Christianity of those days.

Now what brought about this remarkable change of attitude on the part of the apostle Peter? He himself explained it: "But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean." Previously he had thought that he should do so; now he knew he had been in error. But how had Peter and the other apostles understood the instruction which Jesus gave after His resurrection to "make disciples of all the *nations*" and "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all the *nations*?" (See Matt. 28:19 and Luke 24:47. In both passages the Greek word, *ethnos*, is used; it is the word commonly translated "Gentiles.") Probably they reasoned that, while the gospel was for all, its blessings were attainable by Gentiles only on condition that they also receive circumcision and conform to the other requirements of the law of Moses, which was indeed the contention, later on, of certain men of Judah. (Acts 15:1, 5.) For it is evident that the early Jewish Christians did not think of this new movement, grounded upon the acknowledgment that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah, as something separate and apart from Judaism. They were indeed disciples of Jesus, but they were still Jews also; and even the apostles continued to observe the ancient customs. (See Acts 3:1; 16:3; 21:20-26.)

To them, then, such reasoning concerning the Gentiles would seem quite natural; and all along proselytes had been considered

acceptable. (Acts 2:10; 6:5.) But it seems never to have occurred to them that a Gentile could be received just as he was. Yet some progress had been made toward overcoming their extreme Jewish exclusiveness. Philip's work in Samaria had been investigated and approved by the apostles; and at Joppa Peter was lodging with a man who by reason of his occupation was considered unclean—Simon the tanner. A number of years had passed by, however, since Jesus had given the "great commission"; and these men have been criticised for not having already proclaimed the gospel to the nations. There is probably justice in the criticism; yet we must remember that "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" was the Lord's order. Accordingly they had begun in Jerusalem, and perhaps they were disposed to tarry too long; but when persecution came and the disciples were scattered abroad, the gospel spread throughout Judea and Samaria and up into Galilee. And now the time had come when there must be no further delay; the door of salvation must be opened wide to men of every nation. And it was by the mouth of Peter that God chose to bring the word of the gospel to the Gentiles, even as it had been his privilege to be the first to introduce it to his own nation on the day of Pentecost.

THE HOUSETOP VISION. But not yet was Peter ready for this next step. The thought of associating with or visiting uncircumcised Gentiles was still repugnant to him. Nothing was further from his thoughts that day as he prayed on Simon's housetop and waited for the mid-day meal to be made ready. Yet at that moment three men were approaching not far away, seeking for him. From Caesarea they came—from the home of a Roman centurion—two of his household servants and a soldier. And at precisely the right moment the Lord prepared Peter to receive them. He fell into a trance; there was the vision of the vessel like a large sheet coming down from heaven, with all kinds of animals and creeping things and birds therein; there came the command, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat"; and Peter's response, so natural to one brought up in strict observance of the law, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." (Evidently he had not yet perceived the full import of a statement made by Jesus and later recorded by Mark in his gospel. See Mark 7:18, 19.) Again he heard the voice: "What God hath cleansed, make thou not common." Three times this occurred; and the vessel was taken up into heaven. Peter was puzzled: what did it all mean? The three men arrived at the gate; the Spirit said, ". . . go with them, nothing doubting; for I have sent them." There was no "not so, Lord" now; Jews and Gentiles spent the night together in Simon's home and the following day they set out for Caesarea, where Cornelius and his friends were waiting.

(To be continued)

"My boy," said a father to his son, "treat everybody with politeness, even those who are rude to you; for remember, you show courtesy to others, not because they are gentlemen, but because you are one."—**The Record of Christian Work.**

“FAITH OF OUR FATHERS”

E. L. J.

This month — 15 or 20 separate, valuable quotations. With a few connecting notes, each speaks for itself.—J.

B. W. JOHNSON ON THE “LORD’S PRAYER”

“*Thy Kingdom come*”: The Messiah’s kingdom had not yet come, but was proclaimed by the Lord at hand. It did speedily come, but in its full and in its final triumph over evil, it has **not yet come**. For this coming we may now pray, and the prayer is answered in part by each success of the gospel.”—*Peoples’ New Testament with Notes*, Vol. 1, p. 42.

JOHNSON ON “THE JEWS”

“*So all Israel shall be saved*”: After the fulness of the Gentiles has come in, the Jews, as a people, shall be saved. That is, of the Jews then living, the greater part shall be saved. The nation shall turn to the Lord.—*Peoples’ New Testament with Notes*, Vol. 2, p. 57.

McGARVEY ON “JOEL”

“Not all of Joel was fulfilled at Pentecost.”—McGarvey on *Acts*.

“WHITBYISM”

Dr. Duffield of Princeton, N. J., says: “The doctrine of a Millennium *before* the advent of Christ is not to be found in any of the standards of the churches of the Reformation: by several it is expressly repudiated. It is a modern novelty, suggested but 150 years ago by Whitby, and avowedly a ‘new hypothesis.’”

IS IT NOT?

“That the Lord Jesus will personally descend from heaven and revisit this earth is neither doubted nor denied by any Christian.”—Alexander Campbell, (*Millennial Harbinger*, 1843, page 49).

DAVID LIPSCOMB ON THE RESURRECTIONS

(Italics ours. J.)

1 Cor. 15:23: *They (the dead) will not all be raised at one time.* Christ came forth as the first fruits. When Christ died on the cross, many of the graves were opened, and “many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised; and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many” (Matt. 27:52). Those who accept Christ, put him on, live in him, “shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:16, 17). *The wicked shall afterward be raised*: “Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2). “And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. And if any was not found

written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14, 15).

Verse 24, "Then cometh the end": The consummation of the gospel dispensation or state of things, which will open the new and eternal period. * * * Everything that is in the world, that exercises rule, authority or power, save as it comes directly from God, and is used under his direction, to promote his rule and dominion, is an enemy of God and of his Son Jesus Christ, and must be destroyed by the rule and dominion of the Son before the kingdom and dominion of the world can be delivered up to the Father. Jesus Christ came into the world to rescue it from the evil one and to destroy everything that exerts power or authority or dominion on the earth, and to establish the kingdom of God on earth. *When that is done every one will render homage and obedience to God.*"—David Lipscomb, in *Salvation From Sin*.

CAMPBELL, AND THE THOMAS "COVENANT"

In reply to some references to a covenant entered into between Dr. Thomas and myself, I have to say that there is no such document in existence, and never was. There was, indeed, a covenant entered into between John Thomas (no "D. D.," but "M. D.") and certain brethren in Virginia, touching the immutability and impropriety of teaching the mortality of the soul and the non-resurrection of infants and Pagans, certain speculations concerning the final destiny of the wicked, etc.; which covenant binds him to desist from such vain and foolish speculations in public. The alleged breach of said covenant lies between him and those brethren, and not between myself and him.—A. Campbell, *Millennial Harbinger*, 1843 p. 522.

IS IT SO "CERTAIN"?

In the *Gospel Advocate* of Feb. 9, 1950, Brother Earl West (in an interesting series on the Restoration Movement) registers this "objection" to Campbell's placement of certain prophecies. It is true that "a great man can be wrong," and Campbell could be, and was at times. But **was he here?** Brother West says:

There were times when Campbell's objections to Millerism were open to objection, to say the least. In the fall of 1842 Campbell noted that Miller had said the world would come to an end the next year. If that were true, said Campbell, how could the fact be accounted for that several prophecies had not yet been fulfilled? He quoted from Isa. 2:4: "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks." Again, he said that Satan was to be bound for a thousand years; but how could this be if the world come to an end the next year, since there was no indication that Satan was then bound. He quoted freely from Isaiah's prophecies asserting that these had not been fulfilled. Even a great man can be wrong, and it is certain that many of the quotations to which Campbell referred pointed to the first coming of Christ, not his second coming."

And here is Campbell's fuller list of passages yet unfulfilled, as he thought, in his day.

He is arguing against the teaching of William Miller, the father

of moderi Adventism, and the Millerites, who were expecting the end of the world in 1844:

"Can anyone believe that the following predictions have yet been accomplished? Isa. 59:16-21; 60; 61; 62; 63; 65:17-25; 66:10-24; also Jer. 30:1-3, 17:24; 31; 32:36-42; 33:1-26; Ezek. 36, 37; also chapters 38 and 39 concerning God and Magog. Can anyone say that these prophecies have been fulfilled? And if not, can anyone show how they are to be fulfilled after the end of the world? Dan. 2:40-44; 7:7-14, 23-27. Compare these with John's Apocalypse, chapter 16:12-21, with chapters 17, 18, 19, and especially chapter 20:1-10. Surely no one will affirm that all these things have yet come to pass."—*Mil-lennial Harbinger, Condensed*, Vol. 1, pp. 95, 96.

The true mode of biblical interpretation is to follow the historico-grammatical sense. * * * Thus *Aion* grammatically means time or age; historically, a dispensation, as the Jewish or Christian, Melancthon was quite right in saying: "Scripture cannot be understood theologically, *unless* it is understood grammatically"; and Luther in saying: "The knowledge of the sense can be derived from nothing but the knowledge of the words."—*B. A. Hinsdale, "Ecclesiastical Tradition,"* p. 169.

EVEN THE "POST" WRITERS ADMIT IT

(But they brush the testimony aside as "uncritical"!)

The early church before Augustine in its popular thinking was largely apocalyptic. An early return of Jesus was expected to establish his kingdom. We have seen that the Jewish apocalyptic writings had currency in the early church, and that one New Testament author, Jude, refers to one such writing and quotes by name from another. This apocalyptic thought was generally premillennial; it was a temporary kingdom upon earth that was to be established. That this thought was uncritical is indicated by the current of the Jewish writings in the church which were interpreted in a Christian way and sometimes suffered Christian interpolation.—Harris Franklin Rall, in "*Modern Premillennialism and the Christian Hope*," The Abingdon Press.

Burton, of Oxford, in his Bampton lectures of 1829, and Bishop Russell, both anti-chiliasts, assert that the matter is beyond successful denial. The latter, in his history of the Scotch Episcopal Church (p. 84), affirms that, "Down to the beginning of the 4th century the sure and certain hope entertained by the Christian World, that the Redeemer would appear on earth, and exercise authority during a thousand years was universal."

"Desprez, Vicar of Alvidiston in his semi-infidel praeteristic book on Daniel and John, confesses: "That the writer of the Apocalypse meant to assert a literal reign of Christ and His saints upon the earth for 1,000 years," and that this receives confirmation from the fact that the church of the first 3 centuries was essentially chiliastic (pre-millenarian)"—Desprez, on *Daniel and John*, p. 309.

Alford says: "The whole Church, for 300 years, understood Rev-

elation 20:1-6 in a plain, literal sense; and, It is the most cogent instance of unanimity which primitive antiquity presents."

BARTON STONE ON UNIFORMITY

The attempt to make all believe alike has always been followed by the most painful results. * * * Uniformity of faith is desirable, but in the present state of things, it can hardly be expected. * * * All should believe, and do believe the Bible as divine—as the truth of God. Not a fact or a truth there stated, but all receive it, yet the various opinions formed of that fact, or truth, no man can relieve. It is impossible to force an honest, intelligent mind to believe. Coercion has divided Christians in every age; ever since the introduction of laws to enforce uniformity. The Reformers saw this and for a while protested against it. They boasted that the Bible was their religion. But the free mind soon began to form different opinions of Bible facts. For this they were reproached by the Catholics—and to remedy the supposed evil, the Reformers began to embody their opinions of Bible truth in a creed or book, and required all their members to subscribe to it. Thence division ensued, and it has continued and increased to the present time—and will continue as long as uniformity of faith is required. This evil has been seen by many of the present age. They, too, have determined to reform, and revert to the true principle of reformation, to take the Bible alone as their only rule of faith and practice. If these principles be relinquished, there will be a speedy end of reformation and union. Let us watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation.—*B. W. Stone, Editor, Christian Messenger, Oct. 1833, pp. 302, 303.*

"I have long since lost my pride of opinion. I would not knowingly hold a sentiment contrary to the truth of God for a world."—*B. W. Stone, Editor, "Christian Messenger, July, 1833, p. 205.*

"As to 'featuring' the disputed teaching—it is not my purpose to press it unduly or disproportionately, nor to make it obnoxious by undue and offensive emphasis; but only in faithfulness to the word of the Lord, as occasion may require. Also, we recognize the fact that though *the Scripture* is inspired, *our conclusions* are not; and our *conclusions* are, therefore, not to be insisted upon as though they were. Only the statements of God's word are the basis of Christian fellowship."—Quoted from R. H. B.

"When we believe in Christ and obey His commandments, we are Christians. Having done this, if we differ, we should differ as Christians—as brethren in the Lord—and not make our differences, denominational barriers which interdict Christian love, destroy brotherly fellowship, prevent successful cooperation and promote party strife and ugly contentions."—*F. D. Srygley, p. 315, Larimore and His Boys.*

A COURAGEOUS LETTER

The following letter, dated Jan. 26, 1950, was sent to the the elders of a church in the Rocky Mountain area, by Waldo Hoar, the fine minister of the church at Linton, Ind. Whether heeded or not, it is at least

an example to others who are pained to see the simple churches of Christ sectarianizing themselves.—J.

“Dear Brethren in the Lord: Your letter of Nov. 30, 1949, reached me some weeks ago. I was very glad to know of the work in Belgium, and hope and pray that it may be prospered of the Lord to accomplish much in His name.

“After much thought I am writing you concerning the statement in your folder entitled ‘Our Doctrinal Stand.’ I want to plead with you not to carry on a work, in Belgium, Denver, or in any other place, on such a denominational basis as there stated. I believe you have no right to draw such lines against your brethren who have become obedient in the very same way in which you obeyed the Lord, and who carry on the very same worship, and who live the same lives of godliness in which you believe. I have never been able to see that we could disfellowship one another because of a difference in understanding of things the Lord will do in the future. I know faithful brethren who are on both sides of your question and who will fellowship one another and work together. I believe it should be thus in every place, at home and abroad; and that if we allow ourselves to be divided over such questions we will defeat in a large measure the purpose for which the Lord has called us. We just can’t afford to do it, brethren; and again I plead with you, in all kindness and brotherly love, to reconsider that ‘Doctrinal Stand.’”

MORE INTERESTING LETTERS

For earlier letters from prominent preachers, see installments No. 39 and 40, in the 1948 series of “Faith of Our Fathers.”—J.

FROM A. B. LIPSCOMB

(He thought our doctrinal differences could be tolerated on the basis of Christian love):

“I regret, my dear brother, that these doctrinal differences, or ‘differences of opinion’ continue to disturb the brotherhood; and, as Brother Elam put it, I have hoped and still hope that ‘we might get these on a working basis of Christian forbearance and love.’”
—From letter to R. H. Boll, dated Jan. 30, 1935.

F. L. YOUNG

(From an article by W. W. Freeman, in the F. L. Young memorial number of **Firm Foundation**, entitled, “He Yet Speaketh”):

In an unpublished thesis of over eight hundred pages prepared for Southern Methodist University appear the name and picture of F. L. Young. The words spoken by him at the close of a lecture (Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures) in 1919 account for the distinction. These words were as follows:

“No earthly censor can dictate to a faithful gospel preacher. The overseers of the flock may suggest the best message for the occasion, but the faithful messenger gets his authority higher up. I have read a few books on religious theories that I considered speculative . . . Some of their theories I accepted, some I rejected. . . . Shall I disfellowship the good brother whose theory I rejected? . . . I have resolved never to make anything a test of fellowship that the Holy Spirit has not made a condition of salvation.”—Page 134).