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JUNE, 1973

Why Can't I Understand the Bible?

(Am I a "natural man"?)

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Christian Social Drinker?

See page 170

"We want immortality."

They're sure that Science will find a way.

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Talking Things Over

G. R. L.

“Don’t blame the child”

A popular song frequently repeats the line “Don’t blame the child,” explaining that “the apple falls not far from the tree.” The obvious message is that the parents are responsible for the misdeeds of their children.

There is a grain of truth in this; old Eli suffered because of the wickedness of his sons (1 Samuel 2-4). At my job I deal with a lot of “problem children” and their parents. In some instances, it is clearly a case of “problem *parents*.” Sharon has been sent home for disruptive classroom behavior; her mother comes to see about the situation—drunk. Moses is cited by the truant officer for excessive absence and tardiness; the mother and older sister come to school and launch a public tirade against school in general and everybody in this school in particular. It isn’t hard to determine the origin of student attitudes in cases like these.

Other parents—with the best of intentions—unknowingly contribute to the difficulties of the child. Olivia, the next to the youngest in a family of 13 children, has already failed three grades in school. At home she is labeled “the dummy.” In her presence, her father said to me, “I don’t understand why Olivia can’t be like Allie (an older sister). We never had problems like this with Allie.” (I don’t know why he didn’t compare her to Mattie, another sister. Olivia was an angel by comparison.) I have no doubt that Olivia’s parents loved her, but they never helped her with a word of praise or encouragement for something done well. They were too preoccupied with other things to get really involved with Olivia’s school life. And then she ran away from home and stayed a week. A week after she returned, her mother still had not discussed the episode with her. It took another run-away and a court order to make Olivia’s parents realize that she—and they—needed help. Incidentally, Olivia’s IQ is in the low 50s (average is about 105).

Many parents reach the point where they cannot discuss anything of real importance with their teenage children—unless you call a shouting match a discussion. A breakdown in communication is often followed by serious problems. The responsibility for doing something about it rests primarily on the parents, but the average parents don’t know which way to turn. A few will seek

the help of a family counselor or other qualified person, but most—like Olivia's parents—just hang on and hope that the storm will blow over.

Don't blame the parents

However, there are already too many accusing fingers pointing at parents. During the past few decades, popular thinking has made the children the center of the family. Parents exist for the children, instead of the other way around. The children enjoy all the benefits that Dad and Mom can supply, but they bear no real responsibilities. If a child goes astray, blame it on the parents! I am glad to see a trend toward reversal of all this, but it takes time for a trend to have widespread effect.

In the meantime, many Christian families are being swept along with the thinking that prevails in our society. They have not seriously considered such statements of scripture as Deuteronomy 21:18-21: "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, who will not obey . . . the men of the city shall stone him with stones, that he die." The New Testament is just as positive, though slightly less harsh. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord . . . Honor thy father and mother . . . that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Ephesians 6:1, 2). The warning in the last clause is strict and clear; the child is responsible to God.

It is not uncommon for a Christian family to have a child who wills to go his or her own way, at least for a time. Often the parental reaction is, "What did we do wrong?"—with a great deal of hand-wringing and self-incriminating. They never face the fact that the child is ultimately responsible for himself. Certainly, they can think of things they might have done differently, but could they guarantee that that would have changed the course of events? How useless to "lock the barn after the horse is stolen!" How much better to let the Lord cast this transgression—if such it be—along with all the others into the deepest sea. Though we don't forget, let us be sure that God does. Then, instead of grieving over our guilt, we're in a position to praise the Lord for His goodness and to trust Him to extend mercy to that child who went astray.

The Devil's ace card

Nearly 200 years ago there were expressions of concern over what the industrialization of the cities was doing to the structure of the family. Today we don't even know what a "normal" family is, in terms of family relationships of a century or two ago. I consider the disruption of the family to be one of the most clever devices ever devised by Satan (in the name of progress!). We need to be aware of his devices, and we need to be ready to help the families of believers in distress. They need more than our free advice, which is so plentiful. They need love and compassion and prayers. When one member—or one family—suffers, the whole congregation suffers. If we are to overcome Satan's inroads into the church via the family, we're going to have to let down the walls between us and learn what it means to bear one another's burdens.

The Death of Christ

R. H. Boll — 1944

To those who have been wounded and maimed in battle, and to those who gave their lives for their country, we accord all the sympathy and loving gratitude of our hearts. But to class their suffering and sacrifice with that of the Lord Jesus Christ (as some do) shows a total misapprehension of the nature and meaning of His death. There has been many a noble deed and great, unselfish sacrifice, to be sure, and many a feat of valiant heroism. The Lord Himself declared that "greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friend." But the life of Jesus Christ is not to be confounded with any of these. It stands in every way by itself. Here are five distinctive features of the death of Christ.

1. Christ's death was in the highest sense voluntary. For this He came into the world (Hebrews 2:14). The crucifixion of Christ was not an unfortunate event that befell Him because of circumstances—as for example a martyr's death for his convictions, or a hero's death in defense of the weak and helpless. It was not an accident, but constituted the chief point in a careful and deliberately laid divine plan. "Him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay" (Acts 2:23). Men die because it cannot be helped; His death was a purposed aim and end. "I lay down my life that I may take it again. No one taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10:17, 18). Here is a Man who, though joined to all men through Adam, yet stood outside the heritage of death which from Adam was transmitted to all his race (Romans 5:12-14). When men die for some benevolent cause, it means that they go a little sooner; for in a little while, sooner or later, they would have to go anyway. But this Man did not have to die. He really *gave* His life in the fullest meaning of the word. In this respect the death of Christ stands by itself.

2. Christ's death was representative and vicarious. He died for us. He tasted death for every man (Hebrews 2:9). And that not only for our good, but on our behalf and in our place. "One died for all, therefore all died" (2 Corinthians 5:14). None other but "the last Adam" had the right to represent all His race and to act on behalf of all men and in their stead. For all men potentially—and for those who by faith accept it, actually—stands the death and resurrection of Christ on their behalf.

3. His death was of the nature of a judgment. He took our condemnation upon Himself. He faced the curse and the judicial

wrath of God on our behalf. Therefore it was an atoning death. "His own self," He "bore our sins in his body upon the tree" (1 Peter 2:24). The agony of Gethsemane and the awful cry from the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," testify to the fact that it was God's judgment upon sin that came upon him. There was one human being alone of all that lived on the earth to whom God did not show mercy. That one was His beloved Son—to whom no mercy could be shown; for He bore the sins of the world (John 1:29) and became identified with the sins of all mankind. "Jehovah laid upon him the iniquities of us all."

4. His was the death of One perfectly righteous. He was wholly sinless, guiltless, and without blemish. If He had not been so He could not by any possibility have died for others, but would have had to die for His own sin. In the Old Testament the point is always insisted on that the sin offering must be without blemish. It was because He alone was the sinless One that He and He alone could atone for the sins of others.

There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin;
No other could unlock the gates
Of heaven and let us in.

5. Christ's death was redemptive. "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). His life was given, and His blood shed that we might be ransomed from the guilt and bondage of sin and from its condemnation. In Him we are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." And, "In him we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Romans 3:24; Ephesians 1:7).

To this sacrifice, the noblest of human self-immolations bear hardly a remote and faint resemblance. To put the death of Christ in the same category with the death of those who die for their country on the field of battle, or who lose their lives in other heroic action verges on blasphemy, however intended. Nothing in this world can be put on a par with Christ's sacrifice of Himself. It is the final manifestation of the love of God, who gave His only begotten Son that He "might be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus."

Make me an Intercessor,
Such as Thou dost require,
Who will understand and enter
Into Thy heart's desire.

—Ps. 25:14

Ernest Lyon is a professor of music at the University of Louisville and minister of the Highland Church of Christ.



Viewing The News

WORLD POPULATION in mid-1971, according to the United Nations' Center for Economic Information:

Asia	2,105,000,000
Europe	466,000,000
Africa	354,000,000
North America	327,000,000
South America	195,000,000

That is a total of 3,447,000,000 out of a total of 3,706,000,000, leaving 259 million for other territories.

U.S.A. RELIGIOUS figures show that the Southern Baptists were the first denomination to go over 12 million in membership, unless you count the 48 million Catholics, including even babies. The latest figures show a Southern Baptist increase of 1.7% in one year, the Jehovah's Witnesses an increase of 7.2%, the 7th Day adventists 4.9%, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) 2.9%. Most of the liberal churches were down and a few relatively conservative ones were down.

THE LACK OF the death penalty continues to bring up horror tales. The *Washington Star News* of March 14, I am told, had the story of 24 hostages being held in an 8 x 10 room by some bandits. Four of the hostages were shot while in the room. One bandit said, "I think I'll throw a hand grenade in there. What can I lose? There's no death penalty anymore." Are you one of those who consider it "inhumane" to have the death penalty?

WOUNDED KNEE was probably a term describing to you an accident until recently. But what happened at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, was no accident. It was a well-planned maneuver by radicals of all kinds, many of them with long prison rec-

ords, supported by every communist and pro-communist organization in the country. If someone or some group in the government in Washington wasn't planning with them to use that incident to give the radicals control of the Indian groups throughout the country, then there are some mighty foolish people making decisions in Washington. Incidentally, part of this came close to Louisville when the National Director of the radical group, the A.I.M. (American Indian Movement) spoke at Indiana University and publicly thanked the Communist Party and the Young Workers Liberation League for arranging his appearance there.

IF YOU WANT to hear about the laxness of our internal security from an authority, then try to hear Otto F. Otepka, Chief Security Officer of the State Department for over 25 years when he speaks in Louisville on Monday, June 18th, under the auspices of the Christian Heritage Center, 205 Watterson City West, 1941 Bishop Lane, Louisville, 40218. The cost is set at \$2.00 with student tickets at \$1.00.

HOW DO YOU like this newspaper clipping sent to me recently: "In Cleveland, Ohio, Dr. Raymond Lewis canceled a 9:30 a.m. service at the Old Stone Church because the congregants might not have cleared the church in time for the 11 a.m. service. And that service had to be on time, the pastor continued, so baseball fans could park in the church lot by noon and thus make the opening doubleheader pitch."

ACCORDING to Ben L. Kaufman's religious column in the April 22, 1973 issue of a Cincinnati newspaper, a Baptist evangelist in Crowley, Texas,

was locked up (but later acquitted by a jury) while trying to do door-to-door visitation in a trailer park. He was ordered to leave by the park manager, at first refused but later agreed to leave when asked to do so by a policeman. The policeman, according to the evangelist, was asked if he was saved and "that's when he got real mad." Crowley is near Ft. Worth.

BECAUSE of our country's moving closer to the communist-controlled countries politically and economically and the cooperation between our country and the communist-controlled lands, many will not believe the true stories of the millions of fellow-countrymen the communists have killed and of other persecution such as the religious ones. I am glad to see that Albania has officially shown that these stories are true. In 1967 Albania made the practice of religion a crime. Recently, according to the *National Laymen's Digest* of April 15, 1973, a Roman Catholic priest was executed for secretly baptizing a child. They've been doing things like this all along. It is better to have it in the open. Occasionally I see a mention of religious persecution even in our newspapers, but most of the time the news media ignore the subject or deny the truth. It was good to see in *The Cincinnati Enquirer* for April 29, 1973, a reprint from the *Los Angeles Times* headed "Practicing One's Religion in USSR Can Lead to Prison." That can also lead to death and to every imaginable kind of torture, too. And yet this country wants to get closer to Russia and our politicians are picturing murdering slavemasters like Brezhnev as amiable and kindly persons that it would be good to know!

NO COMMUNIST COUNTRIES! Believe it or not, there is not one single communist country in the world! There are quite a few countries that are ruled by communists and those countries have a socialist form of government, but the communists themselves would be the first to agree that there is not a genuinely communist country in the world at this time. Russia calls itself the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and a very small percentage of the population is allowed to be members of the communist party, which runs the country.

EXPERT observers of communism say that Red China's acceptance of

USA help was due to the build-up of Russian nuclear arms, thinking Russia wants to keep dominance of communism by destroying China's striking power. So we help! I don't know whether that is true or not, but one of our most learned observers of communism, Dr. Fred Schwarz, believes that there is a good deal of truth in this idea.

IN CASE you were one of those who thought that Federal aid to education did not mean federal control of education, you might take note of the fact that HEW recently notified all male and all female schools that they would have to become co-ed or lose their funds. I was recently reminded of an old truism—"Accept shekels, receive shackles." In case your school has become dependent on any governmental help, just remember this. And maybe you didn't know that the Department of Labor has set down guidelines prohibiting "religious discrimination" in church-related colleges that have federal contracts or subsidies. Those guidelines even extend to persons hired to teach religion!

I FAILED to mention early in this column that the radical Indian group AIM has received a good deal of financial help and moral support from some of the "liberal" denominations. If the members of those churches would investigate the groups their leaders support as thoroughly as Paul told Timothy to investigate widows before giving them support, there would be lots of changes in the churches!

DID YOU READ about the church in North Hollywood, California, that has taken steps to see that the work of the church is carried on by those who are left behind at the rapture? Most churches won't need to bother; the services will go on just exactly as before except for a few missing persons! At least that is the situation as it looks from here as I read of the strange ways churches are taking in place of God's way. Don't let it be that way in your congregation.

Many thanks for your aid again in getting materials together for this column. Keep the questions and the materials coming to

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Dinah

Mrs. Paul J. Knecht

In a recent sex questionnaire given out to early teen students by a public school teacher one question embodied this thought: Do you know that getting pregnant before marriage is one way to get your parents' consent for your marriage? The others were of similar purport.

I have known two couples in my lifetime who because of the Christian integrity of their families and the good upbringing in the Lord that they themselves had had—yes, and because of their faithful going on together for years now, seem to have had the same motive. But the majority of cases apparently do not prove to be stable marriages even if they go as far as marriage and many do not.

But it is not a modern idea. We may think we have progressed beyond our ancestors in doing our own thing, i.e., in disregarding the moral teachings that have been the standard for thousands of years to those whose desire it is to live clean, moral upstanding lives in the eyes of society. There were many failures, but they *were* failures. Now failure is not only condoned, but justified in the eyes of society in general and is being taught in our schools as an acceptable way of life. It is reported publicly that one teacher reaped some drastic immediate well nigh disastrous treatment by the boys in her class (about 20 of them) as fruitage of her sex teaching. But this goes beyond our subject.

But the idea of sex before marriage is not a new one. And the motive (in order to get the parents' consent to marriage) is possibly not new either. When Jacob the third of the patriarchs of the Jewish nation encamped near Shechem his daughter, Dinah, the only girl mentioned in a family of twelve sons, went out "to see the daughters of the land." Whether that was right or wrong in itself we are not told. We do know that later Jews were to have no dealings with Canaanites. Whether she had consulted her parents or not before she sallied forth is not recorded. We are not told that she even saw any of the daughters but "Shechem, son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her: and he took her, and lay with her, and humbled her." He wanted to marry her. There is no indication that she was forced. It may have been love at first sight on both sides. But if they did it hoping for the consent of her parents their hope was vain. Hamor acceded to his son's request and went to Jacob to ask for his daughter to be the wife of Shechem. He requested further that they all remain in the land and intermingle in marriage. He assured Jacob and his sons—who had returned from the field evidently while the conference was in progress—that the land would be before them,

indicating that they would have freedom to take possession of such as they needed. It sounded like a financially sound and generous offer (Genesis 34:8-10). But it was not to be. Not recorded in this story is the purchase of a piece of land from the sons of Hamor by Jacob. This deal may have been made at this time or later. Joseph's bones were buried there (Joshua 24:37).

While we cannot judge the motive of the young couple it is quite possible that Dinah knew and perhaps had told Shechem that she could not marry him; and that she had yielded to his entreaties in the very hope of thereby obtaining her parents' consent to their union. For in those days the sexual coming together often constituted all there was to the "ceremony." So far as this writer can find there is no record of marriage vows such as are considered a necessary part of our ceremonies. They did not need them. Marriage was "for keeps" as we say. Exceptions were rare.

But this was not to be, i.e. that God's chosen people should mingle themselves with the peoples of the land. It seems that Jacob said very little. His sons took it up, deceived the men of Shechem saying or implying that if they would be circumcised then their father would agree to what they proposed. This could not be for one other reason: Jacob was on his way from Laban back to his father's home under the guidance of Jehovah (Genesis 31:3).

Two of Dinah's brothers, Simeon and Levi went on the third day and killed all of the males, took captives of women and children, stripped the slain of their spoil; and took their sister out of Shechem's tent and went home (Genesis 34:25-31). Jacob reproved them for their fierce retaliation but they were unabashed. The shame of Dinah's trouble went deep into all of the family. No word is given us of her reaction. It must have taken her a long time to get over the humiliation, the reaction of her family, and her own grief and frustration if she truly loved the young prince.

This brief, sad story of Dinah's efforts to make acquaintance with her neighbors and its dire ending bring a lesson to our minds. When God's people become too friendly with the world (1 John 2:15-17) He will not stand idly by for long. He will call them out of the tents of wickedness (Revelation 18:4-5) and will miserably destroy the world that knows Him not, nor wants to know Him. He will take His people out and give them time to repent perhaps, before they stand before the judgment seat of Christ where His *family* will be judged according to the deeds done in the body (2 Corinthians 5:10).

VANCE HAVNER: The church is so subnormal that if it ever got back to the New Testament normal it would seem to people to be abnormal.

Questions Asked Of Us

Carl Kitzmiller



Should a Christian engage in social drinking?

No. There is too much danger to himself and to others.

I readily concede that the New Testament condemns drunkenness, not drinking in limited amounts which does not result in drunkenness. It speaks of not being given too much wine (1 Timothy 3:8) instead of commanding total abstinence. Some have taken this to mean that social drinking is acceptable. To draw such a conclusion is to make several errors, however.

One of the errors is that social drinking does not result in drunkenness. Many of the alcoholics of today are people who started out as social drinkers. Many of the accidents on the highway are caused by people who think they are only social drinkers. Let's face it—social drinking can be hard drinking, and often is. The surroundings in which it takes place do not mean that the drinker does not become drunken. It is a very false assumption that says social drinking is always limited and that the sin of drunkenness does not occur.

Another error is that of assuming that, since at least some Bible wines were intoxicating (else no need to warn of the sin), any intoxicant today is just as acceptable. This ignores the high alcoholic content of those drinks generally used today. Bible wines were probably not nearly so potent as the wines of today, not to speak of the other modern carefully refined high-percentage alcoholic drinks of other sorts. It is much easier to drink to excess in our modern situation.

A third error is that of assuming what may have been permissible in those simpler times is always to be exercised as a right. The apostle Paul imposed certain restrictions on himself on given occasions for the sake of others. He renounced what he might have done without sin in order to avoid offense to weaker persons. Even if some social drinkers today manage to discipline themselves and never become drunken (and I suspect their numbers are really very few), their drinking buddies may not be so strong. Moreover, in our day of better water supplies, more knowledge of preservation of food and drink, and a variety of healthy drinks available, there is really no need for the intoxicants. We can hardly consider our situation in these matters to be the same as in New Testament days.

We live in high pressure times when the problems created by drinking are increased, and the dangers are increased. We are dealing with a potentially more dangerous matter in our day.

Although the Bible did not in so many words condemn all use of intoxicating wines and command total abstinence for Christians in the early days, I believe its principles will impress us with the wisdom of such a course in our day. When I consider the grief that has come even from so-called social drinking, the damage to one's body, the expense of the habit, the loss of testimony before an unbelieving world, the lack of positive good, the danger of falling into sin, or of leading others into sin, it is hard to see why any Christian would want to drink alcohol, even socially. I suspect that a careful examination will generally reveal such a desire arises from indulgence of the flesh, not from a desire to be a better Christian, or from wanting to be as much like the world as possible, not from wanting to be more Christ-like. Even the fellow who drinks moderately so as to be a "good guy" and to talk to certain classes of sinners is probably deceiving himself more than he is anyone else, including those he proposes to reach.

Am I responsible for the wrong done by the company or business I work for? And what if I am helping make products that will be used for evil, how far does my responsibility go?

There is no simple answer to this question that will fit every circumstance. Obviously there is a broad area involved here that calls for human judgment, wisdom, and even information about the business of the sort that may not be readily available. It is quite possible to be in a big organization that has multiple interests, holdings, and aims—some of which are praiseworthy and some objectionable. Or one may be engaged in manufacturing a product which will be used in both good and bad ways. The good uses may outweigh the bad, or they may not. The Lord recognized that we are in the world and are going to do some elbow rubbing with people who will not all be motivated by Christian ideals (1 Cor. 5:9-10). We are not to avoid all association with unregenerate people. Surely we are not responsible for every evil deed done by others in the same company or business we may work for. We are not responsible (unless such is our position within the organization) for the improper, unethical policies that may be adopted by a company. We are not responsible for every use which people will make of products we may have helped manufacture. Jesus' instruction to His followers to pay their taxes (Luke 20:21-25) shows we are not responsible for all the uses or misuse which may follow.

There is another side to all of this, however. The Christian should stand for righteousness, engage in that which is good, and keep a clear conscience in all that he does. This will mean that there are some jobs he will not hold, some products he will not make, some practices he will not adopt, and some callings he will not accept. Drawing the lines of distinction will not always be easy and will call for a great deal of toleration even between Chris-

tians. He will need both sensitivity and sense. He certainly will need a good Bible-educated conscience. Even then the decisions will not all be easy. Suppose my company wants me to give short measure or weight. I must not hide behind the excuse that someone else "ordered" it. This matter is wrong, so as a Christian I refuse to do it. That may get me fired, but it was a relatively easy decision to make. The issues were clear. But suppose my refusal does not get me fired, and I am shifted to another unrelated job where I do not do the weighing or measuring. Should I go on working for a company that engages in such a practice? This is a more difficult question. Does my continued association with the company give an approval of the evil? Should I actively try to get the matter corrected? Maybe in some cases there is no legal violation, only a moral one, or solid proof may be lacking. We suspect that too many Christians do not let their colors show as they ought in such situations. On the other hand, where is the company or business that is morally perfect? We cannot resign from the world. And these problems can even be extended beyond employment to the matter of buying stock or patronizing the business.

I know of no magic formula to decide some of the dilemmas. Each case pretty much has to rest on its own merits, and each Christian needs to be concerned with his own conscience and to some extent with the attitudes of church and society. How do others feel about the job, product, or service? Does he appear to be a hypocrite? As difficult as such decisions are, we must not make an artificial separation between our secular life and our spiritual life as though they are unrelated.

Do you believe in miracles?

Very likely this question is asking whether I believe in miracles in our age, not whether I believe the miracles of the Bible. I see no way for any true Christian to reject totally a belief in miracles. To do so is to reject the Bible and to hold a low view of Jesus. The Bible records many miracles, especially connected with the life of Christ, and those who reject miracles end up rejecting the Bible and the Christ. The resurrection of Christ is the miracle of miracles, and we have only a human Jesus if we reject that resurrection. I believe in an omnipotent God who has active control over His universe and who can set aside the natural laws for the operation of that creation whenever He chooses to do so. Whatever reservations I may have about present day miracles is not because of some rationalistic or pseudoscientific bias against the miracle in principle.

What about miracles in our day? I believe God does often, in answer to prayer, bring things to pass that seem to us to be near miraculous. I believe He exercises His providence in our lives sometimes in such a way that we have to acknowledge His intervention. In other words I believe in a God who is actively working all things together for good to His children. And, of course, I believe He gives new life in the new birth so that great and

radical changes may come to men. But perhaps "miracle" is not normally the best word for these things. These are not exactly what most people are concerned about when the modern miracle is under consideration. Do miracles of the sort that the New Testament records occur today? Are *men* used by God today in such a way that they are able to bestow instantaneous healings, raise the dead, cause seas to be still, instantly multiply food supplies, and such like?

If such miracles do occur today, I can more readily believe they occur in virgin areas where there may be (?) some need for authenticating the gospel message. Since New Testament miracles were primarily to confirm the message from God (Hebrews 2:3-4), there is a legitimate doubt as to the need for miracles in most cases today. We have the confirmed Word of God. While I cannot claim to have been everywhere or to have seen everything, I am not aware of having personally witnessed any miracle of the New Testament sort. And knowing the loose way in which some folks use language in these matters, along with the tendency of the flesh toward deceit, sensation, and the seeking of self-glory, I am not inclined to believe all that is written or claimed either.

Even if I were to witness something that seemed to be a genuine miracle I would not automatically conclude that it came from God. We should not forget that there is a source for miracles other than God. Satan has much less power than God, but he is supernatural and possesses some power to work miracles. I have no doubt that if he can create confusion among God's people, lead them astray, or cause them to major on minors he will do it!

7110 Bruton Road, Dallas, Texas 75217

"Thus Saith the Lord"

Against the foeman's fiery darts
I wield anew the Spirit's sword,
And answer every fresh assault
With ever-fresh, "Thus saith the Lord."

And, when some promised blessing seems
Too great, too wonderful for me,
I dare by faith to call it mine,
With "It is written" all my plea.

'Mid shifting sands of doubt and fear
This one foundation stone;
My soul hath cast her anchor here;
I rest upon Thy Word alone.

—Annie Johnson Flint

Frozen at the Mouth

Betty Z

The evening service was over and everyone was making their way out of church, or standing around in the porch talking—about this and that. One young couple were talking about something rather special that had happened. The week before the girl had become a Christian. “When I went to work on Monday, everyone wanted to know why I was so happy,” she said. “And I told them I had just become a Christian.” How lovely to tell others so naturally about an event like that in her life.

And why not tell folk—we tell them about other things—yet talking about a spiritual experience seems different, so personal, and many find it hard and remain as some said like arctic rivers, frozen at the mouth.

How does a woman witness to her friends and neighbors? Chiefly by her life. It should be different and attractive to the outsider. Then, as opportunity occurs, she will be able to say what Jesus Christ means to her.

Neighbor

For instance a woman singing to herself, as she hung out the family washing, was asked over the fence, “How do you manage to keep so cheerful with all your brood?” Very wisely she did not give her testimony there and then—it wasn’t a very good moment. For one thing she did not want her neighbor to catch pneumonia, and anyway the neighbor probably had many things cluttering her mind—the lunch in the oven, the shopping to be done, the children to collect from play group. What she did say, quite casually, was, “If you really want to know, I’ll tell you one afternoon over a cuppa. Something happened to me a couple of years ago—life hasn’t been the same since.” I can imagine that neighbor going indoors interested; she had been given a tit-bit which as she chewed over would make her want more.

Chatting

Another woman just chats about her Christian experience as the chance is given her. On a coach one day she got talking to the woman in the next seat, who admired her jumper. “Oh, someone at the church made it for me,” she replied. “Do you go to church? It’s made such a difference to my life. I didn’t always go, but one day I asked Jesus Christ to come into my life, and do you know, I haven’t been the same person since. I’ve been a new woman.” Her fellow traveller was interested.

If we allow Jesus Christ to come into our everyday lives and affect the ordinary things we find ourselves doing, then as we chat about them, we shall find that along with them goes Jesus. Telling others about what He means to us and seeing others put their trust in Him is one of life’s most thrilling experiences. Pray and God will give you the opportunities and the words to speak.

PROPHECY

Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

Malachi: Christian Living in the Last Days

(Last of a series)

Dr. Ed Blum

Malachi 3:8 "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings."

The tithe in the Old Testament often amounted to as much as thirty percent of a person's income. That does not mean that a believer today has to give thirty percent of his income, because in those days there was no separation of Church and state. The tithe did pay for both civil and religious government. A person who applies this to the New Testament church is, I think, making an illegitimate application.

But there is another application—the possibility that you don't think of it at all, and you may feel that finances are not part of our spiritual life. This is an over-reaction the other way.

As the last word in the history of a long period of God's dealing with the Jewish people, He says to them, (Malachi 3:13) "Your words have been stout against me." In other words, I don't like your attitude, the Lord says. I don't like the way you talk about me. I don't like the way you think about me. And the Jewish people say, What have we spoken so much against you? What do you mean? We are religious people. We offer sacrifices. We are your people. And so the Lord spells out in the same familiar pattern, the charge, the refutation and then the demonstration.

V. 14, "Ye have said, it is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?" They look at themselves and what they are doing in their religious life. They were getting up and going to church. They offered their sacrifices, they participated in religious affairs to a certain extent. But as they thought about their religion they said, Well, it really isn't doing much. It's vain. It doesn't profit. Now that's the wrong kind of thinking. We ought not to be religious because we are thinking in terms of profit and loss. In other words, if the only reason we go to church is because of the ad we see in the paper ("the family that prays together stays together") that really is a wrong motivation.

I think we should be very careful in presenting Christianity as a benefit type situation—"If you accept Jesus Christ you will be happy and singing all the day long," this is presenting Christianity on the wrong basis—that this will profit you. It *will* profit you, but

you ought to be a Christian because you are convinced of the truth of the matter. The truth is the important thing.

When we present Christianity or Christ we ought not to present it in terms of pleasure or pain. The non-Christian says, Why should I accept Jesus Christ? This is going to cause me a lot of pain; and his life is built on a pain-pleasure principle. He avoids that which causes him pain, and that which gives him pleasure is his highest good. Therefore we ought not to present Christianity this way. That is accommodating the message to the spirit of the times. Many people are on this pleasure-pain ethic. Whatever gives them the maximum amount of pleasure is their greatest goal. If drugs give them pleasure and reduce the pain, then of course they go to drugs.

Christianity on a short term basis cannot compete with that. The Bible does speak of the pleasures of sin for a season. A Christian, by definition, has to have a long-range view of things. A person may ask, "If I become a Christian what will this do for me in the next few months? Will I make more money in my business? Will I have more friends in the next three months?" On this kind of a basis we don't compete very well. Although I think Christianity is the best life, there are certain things from a non-Christian's point of view that will cause him to have more pleasure immediately. A person has to look at the long range view. Some people have a very difficult time at this. Yet God constantly exhorts us to take a long range view. Remember Psalm 73? This man was trying to evaluate his life compared with the lives of other people. On a short term basis he was coming out on the short end, and he almost lost his faith. It wasn't until he went to the temple of God, and considered the final end of the wicked that he saw that the end was different. Then it made sense to him.

If Jesus Christ had evaluated His life simply on the immediate short term basis, it would have been very discouraging. When Jesus died on the cross all of His disciples forsook Him. He died an apparent failure. Just from the short term view—33 or so years—He was a failure. He wrote no books, founded no institutions. He had a few disciples and they turned away from Him. But He said, "I came to do thy will, O God," and therefore He was finally vindicated. The vindication did not come until His resurrection and will not be seen by the world until He comes again.

So here, in verse 14 as these people evaluate their lives, they are saying, It is vain to serve God. It is vain that we have kept His charge, and it is vain that we have walked in mourning before the Lord. Now really, they had not done all these things with the whole heart. They had been religious, they had kept the form, but from the rest of the book we realize that they had drifted quite a way from God in the actual performance.

In verse 15, "Now we call the arrogant blessed. Not only are the doers of wickedness built up, but they also test God and escape." The wicked prosper, and this is a problem that a person can fall into when he is looking at the immediate return. These people were saying, "It really doesn't pay to serve Jehovah, does it?" The other guy says, "No, I guess not. Look at the Persians around us. They have their gods, they worship Zoroaster and they are doing just fine. So, many of the people were falling away in their faith. But in verse 16 we see the other side of the story. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." We see here the function of the true believer. He is marked out as one who really fears the Lord; he is not just religious. The people described in verses 13-15, I think could be called in our language, nominal Christians. Those in verse 16, we could call the truly regenerate. You are seeing in your lifetime a division. You are seeing the organized church falling apart and nominal Christians falling away like flies.

In France and England only two to three percent of the people attend church. It's happening in America today. You come back from church on Sunday morning and you see your neighbors mowing their lawns, or you see the shades pulled and they stagger out to get the morning paper. We are living in an age when people have left nominal Christianity. In a certain sense that may be good, because they have not found anything in these other churches. In so many of the churches the gospel has gone. This presents a challenge to us, because we need to make the issue very clear to people about what faith really is—it is trust in a living Person.

You mention God in a conversation today, they look at you as if to say, "What kind of a nut are you?"

Believers who are living today, as well as those living in Malachi's time have a special responsibility to one another. Because we are in a minority, as these people, we have a responsibility to one another. Being a solitary Christian is a difficult thing.

When everybody was a Christian—of course that never was—the climate of the age made it easy. You could talk about God, and everybody talked about God. For instance, two hundred years ago if you mentioned God in a conversation nobody minded. But you mention God in a conversation today, they look at you as if to say, "What kind of a nut are you?" It's going to be harder for Christians for they are going to be more alone. There is going to be a sharper dichotomy between what is Christianity and what is culture. In the past, Christianity and culture were more intertwined. But we are going to see an increasingly pagan culture, and a smaller though, hopefully, a more committed group of believers. There is also a danger here. When a person is a Christian and he lives in a culture that is very pagan, when he gets away from the Lord he immediately drops to the level of his culture, and his culture is going to be very bad.

Christians are going to find increasing pressure along this line. And so, they that feared the Lord, back at Malachi's time, spoke to one another. What do you think they said? They encouraged one another. They ministered to one another. Ephesians 5:19, 20 tells us, that as believers, we are to speak to one another, we are to encourage one another, we are to exhort one another. And I take it that this will become more and more needed as the age wears on.

In Malachi 3:16 we learn that the Lord gave attention and heard. The Lord listens to our conversation. He listens to the conversation of the ungodly. He also listens to the thoughts and conversation of the godly. He knows everything. The Lord knows and remembers. He remembers His own, those who fear the Lord and esteem His name.

Hear what the Lord says about us in verse 17, "They shall be mine saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." The picture here is that the believer is precious to the Lord. The Lord remembers him, and will finally save him.

We come toward the end of the book now and he is looking forward to the future. He is warning and exhorting the people that there is to be a day of judging. In chapter 4 we come to the day of the Lord. "For behold the day of the Lord cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." The day of the Lord will issue in judgment for the unbeliever, but for the believer, look at verse 2.

"But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." A very complicated figure in a way. In my judgment, he is not speaking especially about Jesus Christ, but Jesus Christ will be the instrument. It is a picture of God's righteousness coming and in judgment. But it's pictured in the sun rising, and as the sun rises, the darkness that is over the land is evaporated, and this sun has healing in its wings. Of course, the sun doesn't have wings, but evidently the wings are the rays. The picture is that everywhere the sunlight hits, healing takes place. This is a very beautiful picture of what happens when Jesus Christ returns.

We live in a world that is in darkness; we live in a world that is under the judgment of God, where there is sickness and death. But when He returns He abolishes unrighteousness, and brings in health and judgment. He brings in salvation. The people who have lived in a long night of darkness shall see the restoration of the Lord. This was partially fulfilled at Christ's first coming, but more fully at His second coming. Continuing in verse 2 there is another beautiful picture, "And ye shall go forth"—out of the darkness

of the situation which you are in—"and skip like calves of the stall."

The picture here is of the young calf that is penned up and all of a sudden someone releases the gate and the calf gets to go out into the pasture. He leaps and runs with joy. This is a picture of one that has been released. In Acts three there is a beautiful picture of this. Here a person was crippled for over 40 years. He had been brought every day and set at the side of the temple and there he was begging. When the apostles came in he wanted to get money. Peter says, I have no money, but what I have give I unto thee, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk. He leaped up and began jumping and praising God. The picture is one of a man who had been in bondage. All of a sudden now he is able to jump and run around. When Jesus Christ returns again, then all those who are burdened down and oppressed who are His people will be released and will praise God.

In verse three, "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." The long term basis vindicates Christianity. You say, how do I know this is true? The reason is, that Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead. We know also that it is true because His word affirms it. We live by faith. Faith is not an empty opinion. It is built upon knowledge, and our knowledge is built upon His word.

An exhortation in verse 4 to all the people of Malachi's time, "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments."

He is telling the people of that time, heed the Word. The problems in your lives are because you have not been heeding the word of God. The application to us is, if we are to have the kind of life that will be pleasing to God, we must heed His word.

We live by faith. Faith is not an empty opinion. It is built upon knowledge . . .

Verse 5, "Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Elijah was not to come in person, but one like Elijah, and this was John the Baptist. Had they accepted Jesus Christ then this prophecy would have been fulfilled and judgment would have taken place, but they did not. Of course God knew that they would not accept His Son.

The Lord gives a prediction, "I am going to send Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord." Right before the end of that tribulation period there is going to be a figure to arise. He will be a very unusual man who will fulfill Malachi's prophecy. He will speak to the people of Israel once again. What he will do is described in Malachi 4:6. "He will turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

God has kept Israel all down through history. Through Israel He has brought redemption to us. Israel has had a greater influence upon the world than any other people. So many of the Nobel Prize winners have been Jews. The scriptures teach that God has not finished with Israel—Romans 9-11. In the last days we are going to see wholesale conversions of Jews to Jesus Christ as Messiah. Already many young Jews are coming to trust in Jesus. Israel is back in the land. There is a spiritual blight there; most of them are secular Jews. The average Jew in Palestine is like the average American today, not religious. There is a spiritual vacuum. And the Lord is going to send His messenger. There is going to be a wholesale conversion of Jewish people; then there is going to be the final judgment. For the believer, we look forward that the Lord will take us out before that great and terrible time.

Christian, living in the last days, we are to encourage one another. We are to live by faith. We are to live by His word.

The moral yardstick has been set aside.

They Say, "Peace and Safety"

Dee McCroskey

The new peace in Indochina is variously described as welcome but fragile, and "shaky." It is laden with uneasiness on all sides. Is it the prelude to the great world-wide cry of "Peace and safety," and then "sudden destruction" (1 Thessalonians 5:3)? The context shows that this cry of peace will come in the Tribulation period, when the terrible Beast of Revelation 13 will control the whole world. People will think they have peace at last, but will have only destruction and judgment instead.

There is a very striking statement about that Beast ruler, in Revelation 6:4. It says, "and power (authority) was given to him . . . to take peace from the earth." That time is not here yet, but the world is already well on its way there, and coming closer every minute.

Today God is permitting wicked men to take peace from the earth, and to bring in murder and violence and terror in its place. The question is, Why?

God has done this before. When the human race became so wicked and rebellious against Him, He just gave them up to their wickedness and final judgment. Read Romans 1:24-32, and note the words, "gave them up," and "gave them over." It was so before the flood, and it is becoming so today. The forces of darkness

are pressing in upon all fronts. God is getting ready to turn this world over to the enemy, Satan, for a season, after He has taken His own children out of it (see 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18).

We are in a generation now that has completely set God's Word aside as the moral standard, the yardstick by which we can tell what is right and what is wrong. There is no other standard to go by. Without God and His Word, there is no moral yardstick at all. Then moral issues are judged by "a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). And God says, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil" (Isaiah 5:20), as people do today.

We believers are pilgrims and strangers here, in a world being rapidly given over to the power of darkness, and coming judgment of God. But as the song says, "We are only passing through!"

—Editorial in *Last Day Messenger*

"There are two contradictory wisdoms."

Why Can't I Understand the Bible?

Martin O. Massinger

Most people who look at our paper readily acknowledge that the Bible is the Word of God and therefore receive it as reliable. But some of these same people are distressed by the fact that they actually do not understand much of it nor profit by reading it. They raise the realistic question, Why can't I understand the Bible?

Brain and heart trouble

There are really two kinds of trouble involved in the answer to this question. The one involves the brain; the other involves the heart.

Let us very briefly look at the first. Like any study, Bible study does involve the brain. The Bible is a big book, carefully organized, with the parts perfectly and intricately interrelated. It is not just a random collection of disorganized pious sayings.

The Bible needs to be taken seriously, and it needs to be studied systematically and persistently throughout life. Therefore there is a need for a Bible teaching ministry in churches, Sunday schools, and in every church related activity. There is likewise need of Bible colleges, which exist for the very purpose of giving Bible teaching and training in preparation for Christian service.

But let us devote our attention to the other problem, the problem involving not the head but the heart. You see, you could conceivably do a great deal of Bible study with your head and yet completely miss out in receiving its marvelous message for your heart. Unfortunately this is often the case. To get into this subject let us turn to Paul's analysis of this great problem in 1 Corinthians 2 and 3.

As everyone knows, the ancient Greeks were great admirers of human philosophy. Now there is nothing wrong with the word philosophy. It simply means love of wisdom. And wisdom is a good thing. The only trouble is that human philosophy seeks in vain for a system of wisdom to understand the universe as it is. And apart from God's revelation there is simply no chance of understanding the sum total of things.

Two kinds of wisdom

When Paul came to the great city of Corinth, he flatly repudiated this wisdom and determined instead to preach "Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:1-2). Now I am sure that he was not rejecting legitimate knowledge, systematized factual truth. But what man, unaided by the Spirit of God, had tried to figure out for himself, Paul rejected.

Yet Paul did not wish to be misunderstood. He was presenting another kind of wisdom. It was not the wisdom of this world but the wisdom of God.

So there are two contradictory wisdoms: the wisdom of the world, and the wisdom of God. It is this latter area, the wisdom of God, which is the sum total of Biblical truth. It is of this domain that Paul is speaking when he says: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (2:9). This means that this vast storehouse of spiritual truth cannot be taken in with the ordinary human senses, the eye, the ear, and the heart. Of course we might read these truths with our eyes or listen to someone preaching them with our ears, and even be moved somewhat in our hearts, but we still would not be receiving these things.

How then can these great spiritual truths be taken in? The answer is in verse 10: "But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit. . ." The Holy Spirit, one of the three persons of the Holy Trinity, actually lives in your body if you are saved; and one of his several functions is to reveal God's truth to you. It can be done in no other way.

There is an interesting comparison in verses 11 and 12. Verse 11 says: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" In plain English this means that you have to be human to understand human affairs. My dog may be a very intelligent animal, but he cannot understand politics, economics, literature, history. And why not?

Simply because he is a dog and not a man. These are human affairs, not canine affairs. Only a human being can understand human affairs. If I should want to communicate human affairs to my dog, two miracles would have to take place. He would have to receive a human brain, and I would have to be able to communicate to him in the language of a dog.

Now all this sounds ridiculous, but please hear me a little bit further. Just as a dog cannot understand human affairs, so a human being cannot understand divine affairs. The last half of verse 11 says it in so many words: "Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

Two miracles

Now watch the parallel. The two great miracles that I suggested in our odd illustration about the dog, are exactly what God has performed for us. Here you have it in verse 12: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." God has actually changed our capacity so that we have the Spirit of God. When you and I trusted Christ as our Savior, the Holy Spirit moved into our very body. He is God. This is literally true. So we believers have received a capacity to understand divine things which we never had before. And then God deigned to speak to us in human language. By this we mean that He gave us the Bible, His Word, in human languages: Hebrew in the Old Testament and Greek in the New. Then, since most of us cannot read Hebrew and Greek, He even provided us very good translations in the English which we can understand. This communication is in words. Verse 13 tells us that these words are not words "which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

So we have two marvelous miracles: a great change has taken place in us at the new birth which is nothing less than the coming into our very bodies of God the Holy Spirit with all his divine understanding. And on the other hand, we have in our hands a book which is actually God's message given to us in human words.

Now it is obvious that not everyone is capable of understanding the Bible. That is a point that we made in the title to this article and in the opening paragraph. But it is not merely a matter of being unable to understand it with our brains. Some people's hearts are right, and some are not. The passage that we are studying goes on to divide the human race into three parts. And this division is along this very line of understanding or not understanding the things of God.

The natural man

In the first place there is the natural man (2:14). The Greek word for natural has no good English equivalent, so the word "soul-ish" has been manufactured. He is the man whose soul operates properly, but whose spirit is dead. You see, a human being has a soul and a spirit. They are not identical. The soul can understand life around about us in the natural realm. The spirit is that part of us that understands God and communicates with Him. There are some people whose spirit is dead. They are people who have never received new life in Jesus Christ. They may be people, fine citizens of the community, but they are unsaved. They have never trusted Jesus Christ as their Saviour, who died on the cross that

they might have everlasting life, and who arose again on the third day. Now this kind of person is called "the natural man." He receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God for the simple reason that they are foolishness unto him. He cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned, and his spirit is dead.

Could it be that this is the reason that you do not understand the Bible? Maybe you are still spiritually dead. If that is the case, believe the simple truth of the gospel: Jesus shed His blood for your sin, He died under the wrath of God which you deserve, and then arose again on the third day from the dead. If you will simply believe this truth, you will pass immediately from death unto life. You will then no longer be a natural man, unable to study and understand the spiritual content of the Word of God. This is a marvelous change, but it is taking place every day in multitudes of lives.

The spiritual man

Now Paul presents the opposite end of the scale. In contrast to the natural man, who receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, he states in verse 15 that "he that is spiritual judgeth all things. . . ." This word judgeth means discerns. The spiritual man is a man whose spirit is keen and alive. That is, his human spirit is in such a condition that the Holy Spirit can teach him the things of God. That is one of the reasons why the Lord Jesus after His ascension sent the Holy Spirit down. He expressed this clearly to His disciples in the Upper Room Discourse in John 16:12-15. In that passage He told them that He had many things which He still wanted to tell them. It was not a matter of their being incapable intellectually, but the Holy Spirit had not yet come to indwell them. He went on to tell them: "When he, the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth. . . He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." So now the Holy Spirit has come. He came on the Day of Pentecost. Since that day those whose hearts are right before God can receive His teaching and discern all things.

The carnal man

Now getting back to 1 Corinthians we find that there is a third kind of person, apparently somewhere on the scale between the natural man and the spiritual man. But what could this mean? Either you are saved or unsaved. There is no halfway point. That is true. This third kind of person, the carnal man of 3:1, is saved, just as truly as the spiritual man. But the flesh, the old nature, so dominates him that it has hindered his growth and caused a protracted babyhood. Instead of being capable of taking in solid food ("meat," verse 2), he still has to get along on a milk diet. This is sad. This is an area that calls for self-examination, for confession and correction before the Lord. Can it be that we, though saved, are carelessly going along in an attitude of carnality which effectively hinders our intake of the Word of God?

—In *Dallas Bible College News*

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Missions Seminar has good response

The Missions Seminar held at the Portland Avenue Church May 12, 1973, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., was attended by at least 100 concerned Christians from churches in Indiana and Kentucky. Some drove over 100 miles to attend. Ten missionary men and women were on the program during the day. Since it is not often that there are that many missionaries in the area at the same time it was felt that this was a good opportunity to get together to discuss missionary needs and challenges. Those who attended felt well-rewarded for the time spent, and many will be carrying back to their churches what they received. The messages were recorded by Brother Jim Goodwin and those who wish them on tape or cassette may obtain them for \$4.00 by sending their orders to him at PCS.

The results of a questionnaire concerning missionary giving were also distributed to those attending. Others who wish copies may obtain them by writing to PCS. 23 churches (out of 87) contacted responded to the questionnaire. All of those who responded were involved in missionary giving in home or foreign missions. 25 home or foreign missionaries are supported in whole or in part by these churches. In 1972, \$81,562.00 was given by these churches for missions. Contributions of the churches ranged from a low of \$200 to a high of \$18,514 for the year with an average of \$3,707 for each church. Percentage of church income devoted to missions ranged from 6% to 60% with an average of 23.47%.

Individual giving through the Missionary Office was not included in this survey. Also a number of churches who contribute liberally to missions did not return questionnaires, so these results are only suggestive.

The keynote message, "Where are We? Where Can We Go?" was given by Dennis Allen, missionary to Hong Kong. Robert Garrett from Rhodesia spoke on "Training and Sending Forth Laborers." Vernon Lawyer, formerly a missionary to Rhodesia spoke on "The Mission Call." "The Non-professional Missionary was the subject of Billy Ray Lewter's message. Brother Lewter has served as a missionary both in Hong Kong and Manila. Victor Broaddus, who has worked many years in the Philippines, discussed "Educating Churches for Missions." There were two separate sessions for ladies in which 5 missionary wives, Mae Broaddus, Mary Lewter, Joy Garrett, Betty Allen and Sister Dollie Garrett, spoke and answered questions. We believe much good will come from this seminar. As Brother Janes so often said, "The brethren will do more when they

are taught more.” We are grateful to Brethren Earl Mullins and Glenn Baber who conceived and planned this seminar. Many expressed the feeling that one day was too short. Maybe this is a foretaste of longer and better seminars at a future date if the Lord tarries.

Church leadership meeting held in Rhodesia

We had a very interesting meeting at Gatooma. On Friday, April 20, I spoke seven hours on church leadership; two hours in the morning, and three hours in the afternoon and in the evening. They said it was the first meeting of its kind that had ever been held by that group of churches. There are abundant opportunities to teach the work of God in addition to your work with the children.

Concerning Brother and Sister Harris: we phoned Monday and the papers were not yet ready. Mr. Walsh, Immigration Office, thinks he may have them for us tomorrow. We have no clear idea of the plans for Harris as he has not written us anything about when they hope to leave the U.S. The pressure for our return to the U.S. has lessened, but the need for them to come on soon has increased. My wife has been having difficulty keeping up with things since the new school term began. This work is too much for her and we need to get her out of it as soon as we can. But we are going to try to hold things together a bit longer. We do not know when we can leave Rhodesia but the prospects of getting away in June are dim even if we are able to get the immigration papers tomorrow. —*J. Miller Forcade*, Salisbury, Rhodesia, May 7.

“They said they found no joy”

At present we are having scripture classes with Brother and Sister Chadzko. They were converted to the Lord in Umtali, but have very recently moved to this area. He was a Roman Catholic and his father a Count in the Catholic Church. He says he has met several of the Popes. She belonged to the Church of England (Episcopalian). They say they found no joy and happiness in their former religions, and are really enjoying studying the Bible. Their willingness to accept, makes them a joy to teach. They are never on the defensive as many are whom we try to teach. —*J. C. Shewmaker*, Bulawayo, Rhodesia, May 16.

Lessons on the Second Coming

I didn't get home from our class till after noon. We now meet in the morning instead of afternoon—and we like it. We had such a good class this morning. We spent a long while discussing Proverbs 13:24 and Proverbs 14:1—some excellent thoughts were brought out. This class is composed of white women.

We go to Harare tonight and tomorrow night we go to Arcadia. Daddy Brown is teaching lessons on the Second Coming. They are very interesting and encouraging. I love to hear the Africans sing, “Come Lord Jesus, Come!” —*Addie Brown*, Salisbury, Rhodesia, May 15.

Second gospel meeting planned in South Africa

I will be conducting our second series of Gospel meetings scheduled from the 11th to the 17th June, with the theme: "How shall we escape?" I am busy preparing my lessons, and printing the handbills for these meetings, and we pray that many may turn to the Lord, and I be granted the needed health and strength!"

Our Hanover Park building project is moving to where we have now decided and accepted the plans presented as official, and just waiting to obtain them after being passed by the City Council, so that we can start erecting the building. We are thankful for the enthusiasm of the men within the congregation, who have offered to give of their time and labor! We are praying that the Lord shall undertake to bring about success to this project, in an area ready for harvesting.

As a family we continue to express our appreciation to all concerned, for their expression of love, in contributing to the car fund. May God bless them! —*T. W. Hartle*, Capetown, South Africa, May 14.

"Science Says"

Douglas Jones

The selfless labors of Pasteur, Fleming, Salk, and a host of other dedicated scientists, genuinely merit our appreciation. Their discoveries in the field of health have enormously benefitted mankind. No doubt similar and perhaps even greater advances are still to come. For all progress of this sort we can be thankful. Yet, as these benefits accrue there is an increasing tendency to suppose that science can do anything. For example, in an address at the 1965 national convention of the American Chemical Society, Dr. Charles C. Price proposed that the artificial creation of life be set as "a national goal." According to Dr. Price, it is merely a matter of time and money and great effort. He said: "I can't imagine that the ability to synthesize new life will not happen within a century or so."

Dr. Price is not alone in his belief. The research of a growing number of scientists is directed toward the creation of life in a test tube. News stories appearing from time to time might lead one to think the researchers have practically succeeded. In fact they have only assembled a few of the elemental building blocks found in living cells.

But if man can create life then eventually it is assumed, he will also be able to revive the dead. On this premise the Cryonics Society was formed in 1965. Through a process of freezing immediately after death, members of the Society hope to preserve their bodies until means are found to restore them to life. As one member expressed it, "We're not interested in just freezing bodies. We want immortality." Science, they are confident, will find a way.

Not all scientists of course subscribe to this view. Nevertheless, it is one more product of that monstrous curse for which the scientific community is largely responsible—the deification of science.

Author Robert Ardrey pretty well summed up the prevailing sentiment with this recent comment: “What we must recognize is that we have no true, driving, unrejectable religion other than science itself . . . If there exists a brotherhood of man in the 20th Century, then it responds to a single unquestioning faith: ‘Science says.’ ”

Will science create life? Will it raise the dead? If we accept the evolutionary theories taught in most of today’s science textbooks, our answer likely will be: “Why not?” But if we acknowledge the eternal principles revealed in the Book of Books, our answer must be: “Absolutely not!” It is the unvarying testimony of Scripture that God “is the fountain of life” (Psalm 36:9) and that it is God “who quickeneth the dead” (Romans 4:17).

Life is something more than proper physical organization of the chemical constituents which make up a cell or a body. This is evident in the creation of Adam. Speaking of Adam’s body, Moses said, “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground . . .” (Genesis 2:7). Here was a body with perfect physical organization but it nevertheless was still a lifeless body. It was not until God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life” that “man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7).

Nor was this God-breathed infusion simply the implanting of animal life in Adam’s body. Life in the human body cannot be divorced from the human spirit. For “the body without the spirit is dead” (James 2:26).

It is the spirit within him that “knoweth the things of a man” (1 Corinthians 2:11). It is the spirit which wills (Matthew 26:41), perceives (Mark 2:8), rejoices (Luke 1:47) and which is troubled (John 13:21). Thus reason, conscience and volition, attributes lacking in animals, are not rooted in the physical brain in the spiritual element of man.

The brain, along with the rest of the body, is constantly changing. Old cells die and new cells take their place so that in a few years none of the original cells remain. Yet even after a lifetime of these continuous biological changes an individual is still the same person. Clearly this continuity of personality must be attributed to something other than the body and that something is the spirit.

When a man dies his spirit returns “unto God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7). That spirit, however, retains its identity after death. Hence Abraham is still Abraham (Luke 16:22-26; 20:37, 38); and Lazarus is still Lazarus (Luke 16:25). It follows, therefore, that if science is to revive a dead body and reinvest it with its own personality, a way will have to be found to recall the spirit from God. That is quite an order, wouldn’t you say?

Death, according to the Cryonics Society, is merely a disease and as susceptible to cure as any other disease. But according to the

Bible, death is the wages of sin (Romans 6:23). "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12).

The resurrection of the dead therefore is not a medical but a moral proposition involving resources which lie beyond the power of sinful man. There is nothing in science which can take away sin. Thus there is nothing in science which can effect a "cure" for death.

Only one who can remove the guilt of sin can take away the penalty of death. That One is Christ, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). He is God's only remedy for sin and consequently to Him, not to medical science, is committed the power of raising the dead. Thus He declared: "For as the Father raiseth the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will" (John 5:21).

That this was no idle claim was demonstrated on a number of occasions. For example, following the death of Jairus' daughter, the Lord "took her by the hand, and called, saying; Maid arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway" (Luke 8: 54, 55).

He spoke and it was done. So, too, "the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28, 29).

Let men theorize and research as they will, no one shall rise from the dead until the Lord commands it. And when He does command it, not a single one will fail to come forth. All, both good and evil, shall be raised together. But how vastly different are the destinies of the two classes. For the righteous there is life everlasting; for the wicked, eternal damnation.

In anticipation of that momentous day, the Psalmist long ago declared: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I will be satisfied, when I awake in thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15). So also, to all who are made righteous in Christ, John says: "and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2).

Yes, all the dead shall indeed be raised. But only the bodies of those who are Christ's at His coming shall be changed so as to "be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Philippians 3:21). The rest have no promise of the natural body being "raised a spiritual body" (1 Corinthians 15:44). For them the awful and inescapable issue of the resurrection will be "the second death" (Revelation 20:14).

Where, then, will you place your trust? Will you look to the science of frail men whose hope is a return to this vale of tears? Or will you rely upon the omniscience of an Almighty God who promises His servants eternal life with Him in Glory?

220 Cove Lane, Click Rte., Llano, Texas 78643

—In *The Truth*

Prayer Has Many Sides

A. B. Simpson

The climax of the apostle Paul's splendid figure of the Christian soldier and his complete armor is found in Ephesians 6:18-19.

After telling about the breastplate of righteousness, the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit, he finally adds, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me. . ."

This experience is for those who live in the highest place, here called the heavenlies. It is the crowning experience of the spiritual life. It is the greatest thing that we can be and do for the Lord.

This expression "praying always" refers not so much to prayer as an occasional act in the moment of emergency as to the habit of prayer as a constant and unceasing exercise. "Praying always" might be more literally translated "praying on every occasion." It is not so much the devotional spirit as the instant and intuitive habit of turning immediately to God whenever occasion requires.

"On every occasion" means in every time of need. These occasions and needs are sent to us by the Lord on purpose to stimulate our prayers and press us closer to Him.

It is the same thought expressed by the apostle in Philippians: "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." And necessity is the empty vessel that goes down into the deep well of God's fulness and comes back filled with the living water. If these needs never came ours might be prayerless lives.

But there is a sense in which even when there is no outward need we may still be "praying always." The spirit of prayer should never be absent from the believer. Just as the evaporation of earth and ocean is always going up even when we do not see the fine cloud, so the heart should be ever ascending to heaven.

At morning and at evening we can see the vapor as it slowly floats from earth to heaven or sinks upon the ground in the moisture of the closing day, but it has been there all day long and is even more active in the hotter hours and clearer air of noon.

So, while we have our morning and evening devotions and our seasons of more special union, the heart may evermore be pouring out its worship and communion to Him in whom "we live, and move, and have our being." Have you learned this heavenly art of "praying always"?

The phrase "with all prayer" is a comprehensive expression covering the manysidedness of the life of prayer and the many forms which it embraces.

There is, for example, the prayer of petition which simply asks for things and receives them. There is the prayer of supplication which continues to ask and watch and plead until the answer comes. There is the prayer of intercession which is chiefly occupied in praying for others instead of ourselves.

There is also the prayer of devotion which worships God supremely and finds its utterance in the Master's prayer, "Hallowed be thy name." There is the prayer of silence, communion, wordless fellowship that breathes out its heart to God, seeking not anything but loving to draw nigh, to wait upon the Lord, to bask in the sunshine of his love and breathe in the sweetness of His life, the most blessed and satisfactory of all the forms of prayer.

The Holy Spirit is the teacher and author of all these varieties of heavenly converse with the world above, and every child of God should be proficient in them all. How many of us know little of prayer except as petition, the cry of need, the request for some particular blessing; and when it has come, how quickly we forget God until some new occasion drives us to His feet. Often He has had cause to complain of us, "Thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel."

Paul speaks of prayer as "supplication." This word is derived from two roots which mean "ply under ply." It is prayer succeeded by prayer, each bursting from a deeper fountain in the full heart. It is the result not of unbelief but of intensity. It is a torrent which does not brook control but breaks through every barrier until it has discharged its flood.

We have no right to criticize the prayer of importunity or say it springs from lack of faith. It is an instinctive cry that keeps crying until it reaches the sense of satisfaction, assurance, and rest.

We find many illustrations of this form of prayer in God's holy Word. It was thus that Abraham prayed for Sodom. It was so that Jacob prayed at Peniel. It was in this way that Samuel cried for Saul. This was how Elijah prayed and prayed, again and yet again, until the cloud rose upon the western horizon and the answer came from the long-sealed heavens.

Many of the Master's own prayers are expressed in language which denotes more than ordinary intensity. There are several Greek words for prayer and some of them are passionate words, words of profoundest, intensest energy. It is this stronger word He used when He said to Peter, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." It was no ordinary prayer; it was an agony of prayer. It was supplication that prayed through the conflict and claimed the certain answer.

When God gives us this prayer we must not try to reason it away or ignore it, but rather pray it through in the Holy Ghost.

We shall find that it means a travailing in birth which brings through the womb of suffering some glorious living thing.

NEWS AND NOTES

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

Gallatin, Tennessee: We are happy to welcome to our church family Lori Ayn Hayes. Lori was baptized into Christ last Sunday morning, May 22, by Brother Dave Schreiner. She is the daughter of Myra and Glen Hayes. We trust that the Lord will richly bless her as she goes forward in the Christian life.

Brother Kim Soi Bok who has been ministering to the Korean segment of our congregation for many months now has resigned. He and his wife are moving east where he will be working with a Korean language newspaper to support himself. He hopes to be able to establish a church in New York or New Jersey. It is Gallatin's plan to arrange for a Korean Bible Class during our Sunday school hour, then have the Korean brethren and sisters to meet with us in the main auditorium. This will enable them to keep up the ties of Korean language and custom and also to become a part of the congregation. The language barrier will still present some problems but we hope these will grow less and less as time goes on.

BIBLE-TEACHING TAPES

A new (free) catalog of Bible-teaching tapes is now available. The tapes—both reel and cassette—are available for loan without charge. A wide variety of speakers and subjects is offered, and there are studies covering entire books of the Bible. When Dr. Horace Wood was in Louisville, he left a tape on the Life of Christ (one in a series of studies by Bill McRae), and that sparked an interest in tapes that is still growing. Some people are sharing tapes with their unsaved friends, "Here is something that really did my heart good. I think you'll enjoy it."

Write to Believers Chapel Tape Ministry, 6420 Churchill Way, Dallas, Texas 75230, and ask for the tape catalog.

Highland Church, Louisville, Ky.: Brother Orell Overman will be preach-

ing every evening, Monday through Friday at 7:30 p.m., July 23-27. The meeting begins on Sunday, July 22 on which evening it will be at 7:00 p.m. Brother Overman is the regular minister of the Pleasant Grove congregation in Indiana.

If the Lord carries our Sister Lucy Cheatham, sister of brother J. K. Scoggan, will be 100 years old July 12, this year.

LOUISVILLE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP WEEK

Dates for the Louisville Christian Fellowship Week are August 13-17. Day sessions will be held at Portland, night sessions at Sellersburg. More details later.

THE NAME OF THE CHURCH

If you haven't seen the April issue of *Mission Messenger*, write for a copy and read "The Right Name." This article is guaranteed to leave you with some warm feelings—either for or against the author, Carl Ketcherside. While you're writing, send three dollars and you'll get *Mission Messenger* for the duration of its publication, through the end of 1975. The address is 139 Signal Hill Drive, St. Louis, Missouri 63121.

Ft. Lauderdale, Fla: During March God blessed us with one baptism and as April begins we have had another young lady come confessing Jesus and being immersed with Him.

I just returned from preaching a revival meeting in Gallatin, Tenn., where nine decisions were recorded, eight of which were baptisms. Praise God!

Our new plans for a church building have been approved by our Trustees and, Lord willing, we will be entering a church-bond financing program and then on to construction. Pray for our labors for God's church in South Florida. —Vaughn A. Reeves

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Sister Mildred Lale, who, with her sister Edith, has been doing the office work for several years, has suggested that we list her telephone number at home so that those who want to call about orders will be able to do so.

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