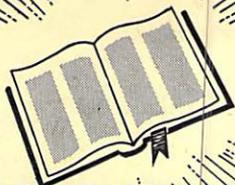
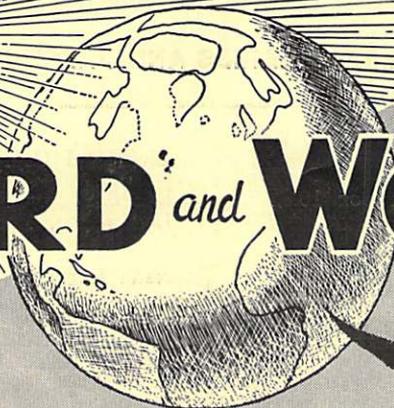


"Holding fast the faithful Word . . ."



The **WORD** and **WORK**



"Holding forth the Word of life."

FEBRUARY, 1977

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In order for any roster to be useful, it should be both complete and accurate. There may well be other names that should be added, or that will be entering the field later. Also, some of these addresses may need more information to be complete. Kindly help us to make this roster useful.

—MISSIONARY MESSENGER

THE WORD AND WORK

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God's Family

W. R. H.

THE PRODIGAL'S ELDER BROTHER

A brother said to me, "Two scriptures have been hard for me to comprehend and feel right about. One is where the laborer who went to work at the 11th hour received a full day's pay; and the other is where the elder brother of the prodigal son was remonstrated by the father. Do you understand what I mean, when I say they seem a bit unfair?" It was an honest confession of a real hang-up of long standing—not that he had let the matter bother him, really, but there was this little element of disagreement. And I had no trouble relating to his feelings, since these passages are, admittedly, beyond our habits and experience.

But these are words from Jesus' own lips, that portray God's sovereign will and sovereign grace. They are as fundamental to an understanding of God's mercy as they are foreign to the rationale of man. Here it is evident that "His ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts."

We tend to be legalistic, thinking that each deed has some intrinsic value, good or bad, and that there must be a balancing of things in order to arrive at any fairness. Without a doubt, those who bore the heat of the day deserved more than those who only worked one hour. But the master of the vineyard had already stated the price for a day's work, and it had been gladly accepted. We must bow to the truth that God can give all that men deserve, or infinitely more than men deserve, and it is all within His divine prerogative—His freedom to do as He chooses, without having to give answer to anyone.

Actually, as we absorb this truth it becomes glorious to our souls. "Amazing grace" we call it. We can all find ourselves in the group of 11th-hour workers. We cannot claim to have borne the heat of the day, nor did we strike a firm bargain with God that we would do such an amount of work for such a pay. We are among those whom Jesus admonished: "Even so ye, when ye have done all, say, We are but unprofitable servants. We have only done that which it is our duty to do." If we find that we have not "done all," then we cannot even say that we have ful-

filled our due, much less to have gone beyond the call of duty. Some may indeed have worked a few hours or years longer than others, but such need to remember that not every place in the vineyard offered identical working conditions, nor was the strength and stamina of every worker equal. These 11th hour men had not refused to work, simply "No man had hired" them.

In the case of the prodigal son's elder brother, a similar use of men's judgment comes into view. The prodigal said, "I am no more worthy to be called thy son." This was true. The father did not deny it. And the elder brother felt the same way about it, we find later. But the father still loved the lad and wanted to claim him as a son, in spite of all. And he did just that. Here again is revealed the marvelous forgiveness of God, and His rich grace; because this account in Luke 15, given by Jesus, is a picture of sons, and God.

It is not wrong for us to understand and relate to the older brother's feelings, *provided* we are able to put them behind us and join the Father as he rejoices over the return of a lost son. We will simply have to accept the Father's last sentence here, by faith: "But it was meet to make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again, and was lost, and is found."

Let your mind dwell on six words:

Make merry—Be glad—Dead—Alive—Lost—Found.

As sons of God can we arrive at this high concept of His divine grace?



IS THIS OPERATION REALLY NECESSARY?

Gordon R. Linscott

A few months ago I heard a couple of preaching brethren complain that "We are losing some of our young people to OM." From the remarks that followed, I concluded that they did not really know what Operation Mobilization (OM) is and how it works. I have never become very involved with OM, but I have followed their work for several years and I have had some personal contact with some of their workers. What I have seen at a distance has thrilled my very soul. I would like to tell you a little about OM and let you judge whether or not it poses a danger to our young people or our churches.

OM is not a missionary society; that it, it does not sponsor or send out missionaries. It is not affiliated with any denomination. OM is primarily a training organization, offering on the job training. The "job" is giving out the Gospel, primarily through literature.

The training aspect of OM has two phases. For example let's take the Mexico Christmas Crusade which took place in Monterrey in December. A number of young people from the US and Canada were the "phase one" trainees. What their training consisted of we'll see more later. The "phase two" trainees were the Mexican Christians who live in Monterrey. Here's where the "mobilization" part comes in. The local churches were "mobilized" to make a concerted effort to flood the city with Gospel literature (including offers of a free Bible correspondence course). The "phase one" trainees showed the "phase two" trainees how to get the Gospel out. The ultimate purpose was to give the local churches a vision of what they could do by themselves and inspire them to greater zeal for evangelism. A major goal of OM is to stir up local churches to take responsibility for giving out the Gospel in their own community; that's what the "mobilization" is about. Usually a part of the "phase two" training includes special meetings for the local church leaders, challenging them to fulfil the Great Commission.

Now more about the "phase one" trainees. These young Christians are recruited from churches all over the world. Most of them are enlisted for the summer months while they are out of school. After a short training conference, they go to some country where the summer's activities will be something on the order of the Mexico crusade. Even though the principal activity is distributing Gospel literature, the training aspect is of greatest importance. There is continual Bible teaching and a heavy emphasis on prayer. Such things as cameras and radios are not permitted; this is warfare, not a pleasure trip. Solicitation of funds is not allowed; if there are needs, the Lord is the one to ask. The whole routine of daily living is made subservient to one thing—get the Gospel out!

Each summer something like 2000 trainees fan out over the world—none of them on the OM payroll, all paying their own way as the Lord supplies. A very few of these remain on for a year or maybe two. This gives some continuity to the work from one year to the next. Some of these end up as missionaries, sponsored by a local church. OM was born in a prayer meeting in a dormitory room at Wheaton College—that was over 20 years ago—and it has continued to be a young people's project (even though a few of the old-timers are still around.) Without backing, without funds, almost without organization it has touched millions with the message of the Gospel. And, I would guess, it has been responsible for revolutionizing the lives of a multitude of Christians.

The story of OM is a record of human weakness manifesting the power of God. At the time of the first Mexican crusade—before

there was anything called OM—there was not a Christian radio broadcast nor a Christian bookstore in Mexico. Through the prayers of these kids, both came to be. Spain was totally closed to foreign missionaries and religious freedom was severely restricted. The OM kids cried out to God and He opened the door. Turkey continues to be exceedingly difficult; several OMers have been jailed, but the door seems to be opening just a crack. A student from SCC, with others, spent the last year or so there. The adventures of the Gospel ship *Logos* is another story that reads like fiction, and now it appears that a second ship may be in the works.

If you would like more information on any aspect of OM, write to: Send the Light, Inc., Box 148, Midland Park, N. J. 07432.

A summer mission program to the far east (Hong Kong and the Philippines) is being proposed for the summer of 1977 by Southeastern Christian College. The objectives are similar to those of the OM programs. If you are interested, write to Victor Broadus, President, SCC, Winchester, Ky. 40391.

The writer is a professor of music at the University of Louisville, and minister of the Highland Church of Christ.



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

The Apostle Paul opens the book of Romans by identifying himself as "a servant of Jesus Christ." He here uses of himself the Greek word *doulos*, which originally was the most abject servile term for a slave, and especially for one who was a slave from birth to death. But the term softened somewhat over the years and Vine says it was even used "frequently indicating subjection without the idea of bondage." Paul, of course, is using it in the sense of voluntary bondage to Jesus as Lord and Master, a subjection that started from his new birth and continued until the Lord called him home.

Paul was not alone in speaking of himself as a slave of Jesus Christ. He included Timothy with himself in Philippians 1:1 and spoke of Epaphras as such in Colossians 4:12. James (1:1), Peter (2 Peter 1:1), and Jude (v. 1) spoke of themselves in this way also. This is especially interesting in James' case since he was a half-brother of Jesus. He never mentioned the physical relationship and called himself a slave instead.

The New Testament furnishes many examples of the uses of *doulos* to show us the character of such a slave. Matthew 8:9 emphasizes his obedience, Matthew 10:24, 25 emphasizes his inferior position to his master and indicates he would be treated in suffering like his master, and Matthew 20:27 shows that the Christian who would be first in leadership among his brethren must be the slave of all. That our Lord will reward faithful servants we know from Matthew 24:21, 23. In John 8:34 Jesus said that the one whose life is lived in sin is not a "free-thinker" but a slave of sin. In Galatians 1:10 Paul says that in order to serve Christ he had to quit pleasing men; the Sanhedrin and others who hated Christ were pleased with Paul when he persecuted Christians and hated him afterwards. In Philippians 2:7 we find that when Jesus became man He thus was taking on the form of a servant, a matter that is cleared up by Romans 6:16-22, where we find that a man is always a slave—either of righteousness or of sin. Jesus, of course, served righteousness perfectly.

To every man, then, comes the choice of who shall be his master—Satan or Christ. Even if he does not know there is such a choice, he makes such a choice either by choosing Christ or by rejecting Him. But if you are a Christian, one who has committed himself to Christ, the choice is simply of being a "good and faithful servant" or one who brings reproach on the Name of Christ. You cannot serve Christ and Satan at the same time. You need to "present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom. 6:13), and to "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service" (Rom. 12:1). Thus you will be the kind of servant the Lord wants and you may prove to yourself "what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2). Be a good and faithful slave of Jesus Christ forever.

Amy Carmichael, recognizing how easy it is to spare ourselves, has written, "We who follow the crucified are not here to make a pleasant thing of life; we are called to suffering for the sake of a suffering, sinful world. The Lord forgive us our shameful evasions and hesitations. His brow was crowned with thorns; do we seek rose-buds for our crowning? His hands were pierced with nails; are our hands ringed with jewels? His feet were bare and bound; do our feet walk delicately? What do we know of travail? of tears that scald before they fall? of heart-break? of being scorned? God forgive us our love of ease. Forgive us that we all but worship comfort, the delight of the presence of loved ones, possessions, treasure on earth. Far, far from our prayers too often is any thought of prayer for a love which will lead us to give one whom we love to follow our Lord to Gethsemane, to Calvary—perhaps because we have never been there ourselves."

PRE-RAPTURE ALERT

SIGNS, AND WHAT TO DO WHEN THEY OCCUR

N. B. Wright



Many readers of these and other pages have been informed of the Blessed Hope, the coming of the Saviour to the air to gather the saints who sleep and those who are alive to be with Him forever (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Some of us, including the writer, have been very slow to learn there will be a pre-rapture alert to the people of God. In anticipation of Scriptures to be presented, we can say there will be this alert to the saints who are careful, prayerful and who are taught. The world will be thrown into unspeakable confusion because they do not know the significance of events to transpire.

I. SIGNS

First of all we turn to the gospel of Luke, chapter 21, verses 25-27, which read as follows: "And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows; men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And they shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

Here follows a difficulty and an explanation of that difficulty. Reference was made in paragraph 1 to the rapture (catching up) of the church. This particular occasion, so far as the record reads, has to do with the private matter between Christ and His own. The dead sinners and church members who live in gross disobedience do not enter into the picture at all. Now, it is plain that the passage in Lk. 21 has to do with another occasion and with other peoples; i.e. the coming of Christ to the earth. This coming, we learn from Dan. 9:24-27 will be at least seven years after the rapture of the church. After the rapture there follows seven years of the Great Tribulation. The Blessed Master in Matt. 24:29 also places the event of His coming "immediately after the tribulation of those days."

How are we to understand the description of the events immediately to precede His coming to earth with the events of the rapture at least seven years before? Your editor has had no help from man on this point. What scholars have to say on the subject is not known by him. Yet we believe the answer to the supposed difficulty is easy and at hand.

The very next verse of the Luke passage gives us a definite lead. It reads: "But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh." This word is a general exhortation, yea, commandment, for all who are looking for His coming. Now drop down to vs. 34-36 and find other instructions to be watchful, careful and prayerful. So we ask ourselves: Who shall be looking for the coming of the Lord? The answer immediately comes in a two-fold manner; i.e., the living church at the time of the rapture and the few living saved at the end of the Great Tribulation. Plain enough, what is our conclusion?

We allow you the same freedom to come to an opinion as we exercise for ourselves in arriving at an answer. It is: we believe the same signs which shall occur before His coming to earth will also transpire immediately before the rapture. The general exhortation indicates this matter to us.

Back to the signs. Note, there are to be signs in heaven, in sun, moon and stars; also upon the earth, roaring of the sea and the billows. We thought we heard a very loud roar immediately before the big earthquake in California in 1971. We heard it and said to the Mrs.: It is going to be a bad one. It was bad—immediately. Therefore, unusual appearances of the sun, moon and stars alone do *not* constitute the sign; neither those on earth alone. It takes both to qualify. When they occur in conjunction, no one will need to wonder whether "this is it" or not. Evidence will be absolutely convincing.

We take a second look at Matt. 24:29, 30. "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Isn't it the same story as in Luke 21?

Another reference is Lk. 17:26-37. In verse 26 He speaks of the days of the Son of man. Verse 31 reads: "In that day, he that shall be on the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not go down to take them away; and let him that is in the field likewise not turn back." Verses 34, 35: "I say unto you, In that night there shall be two men on one bed; the one shall be taken, the other shall be left. There shall be two women grinding together; the one shall be taken and the other shall be left."

When you look back to vs. 31, you will realize something told the man on the housetop and the man in the field that the rapture would immediately come. What told them? The signs, for one thing. They would be of sufficient magnitude to alert them.

Very well, since we have established the fact that the saved person who is in a constant state of readiness will be alerted immediately before the rapture occurs, what shall he do about it? There are instructions. Do you know what they are? Let us see.

2. WHAT ARE THE LIVING DISCIPLES TO DO?

Fortunately, we are not left to guess work. Nor are we to be paralyzed with fear. Luke 21:26 indicates some men of the world will actually die of heart failure. Rather, it is to be a most joyous and blessed occasion for the careful, prayerful and taught believer. Here is the commandment:

We quote it again, Luke 21:28: "But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh."

Do you know what you just read? If you are fortunate enough to be alive on this occasion, you are, when the signs begin to come to pass, to *look up—lift up your heads*. Yes, yes, He is talking about a physical stance—look heavenward. Here will be that last chance to obey your Lord—your last act of obedience. These instructions are to enable us "not to blow it."

A lengthy exhortation follows in vs. 34-36. We give them; then close with a three-fold promise.

"But take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare, for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on all the face of the earth. But watch ye at every season, making supplication that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man."

"Escape all these things"? Yes, escape with your physical life intact. The fact is, some non-careful, non-prayerful and untaught disciples will be killed; then soon raptured. Many of the world will die of heart failure and many be killed. So our Lord is telling those alive in grace how to escape with their physical lives.

Promises to the obedient are three-fold:

1. Redemption. They shall be changed, without dying, to be like the Lord, 1 John 3:2.

2. Be unashamed. "To stand before the Son of man." That is, not be ashamed of having failed the last test; rather, looked up.

3. Kingdom appointments. The great awarding day is given in Rev. 19:6-8. Kingdom appointments in Rev. 2:26; 3:21.

Part II: Inward Witness of the Impending Rapture, to follow.

Say, are you a careful, prayerful and taught believer?

Carl Kitzmiller is a minister of the Church of Christ in Oakdale, La.



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

Do not Christians in general show too little concern for fasting?

This would certainly seem to be the case. Fasting is definitely a Bible subject and is a valid practice when carried out according to the word. It was a practice in the O.T. economy, and the practice of the early church was such as to indicate its worth and use under the new covenant (Acts 13:2-3; 14:23). Jesus himself fasted (Matt. 4:2), indicated it would be a practice of His disciples when He had gone back to the Father (Matt. 9:14-15), and gave teaching concerning the right way to fast (Matt. 6:16-18). Textually, there is a question about whether "and fasting" belongs in Mark 9:29 and 1 Cor. 7:5, and concerning the whole of Matt. 17:21. These may have been additions by copyists in an effort to strengthen the case for fastings. But, regardless, the other passages establish that fasting is scriptural. (There are cases when the fasting may not have been a religious act at all but simply a hardship imposed by events: 2 Cor. 6:5; 11:27; Acts 27:33; cf. Matt. 15:32).

It seems to me that there are about three things which have led to neglect of this practice—the abuses and misuses that have occurred, the opposition of the flesh, and the lack of stress on it in the epistles.

Fasting can easily become a cold, lifeless ritual of disobedient people, practiced for the wrong reasons, and thus hated by God. Although fasting was clearly taught in the O.T., there were occasions when God expressed strong displeasure at the observance (Isa. 58:1-9; Jer. 14:12; Zech. 7:5). Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for using it to seek the glory of men (Matt. 6:16) and gave a parable in which fasting was a part of the boast of a self-righteous Pharisee (Luke 18:9ff). In more recent days, we have seen the hypocrisy and lack of spirituality that have characterized the Roman Catholic practice of fasting, and possibly that of others. In addition, not a few have been "turned off" by some modern advocate who has assumed a "holier than thou" attitude and has looked down his nose at any one who has not made his discovery of fasting.

The flesh does not like to be denied anything, and there is no

doubt this helps to account for the unpopularity of fasting with some. The flesh is often ready to ignore that which is specifically commanded, so how much more that which does not have such a standing.

While it is evident that fasting is scriptural, that we have some examples, and that done in the right way it is pleasing to God, there is a lack of *specific* commandment to fast. None of the epistles, which are directed to Christians, urge this act on us. We are taught to pray and exhorted to do so. We are told to sing. We are instructed in giving and urged to abound in this grace. The Lord's Supper is to be observed. We must not forsake our assembling together. But exhortation to fasting is strangely absent. Paul urges selective fasting (abstaining from meats, etc.) when weak brethren might be offended, but this is not exactly the kind of fasting usually in view. He speaks of those who misused fasting as a religious, legal requirement (1 Tim. 4:3-5; Col. 2:20-23), and he even goes so far as to say that what we eat or drink has little significance as to spirituality (Rom. 14:17). He himself fasted often (whether as a religious act or as a hardship imposed by the events is not clear, as was noted earlier), but he never instructs others to do so. We take it, then, that this is an act of love, a free-will offering as it were, which is above the demand of duty.

Now we repeat that fasting is scriptural, and it can be done to the glory of God. However, a careful reading of Isa. 58:1-9 will show that there are some things which have an even greater significance before God. There is a spirit of fasting which reaches far beyond abstaining from food. One commentator on this passage in Isaiah says:

"The kind of fasting that was acceptable to Jehovah was accompanied by releasing the oppressed, by kindness to the helpless, and by sympathetic acts of self-denying love. To make the old car last another year so that one's gift to the church may be increased; to do all that is in one's power to set men free from the bondage of sin by making it possible for them to hear the Gospel; to give up an evening to let a worried friend share his burden with us; to share one's Sunday dinner with the strangers who visited church that morning; to have the old TV set repaired instead of buying a color set, so that one can afford to send clothing to a disaster area; and to help one's relatives instead of pretending that one cannot afford to assist them—this is honoring God with "fasts" that He approves."

Is the Daniel mentioned by Ezekiel (in 14:14, 20; 28:3) the same Daniel we read about in the book of Daniel?

While some commentators take the position that there are two different men in view, there is no compelling reason why this is so. Ezekiel and Daniel were both a part of the captivity. Daniel

had preceded Ezekiel into captivity by a few years. He had interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream very soon after being taken captive and, as a result, was given an exalted place in the nation. So while Daniel had not lived all of his life at the time Ezekiel speaks of him, he had already achieved a place of fame, and his faith and his name would have been widely known to the captives of the Jews.

The problem arises in part because many tend to suppose a man's life has to be lived and over before he can become one of God's great men. Daniel had a long life and would continue to distinguish himself long after Ezekiel wrote of him, but he was already an example of great faith and righteousness. That he was living and was a contemporary with Ezekiel did not destroy his usefulness as an example of God's work.

Should a Christian join lodges and secret organizations? What about civic organizations?

Personally, I am not much of a "joiner." A chief reason for this is found in 2 Cor. 6:14ff—that unequal yoke of believer with unbeliever. Other factors would also enter into my decision as to secret orders, but I am persuaded that our Lord meant for 2 Cor. 6:14ff to be much more limiting on Christian conduct than most modern Americans make it.

We are in the world and cannot avoid all contact with the world. Indeed, we ought not! We were meant to be salt and light to the world. We must go among "the publicans and sinners," as Jesus did, if we are to reach them. But this does not require a binding relationship and subtle pressures to go along with the crowd that may often be a part of organizational life.

This does not appear to me to be a matter about which we can legislate for other Christians, but we should try to keep our minds open to the dangers and make others aware of potential disobedience. I have seen a lot of "joiners" who allowed their organizations to take time, energy, and money that could have been better used for the Lord's work. I have seen those who became less mature spiritually as a result of joining, even allowing these to become "their religion," but I am not sure that I have ever seen it make anyone a better Christian.

What is Romanism?

This is another name for Roman Catholicism. It is a bit shorter than "Roman Catholicism" and it might be used for that reason. Frequently, however, this usage implies the user's displeasure or disapproval of this religious system.

It is not accurate just to refer to "Catholicism" in most instances, because there is Greek Catholicism as well as Roman. Most areas of our nation are much more familiar with Roman Catholicism, but the nations of eastern Europe are strongly influenced

by the Greek Orthodox Church. While there are similarities between Greek and Roman Catholicism, there are also some distinct differences. The two bodies arose from a split which became fully developed in 1054 A.D.

Many Protestants and others do not like to use the name "catholic" at all because it seems to concede too much. In its basic sense, catholic means "universal," "general," or "world-wide." Its use tends to honor the claim made by the Roman Church to being the one true universal church of Christ. Some of the old creeds (notably the Apostles' Creed) speak of the "holy catholic church" in a sense that is not wrong. Certainly the Lord's church is universal. The term is frequently misunderstood by the general population, however, and because of the more common usage by the Roman Church, is thought to be a reference to that body.

-113 N. 6th St., Oakdale, La. 71463



Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

THIS MAKES ME FEEL GOOD. Thomas Pike of Beckenham, England, sent the following letter to the *New York Times*: "It has just been announced that an American organization has helped our government to buy Hastings Battlefield and to preserve it for my country. Hope I am only one of many who will write, hoping that you can find a little space to thank our unknown benefactors.

"All through my life I have noticed that when natural or man-made disasters afflict the world it was always the Americans who were first there and most generous in the aftermath. Equally, I have always noticed that the generosity was often one-sided. Thanks and even recognition of your country's generosity were often lacking.

"One Englishman would like to take this latest example of American generosity to acknowledge the abiding humanity—of which," he noted, "The world must have long been aware—silently."

We can use a lot of friends both at home and abroad like our Mr. Thomas Pike. There is a lot to like about America in spite of much of the news we hear.—"God, bless America, land that I love. Stand beside her and guide her through the night with the Light from above."—Most of the news we view in this column makes us think of that phrase: "through the night." We do have the basics: a good population of men and women of faith; the Constitution; and more people becoming alert to our problems having a willingness to take whatever action is necessary to get us back on the right track.

ACTION WE MAY TAKE is suggested by Senator James B. Allen of Alabama. Senator Allen believes the country is much more conservative than Congress. "If just 10 percent of the people who feel that government is too big, that there's too much control by the bureaucracy, or that there is too much control by the na-

tional government over the daily lives of our people, would write their Congressmen and Senators and tell them this," Senator Allen urges, "it could very well turn our government around; it could reverse some of the trends that are leading this country in the wrong direction." He emphasizes that no government policy can exist or continue unless it is supported by public opinion. "The views of each citizen, when expressed to members of Congress, can have a powerful effect on their thinking." I hope our Christian readers will take the Senator's most welcome advice to heart, and become regular writers to Congress, letters to the Editor departments, and to public officials at all levels. You have the influence, but it is nothing unless you apply it. And, please, don't just write when things don't please you; let them know when they do something right. This will add but little to your letter writing chore, but it will add a great deal to the pleasure you get out of it.

TAKE OUT THE PROFIT. Three youthful offenders, wearing ski masks and heavy jackets to conceal their identities, told members of the New York State Select Committee on Crime that assault and robbery against the aged were among the most profitable crimes they could commit. When asked to explain, one of the three, a 16-year-old, responded: "Because if you're 15 and under you won't go to jail, and most of the time the old people are too scared to testify." He declared that his group's biggest take was \$1,000. "But I know of some guys," he boasted, "who got \$2,000 and \$3,000 in one hit."

In an effort to curtail crimes against the elderly, State Senator Ralph J. Manno, Chairman of the Select Committee, hopes to introduce fingerprinting and photographing, at the time of arrest, for persons less than 16 and more than 7 years of age who are charged with major crimes. And I express my opinion that if the would-be youthful offenders knew that the fingerprinting and picture making would be followed by sure justice, that would go a long way toward curbing their criminal actions.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL POLICE and keep them independent. There

had been so little crime in the central Texas town of Thorndale during the last two and one-half years that the town fathers felt there was no justification for more than a one-man police force. Just recently the town council decided that even one police officer was one too many. Besides, the police chief was not writing enough traffic tickets to pay his salary. With these conditions it was only a matter of time before two bandits in ski masks walked confidently into the Thorndale State Bank and quite comfortably walked off with an undisclosed amount of money.

Just think what would happen to us as a nation if we reduced our army and navy to the place that we would not be able to defend ourselves. Watch the developments along this line, and let your lawmaking representatives know how you want them to legislate on this issue. It is always being agitated by some in our country. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

A JUDGE TO BE HELD IN HONOR. From the Manchester Union Leader. Judge Richard F. Cooper of the Rochester District Court, New Hampshire has come up with a pretty practical way of putting a stop to driving-while-intoxicated repeaters. It is so relatively simple that you would have thought that other judges would have come up with the idea long ago.

Here's what happens: When a defendant is found guilty in Judge Cooper's court of driving while intoxicated, and it is the first offense, the defendant is usually fined \$200 and loses his license for 60 days. There is nothing new about that.

But, here's the important part: he is also sentenced to the county House of Correction for 30 days. Judge Cooper then suspends the 30 day sentence, but he informs the defendant that if he is found guilty within the next year of any further motor vehicle violation as listed by the judge, the defendant will immediately find himself serving the full sentence in the House of Correction.

This has worked so well that the Judge says he has had only three offenders back within the year, and said the Judge, "Everyone of those defendants has now done time."

Some 300 DWI cases have been

brought before Judge Cooper in the last five years, so with only three of them returning in the first year, it must mean that the others took seriously the Judge's sentence.

If a defendant has been convicted of DWI in another district and then faces Judge Copper on another offense, the fine is usually \$500 and that person loses their license for three years and is sentenced to the House of Correction for from 30 to 60 days. Judge Cooper, in that case most often makes the defendant serve ten days and suspends the remainder, with the same conditions as in the first offense.

OPINION RESEARCH has found that 75 percent of the American people and 72 percent of union families oppose the idea of forcing men and women into labor unions as a condition for keeping jobs. This bit of information supports the idea advanced above by Senator Allen that the American people are conservative. That is why politicians (even "born-again" ones) pose as conservative at election time. And they get elected because the electorate do not observe their record closely enough to see that they are not in fact conservative.

IN THE SECOND DEBATE with President Ford, Jimmy Carter stated that he would not give up U.S. control of the Panama Canal. The following day, his "foreign policy advisers" released the statement that he didn't mean it! This means we will have more of the same give-away-the Canal policies from the White House.

There are still grounds for hope that the American People can retain possession of the Canal. With 75 percent of the American public against giving up the canal, according to Opinion Research, Congress will not be a rubber stamp for the White House on this issue.

You can influence the final decision by joining an endless chain campaign of letter-writing to every legislator in Washington.

It is not possible to put a dollars value on the ownership and control of the Panama Canal. Nearly every socialist government on the face of the earth is speaking out and working for the surrender of the Canal to the puppet government of Panama. Even the most naive among us real-

ize how disadvantaged the free world would be if the present Panamanian Government controlled it. How can men like Ford, Bunker, Kissinger, Carter and a host of American leaders wish to give it to them? Americans should look beneath the surface of events for the answer to that question.

IF THERE WERE MORE sanity in the actions of law makers such questions as the afore mentioned Panama Canal could never arise. The following action took place in the Illinois Senate. The Senate had just adopted a bill to change the definition of death from heart stoppage to total cessation of brain function. Senator Jack Schaffer rose to his feet, "Under this (new) definition, with some of the legislation we've passed here this year," he said, "I think we'd all qualify." His point can be well taken. Let's insist on at least some brain function on the part of our legislators and other leaders.

SPEAKING OF SANITY in a crazy mixed-up world, a man by the name of Burbank has created a cartoon showing a middle-aged man and his wife sitting comfortably on easy chairs in their living room. The man expresses his puzzlement in one short sentence: "Who would have dreamed we'd be sitting here with a son at Vassar and a daughter at West Point!"

AND THIS INSANITY IS dangerous. An editorial from the Manchester Union Leader points this out. "Late last month this newspaper reported in a front page story how the state hospital in Concord turned loose a man who had been sentenced for life there for having kidnaped a Bay State woman, taken her across state lines, and allegedly beaten and raped her.

"Superior Court Judge John W. King had ruled in the case, "It would be dangerous that the defendant should go at large." And yet the head of the hospital's forensic unit gave the accused man off-ground privileges less than four months after he was committed 'for life' to the state mental institution.

"This man, Dr. Rolland, not only approved the accused's quick release into the community, but records in

Superior Court disclosed that Dr. Roll- and also arranged for a state agency for the taxpayers to stand the cost of a set of mechanic's tools costing \$1, 105.50.

"Court records show that, during the time the man was confined to the state hospital, N.H. Legal Assistance was constantly striving to free the accused kidnaper and rapist. And don't forget that that organization is also supported by the taxpayers.

"In the opinion of this newspaper this is dreadfully wrong. What in heaven's name is the deterrent to a would-be rapist or criminal if he knows he can be sentenced for life for this crime, but then be out roaming around quite freely just four months later?

"In this case, the defendant is now actually working in the Bancroft Products Industry and is residing with his family in Dracut, Mass.

"As long as the public puts up with this type of dangerous nonsense, just so long their lives and safety will be in very risky position indeed."

AN EXCERPT FROM A SENATE document has been labelled an excellent example of "Gobbledygook" and a reader who spotted it has been

awarded a payment of ten dollars by the Washington Star. It reads: "If the House should concur in the Senate amendment reported in disagreement with amendments, when the Senate agreed to the report it could concur in the House amendments to the Senate amendments which would clear the bill for the President's signature." You could fool me, but it sounds harmless.

And then President-elect Carter telleth us that he would pardon those citizens who refused to bear arms against communist aggressors in Viet Nam, but would not grant them amnesty. Webster's Third New International Dictionary lists two definitions for amnesty. The first, described as archaic, is: "The voluntary overlooking of an offense by one offender." The second reads: "The act of an authority (as a government) by which general pardon of an offense is granted, often before trial or conviction, especially to a large group of criminals." And Webster's notes, very carefully, that a synonym for for amnesty is the word pardon. I beg your amnesty, sir.

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TIME DATED FROM BIRTH

No one stops to ask for an explanation of one of the strangest facts, not only in historical literature, but in the living world; the fact that all civilized time is dated from the birth of Jesus Christ . . . And no one knows how it came to be done, or when, or by whom. Not one educated man out of a thousand can tell, off-hand, why all civilized calendars are reckoned from that far-off birth in a little Jewish village. Every morning all the newspapers of the civilized world—though some of them fill their columns with attacks on Jesus Christ—readjust their date to His cradle. Each new year, as it arrives, is baptized with His name. Calendars and Acts of Parliament, business, and politics, and literature—the very dates on our cheques and letters—all are thus unconsciously adjusted to the chronology of Christ's life . . . Christian men as they dwell on this strange thing know that it is no accident. It is a sign writ large on Time itself, of the empire of Him who is the Lord of Time . . . How does it come to pass, we repeat, that not by accident, not by some conspiracy of fanatics, not by the force of any imperial edict, but by a convergence of silent, unrecognized, almost unconscious forces, all civilized time is baptized into the name of Jesus Christ? —*W. H. Fitchett*, *The Unrealized Logic of Religion*, Jennings and Graham, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

(Editor's note:) Inside the front cover, we publish the addresses of missionaries as are currently listed in the "Missionary Prayer List" compiled by Bro. C. V. Wilson at Thanksgiving time. This may enable some to write to these front-line workers, who would so much appreciate encouragement from home.

J. C. Shewmaker

Bulawayo, Rhodesia

December 18, 1976

One of the "high spots" during the last two months has been our Rhodesian lectureship, sponsored by the Hillside congregation here in Bulawayo, this week. We had speakers from Salisbury, Gwelo, Umtali, Nhowe Mission and Bulawayo as well as visitors from all these places and as far afield as South Africa.

Those of us who are not young any more are made to feel happy to see the spiritually-minded Christian young men who are entering the Rhodesian scene, some returning to their native land from Harding College, and some from South Africa Bible School at Benoni, as well as young missionaries entering the field from the U.S. This causes one not to fear for the work in Rhodesia. Should these young men be scattered abroad in the future, we are confident that the gospel of Christ will go with them.

Although the Geneva Conference on Rhodesia's future appears to be doomed to failure, all is in God's hands and that is where our faith is.

Concerning our work in Bellevue, our growth seems to stem from the children we are teaching. Last Sunday we scarcely missed our goal of 100 in attendance. There were 97 at Sunday school.

Shichiro Nakahara

Shizuoka City, Japan

December 7, 1976

I want to share with you some of the things that took place which we count them as blessings from the Lord. Our son, Michie, 11 years old and in the 5th grade, is now a Christian, baptized at a meeting held in last month. He is now ready to serve the Lord by leading singing at our S. S. assembly, and for the first time he was asked to pray in public last Sunday in the worship service, waiting on the table, too. Stephanie is now helping with the Beginners. We're thankful that all three of our children are Christians, learning to serve the Lord, growing steadily in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The revival meeting was very successful in that we had three baptisms with more than 20 new contacts made during the meeting.

One of the baptized is a junior high student, whose sister had so much trouble with her folks who were and still are strongly opposing their becoming Christians, who has accepted Jesus as her personal Savior and Lord for her life. It sounds very ironical, indeed, so far as her folks are concerned, that the very girl was sent all way to our camp last summer when her sister became a Christian, however, in order to keep her eyes on her sister with a fear that she might become a Christian but now both are led to Christ. We all rejoice in the Lord for the victory!

Elaine Brittell

Livingstone, Zambia

November, 1976

On Sunday Lester, Ba Keenga (who interpreted for Lester), his 2 daughters and I met with the Christians at Katapazi village (81 miles round trip). They are trying to buy a store to convert into a church house. About 50 were gathered to hear God's word. Two more put on Christ in Livingstone. The past few weeks the ladies here have taken turns in teaching their Bible class and have given fine lessons. May God be very near to you in all your work day by day.

Alvin Hobby

Little Rock, Arkansas

January 5, 1977

I was discharged from my second hospitalization on December 17 and have made a satisfactory recovery. According to present arrangements, we are to leave the States on February 2 to start back to Zambia and to arrive at Livingstone a month from today.

We will be glad to get "home" again and get settled.

It will likely be another 6 months to a year before my skin grafts and donor areas look and feel normal again.

George and Sophia Galanis

Athens,, Greece

January, 1977

Our good Master keeps us very busy in His business and we are so thankful to Him. He called me early in the morning of my life to serve Him. I do not worry about my reward because I trust Him. I am thankful to my Master for counting me worthy to serve Him. We are extremely busy these days serving the souls that the Lord has put in our hands to take care. We have sent 800 calendars and my book "A Message of Salvation," and we have received a lot of responses and some donations to help support our work.

Emie, our daughter, got engaged to a fine Christian young man of 26 who is an M.D. just finished the University of Thessalonica. My wife's health is not so good recently. She is suffering of dizziness and at Christmas Day she entered the hospital after a crisis. We are praying the Lord to give us strength to thank Him in all things and occasions. Your prayers on behalf of her are very much needed and appreciated.

Addie Brown

Salisbury, Rhodesia

December 23, 1976

David went to a funeral yesterday. A brother Nielson was killed by a terrorist when he was ambushed on the highway about 20 miles from his home on Friday evening. He leaves a wife and 2 children. David said it seemed the whole town turned out for the funeral—people to whom he had witnessed concerning the gospel of Christ so well while he lived. Of course he is only one out of many, both black and white, that are being murdered by terrorists. The Africans have lost many loved ones.

Daddy B. has a funeral tomorrow—a man whom Bro. Sheriff baptized years ago.

Leonard and Mabel Bailey

Bulawayo, Rhodesia

November 24, 1976

Owing to the security position in the rural areas our work has changed some as we are not able to camp out in the African areas. We manage to make a trip now and then to be with some of the closer churches for the Lord's Day meetings. We made two such trips in October to Nswazi and Sikoveni.

At Nswazi there was good attendance and we were glad to be there. At Sikoveni the Christians were already singing when we arrived at their building and a little later we all went to a river pool about a mile away where two young people were baptized. There were about 70 present for worship service afterwards, the building was packed. I was given the opportunity to speak.

On October 28th the ladies from all over the city joined together in a morning of study and fellowship in our home. Sister Kendall-Ball and Sister Ewing gave talks and there were a number of readings, songs and prayers. About 50 women attended from 6 congregations, 12 of whom were African ladies.

Thomas W. Hartle

Cape Town, South Africa

December 17, 1976

The husbands of the two ladies I had taught, along with another young lady, are still considering what to do (about deciding for Christ). When it comes to the final decision, counting the cost of discipleship, this is where people hesitate. The young married man, who is caretaker of the flats where we reside, is also still hesitant and thinking over the matter of wanting to become a New Testament Christian. With the discussions we've had, and endeavoring to point out to him all that he should know, he is without excuse—it is now up to him to make the decision, along with many others we have taught. All we can ask you to do over there is to earnestly share in your prayers for these individuals and families.

Our regular services are still fairly well attended, and as members they are to be admired for their courage and zeal to travel by bus from distances far and wide. Bus fares have gone up, and the buses do not run so frequently on Lord's Day as on weekdays and yet there is no problem, they are determined to come.

PROPHECY

Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

Winston N. Allen is a missionary to Alaska, living in Anchorage.



GOD AND THE WEATHER

Winston N. Allen

“Jehovah sat as King at the Food; yea, Jehovah sitteth as King for ever.”
—Psalm 29:10.

The proverbial expression, “Everybody talks about the weather but nobody does anything about it,” is not entirely true. Current events, passages of Scripture, and statements of other observers have impressed upon my mind recently that not only has God spoken about the weather, He does something about it. “He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust” (Matt. 5:45). The Lord uses weather as one means of accomplishing His plans and purposes. At times He uses atmospheric phenomena to bless or to chasten, to assure victory or to bring defeat, to enhance life or to kill. Considering the weather brings to mind the statement of Paul in Romans 11:22a, “Behold then the goodness and severity of God.” He sent a storm to bring Jonah to repentance, and through him the city of Nineveh also repented. Judgment was averted. In Noah’s time He foretold a universal flood, and 120 years later used the deluge to purge the unrepentant world of wickedness (there is evidence that unusual weather conditions have preserved Noah’s ark in ice at the 14,000 ft. level on Mt. Ararat in Turkey).

Right now (Jan. 25) in the United States weather is not only a matter of much conversation, but also of great concern. *The Anchorage Times*, January 18, 1977, had the headlines, “Winter Strangles East” and “Meanwhile, We’re Having Heatwave.” In a number of places in the South 48 all-time weather records are being broken by the frigid temperatures causing great suffering and loss. Here in Alaska we have experienced strong winds and above-freezing readings during much of the winter. “What’s Happening to Our Climate?” was the title of a 44-page illustrated article in the November, 1976 issue of *National Geographic*. Another publication last year ran the headline, “Will Changing Weather Bring Mass Famines?” In the subheading was the assertion, “Om-

inous Changes in World Weather Patterns Are Taking Place." In 1976 severe record-breaking droughts occurred in England, Australia, South America, Europe, the United States, and Africa.

During the approaching "Great Tribulation" there will be a drought lasting 3½ years; this is prophesied by the Lord in Revelation 11:3-6a. Other unusual weather phenomena to occur in that 7-year period are described in Revelation 16:8, 9 & 21:

"And the fourth poured out his bowl upon the sun; and it was given unto it to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat: and they blasphemed the name of God who hath the power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory . . . And great hail, every stone about the weight of a talent, cometh down out of heaven upon men: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof is exceeding great."

In sharp contrast to the above, Revelation 8:12 foretells a time when the light from the sun will be diminished by a third. In this connection attention is focused on Matthew 24:21, 22:

"for then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

The number of days in the Great Tribulation is fixed, so shortening the days must mean that the length of the days will be decreased. Evidently this will be accomplished by the earth's rotation on its axis being speeded up as the result of changing solar and planetary influences. Scientists now are observing a new and strange phenomenon on the sun, mammoth sunquakes. The following quotation is from *Science News*, August 21, 1976:

"Mammoth Quakes Jostle the Sun. Oscillations (swinging to and fro) of the sun have once again been observed . . . but this time with a new twist. Using NASA's Orbiting Solar Observatory 8, a team of French scientists have measured monstrous oscillations of the sun's atmosphere occurring every 14 minutes. The high-resolution ultraviolet sensors aboard the spacecraft detected pulses with amplitudes of 1,300 kilometers. This is in stark contrast to previous measurements . . ."

Sunquakes along with solar flares and sunspots are on the increase. Astronomers assert this indicates the sun may soon undergo a nova, a brightening of its intensity followed by a decrease in brightness. In Alaska there is abundant evidence of a drastic change in the weather several millennia ago. Mammoths feeding on flowering buttercups were suddenly quick-frozen and have been preserved to our time as the climate changed from semi-tropical to extremely cold.

Weather and the Course of History

In a brief study of God and the weather notice several instances in history when God's hand was evident at crucial times. In Joshua 10 we read this unusual account of the Israelites' victory over the Amorites:

"And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, while they were at the descent of Bethoron, that Jehovah cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more who died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword. Then spake Joshua to Jehovah in the day when Jehovah delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel; and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Aijalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the nation had avenged themselves of their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jashar? And the sun stayed in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that Jehovah hearkened unto the voice of a man: for Jehovah fought for Israel."

Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo June 18, 1815 was due in part to violent and incessant rain during the night of June 17 at a season rain was not expected. The resulting mud forced Napoleon to postpone his attack on the combined British-Prussian army lest his cavalry and artillery become bogged down. French author Victor Hugo (1802-1885) asserted that "the shadow of a mighty right hand is cast over Waterloo; it is the day of destiny, and the force which is above man produced that day . . . If it had not rained the night between the 17th and 18th of June, the future of Europe would have been changed."

In 1588 the "invincible" 124-ship Spanish Armada crossed the English Channel after a week of fighting against the English who were under the leadership of Sir Frances Drake. On the night of July 28, while the Spanish Armada was anchored at Calais, Drake sent blazing fire ships adrift among the Spanish fleet. They put to sea in confusion with the English in pursuit. When the English ran out of ammunition, an unexpected ally appeared. Unprecedented gale-force winds arose and drove many of the Spanish ships on to the rocky shores of Ireland and Scotland. In commemoration of the Spanish defeat, Queen Elizabeth I—aware of God's working in their time of need—ordered the striking of a silver commemorative medal, bearing the inscription: "God blew, and they were scattered."

In the late afternoon of April 22, 1915 the Germans loosed their deadly poisonous gas on the Allies for the first time. It was to be the final blow designed to wipe out the tottering Allied resistance. All that Germany needed to do was to march through, take the English channel and the world was hers. Why didn't she do it, and why was this particular time selected to turn loose the gas? It was not the military but the meteorological department which announced to the German in charge that the direction of the winds was fixed and settled for thirty-six hours to come, and that they would carry the gas out over the Allied lines. So the gas was released, but suddenly it whirled and was flung back over the German army. The Germans, gasping and strangling, staggered by the thousands to their deaths. Mr. Schmaus in his official report said, "In forty years of meteorological records of the German government the wind never acted so peculiarly before." Stranger still,

the reverse wind direction occurred in only that comparatively small area. (This account—based on *British Official History of the War*, Volume 1, page 188—is adapted from Dr. E. E. Helm's booklet, *The Lord Reigneth*).

During World War II what has been called "The Miracle of Dunkirk" is another example of God's control of the weather at a vital time in history. The spectacular evacuation of 300,000 British troops was accomplished because the waters of the English Channel were strangely calm, and bad weather to the east grounded the German Luftwaffe. The unusual combination of weather conditions permitted the British to get away in safety May 26-June 3, 1940.

Attention is focused next on the Allied landing on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944, as another instance of God's control of the weather at a turning point in history. Impossible weather on June 5 forced General Eisenhower to postpone the massive invasion. But a lull in the storm early Tuesday morning, June 6, made possible a successful operation. Low clouds hid the fleet from the Germans, and the storm had caused coastal guards to relax their vigilance. Years later General Eisenhower wrote these words about that critical period just prior to D-Day: "If there were nothing else in my life to prove the existence of an almighty and merciful God, the events of the next 24 hours did it . . . The greatest break in a terrible outlay of weather occurred the next day and allowed that great invasion to proceed, with losses far below those we had anticipated" (*Time*, June 16, 1952).

(Part Two: "PRAYER AND THE WEATHER" is to follow next month

MAY I DIFFER WITH YOU?

EDITED BY MICHAEL T. SANDERS

WHO IS MY BROTHER?

It may well be that as much thought has been given to identifying our brother as any other area of Biblical thought. The pity is our conclusions that continue to exclude making the fellowship more and more exclusive.

Two brethren gave thoughts last month on fellowship. Since so much thought and consideration, even in the present hour, is given to this subject these two brethren have given their thoughts (notably different in the area of fellowship).

Please be courteous and careful as you critique their thoughts. After you have read their thoughts measure them in light of the scriptures. Don't forget about the principle of the Bereans and Pop's geese.

FELLOWSHIP

In *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, Copyright 1959, pg. 305, we find this: "State or relation of being a fellow or associate. Community of interest, activity, feeling, etc. Any union or association; esp., a company of equals or friends."

Ungers Bible Dictionary, Copyright 1957, pg. 349, states: "Fellowship means companionship, a relation in which parties hold something in common, familiar intercourse."

Another says: "Joint participation in a person, or project, and secondarily association or mutuality of spirit." (*Dictionary of Theology*, Article on "Fellowship" by Wick Broomall, pg. 218.)

I will, in this article, consider "fellowship" on three levels: (1) Our fellowship with the Godhead. (2) Our fellowship on a human level. (3) Fellowship of 1 and 2 integrated.

(1) As to our fellowship with the Godhead, there is one thing to do. Point to the scriptures . . . 1 John 1:3: "that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." As to this fellowship, we are partakers of: the Divine Nature (2 Pet. 1:4); the Holy Spirit (Heb. 2:4); a heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1); plus many other benefits.

(2) As to this level, it could be generally defined as that particular fellowship brought on by any number of causes or circumstances, such as work, neighborhood, organizations, school, college, etc. There are no religious considerations on this level.

(3) This is the level of "fellowship" where much discussion takes place. It is the mixture of levels 1 and 2.

Where do we begin? The local congregation, of which (you, I, we) are a part, is the best place. This fellowship can be said to be "that social relationship existing between Christians who are regenerated members of the family of God and their cooperation in the work of the Lord." (*Dictionary of Theology*, Article on "Fellowship" by Wick Broomall, pg. 218.) This fellowship is a unity of faith based on a common salvation and a common faith. One of the deepest or highest points of this fellowship is that of the gathering around the Lord's table (1 Cor. 10:16-21).

Now on this level and on level 1 there are some negatives. Notable among them: ". . . and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness . . ." (Eph. 5:11). This and 2 John 9-11 would apply to those who openly hold erroneous doctrine. The passage in Ephesians would apply to anyone or anything of the present age that would take away from our fruitfulness in the fellowship of the local congregation, as well as our own personal life "in Christ."

Entering into this level now comes the question(s). "What about this person or that, of a different kind of "religious" persuasion—from Roman Catholic to those of the "Restoration Movement." Can we have "full" fellowship? Meaning there are absolutely no areas where questions of difference arise. Or can we have a "limited" fellowship? As church members trading attendance at meetings of each others churches, meetings, etc, or the minister being a member of and actively working with a local "clergy association."

Just what would prevent "full" fellowship? Doctrines, attitudes toward the Bible, and toward people who hold to certain truths, i.e. prophecy (in this instance the matter would be settled by the other party!) There are some religionists, as far as this writer is concerned, with whom we can have no religious fellowship at all. Roman Catholics, Ecumenical (liberal?) Protestants, cults (Moonies, etc.), to name a few, that we should *absolutely stay away from!*

As to a limited fellowship—"We agree on so many points," you say. Fine. What about the ones you disagree on? "Oh, but I'm not a negative individual." You sure are lop-sided then! I would term Jesus' scathing denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23 negative, even while He commended some of their good points. His "be not's" and "don't do's" come across negative. He warned of the religious people of his day. The apostles warned of fellowship and association (are they the same?) with those who did not hold the truth. All of it! So, we must be careful today. Miss a lot by total abstinence of fellowship with "evangelicals" and other members of the "restoration movement"? That is probably true. At the same time you will solve a lot of problems and be free of many questions with the nature of an octopus.

In order to take a stand one way or another, it must be of *faith*—yours!—coupled with a good knowledge of the Bible. It is hard to distinguish between the "limited" and the "full." One seems to flow naturally in the other.

If we attempt the "limited" type we endanger ourselves to doctrines contrary with the Word. (At the same time we can rub off on them!??) This is a pathway to doctrinal errors that undermine faith—our own and others who may be watching us.

I would say: beware of any type of "limited" fellowship on a congregational basis. Why? Because of the faith of new Christians or weak ones. On a personal basis, you will have to be your own judge.

An example: some went to an "evangelical" church to view a religious film of some merit. The meeting was opened by a woman! The piano and organ drowned out the singing com-

pletely. What do we tell the younger ones, of both age and faith? It's wrong! Sure it is! But why did *you* go?

REAL REASONS FOR DISUNITY

Following the lead of Alexander Campbell we have usually blamed creeds, opinions, and errors in Christian doctrine for Christendom's divisions. And it is true that they have contributed to division particularly by helping to crystalize doctrinal disagreements. However, they often are merely symptoms of the disease of division rather than the real causes. It is the purpose of this essay to examine some of the basic spiritual causes underlying the disgraceful, divided state of the church.

First, however, let me point out that there is a basic historical law operating to keep us in a divided condition once we have separated from one another. I call this law the law of "institutional inertia." Like the law of physical inertia it means that a body, or in society an institution, will remain at rest or in uniform motion in the same straight line or direction unless acted upon by some external force. And the force required either to set a physical body in motion or to change its direction of motion is directly proportional to its mass. For an institution, the force necessary to produce such a change is proportional both to the size of the institution and its age. The larger the institution and the older it is, the more difficult it becomes either to set it in motion or, if it is already in motion, to change the direction of motion. This principle applies to governments, schools, businesses and churches.

In physics the principle of inertia is dramatically illustrated by the oil tankers now used to haul oil across the oceans. These ships are so huge that even with their engines in full speed reverse, the stopping distance at cruising speed is *three miles!*

The law of institutional inertia operates in a very similar manner. Once a church or group of churches has charted a course and has put out to sea, it takes an enormous force to change that course. If they have separated themselves from their brothers in Christ and if their course is one in which they carefully avoid contaminating contacts with the "hereticks," it is extremely difficult to move them into a more positive relationship with the rest of the body of Christ.

In and of itself institutional inertia is morally neutral. The original impetus for a divisive action may be spiritually and morally reprehensible, but once the action has been taken then institutional inertia tends to preserve and to perpetuate it. This remains true even if the leaders of the sect repent of their divisiveness or, as is more unusual, even if new leaders arise who themselves cannot be blamed for the original division and who have perfectly high and holy motives in their spiritual service within the context of any given group.

As a matter of fact, however, few leaders of any institution are spiritually blameless when it comes to the need to maintain the unity and peace of God's people. They are not responsible for the institutional inertia which makes it difficult to alter an originally divisive action, but they are responsible for their personal pride in the organization which causes them to be more interested in creating and preserving a personal power base than in being a simple servant of the Nazarene.

This brings us to the question of the identification of the spiritual viruses which produce the dreaded, almost incurable disease of division in the body of Christ. In the first place, disunity is related to a legalistic view of salvation. Legalism has a rather strict definition in traditional theological conversation, *viz.*, the doctrine that one's relationship with God is *based upon* obedience to law—any law, whether in the Old Testament, New Testament, or denominational creed and handbook. Sometimes it is used to mean an acceptance of authority of Scripture, but that is not the case here.

Legalism in the first sense is the perverted gospel which Paul opposes in the letter to the Galatians. His condemnation of a "different gospel, which is not another gospel" (Gal. 1:6,7) has often been applied to sundry teachings on baptism, the Lord's Supper, or the order of public worship. However, in the context of the entire letter it is clear that the "different gospel" which subverts the true gospel is the teaching that justification depends not only upon faith in Christ but upon circumcision and the commitment to the law which circumcision symbolizes (Gal. 3:1,2,11; 5:2-6, etc.).

Legalism, the judaizing heresy, was the greatest single cause of division in the church in its infant years according to the account we have in Acts and in the Pauline letters. Circumcision as such is no longer an issue in the church, but the position that legal obedience is the foundation of our fellowship with God is still held and unfortunately is extensively taught in the churches of Christ and Christian churches, and it is still a *major cause of division*.

Of course, no one openly preaches salvation by works. It is rather more subtle. It is said that God requires non-instrumental singing or weekly observances of the Lord's supper or an amillennial eschatology or individual as opposed to congregational support of orphans. If one is not obedient to these laws or doctrinal opinions, he is not a Christian. Or he is my brother "in error," who must repent if he ever hopes to be saved. His salvation depends upon his seeing the truth as I see it and upon his keeping a certain set of religious laws. And the church must be split, if necessary, in order to keep itself pure of those who do not accept these laws as binding upon the Christian conscience.

Unity can only be realized when Christians have a renewed appreciation of the biblical emphasis of salvation by grace. If God

receives both me and my brother by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, then we must receive each other on the same basis—grace. Both of us will see failings in the other, and we will sometimes disagree on the precise application of God's will in our lives. But we can never use the other's weakness—or strength—as a pretense for breaking fellowship. (Rom. 14).

A second fundamental reason for disunity is a confusion of God's revelation with our personal theology. A typical conversation with one of my brethren will illustrate this point.

Me: "My position on this doctrine is thus and thus. Scriptures No. 1 2, etc., seem to me to support this view."

My Friend: "But the Bible plainly says, Quote . . . unquote" (book, chapter, and verse).

Me: "But I think you are misinterpreting that Scripture in this way, etc."

My Friend: "I am not interpreting at all. I simply speak where the Bible speaks. You are substituting interpretation for the Bible. If you would just accept the Bible, you would see your error."

Me: (with a look of anguish) "But I *do* believe the Bible."

My Friend: "But you obviously don't believe the Bible alone because you have just disagreed with the simple teaching of Scripture." I confess that I have never won such an argument. Moreover, I doubt that Socrates, the Apostle Paul, Alexander Campbell, or William Buckley could fare much better. You see, it is already assumed by my friend that his personal theology is equivalent with the teaching of Scripture. If I disagree with him, I disagree with the Bible. My friend, in fact, does not even consider the possibility that he might have a theology stamped with the marks of his historical and religious background.

For reason of limitations of time and space I do not now belabor the point. I do assume that the revelation of God in Christ witnessed by the apostles and prophets in Holy Spirit is not identical with my apprehension of that revelation. My THEOLOGY SHOULD BE INFORMED AND ULTIMATELY JUDGED BY THAT REVELATION. Our theology should be informed and ultimately judged by that revelation. On the other hand, it is inevitably developed with other than purely biblical elements. We must not only seek a correct grammatical and historical understanding of the Bible but we must also relate this understanding to our personal lives and integrate it with the totality of our experience*

*The idea that the Bible is the sole content of our theology is not found in the Bible itself. There are many questions important to Christian faith which the Bible does not answer or which it answers only in terms of a foreign historical and cultural situation. For example, how often should the Lord's Supper be observed? The Bible nowhere gives a clear, definitive

answer. We must consider the data of Scripture including not only the references to instances of observance of the Eucharist but the apostolic emphasis on the passion of Christ, its central place in faith and preaching, and then we must relate all of this to the tradition of weekly observance which we can trace back to the second century.

The New Testament tells us that on at least one occasion one group of Christians met to partake of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). It also says that other Christians "broke bread" daily from house to house (Acts 2:46). Nowhere does it either lay down a law for Eucharistic observance or formulate a principle of approved apostolic example. All such laws are hermeneutical principles or products of our personal theological ingenuity.

Someone, however, may be thinking: "This is all very well for sophisticated theologians, but it doesn't mean much for the simple Christian with a Bible in his hand." But my point is that the confusion between one's apprehension of God's revelation and the revelation itself is a *sinister spiritual disease*. It is of vital spiritual significance both for the literate and the illiterate Christian. Such confusion is basically a sort of spiritual pride. Give a bigot a Bible, and he becomes an infallible pope! Or a Diotrephes (2 John 9, 10).

When we refuse to recognize the human, fallible elements in our particular style of Christian life, worship and teaching, we tend to cut ourselves off from those who have developed different styles. One step toward unity is the humble recognition that we all stand under the judgment and grace of God in Jesus Christ, whom we serve each according to his best comprehension of his Lord's will.

A third and perhaps the most fundamental cause of disunity is carnal pride and envy. It seems odd that we have missed this element so often in our unity forums. In the First Corinthian letter, which is often quoted in condemnation of division and denominationalism, Paul tells us exactly why such divisions occur: "For whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are you not *carnal*, do you not walk after the manner of men?" (1 Cor. 3:3).

The fallen, corrupt nature of man is the cause of disunity in the Church of Christ today as it was in the first century. One reason we have failed to see this more clearly is because we have often stressed the strictly personal virtues and have condemned the sensuous sins and have often ignored the interpersonal and social virtues. Most of us hear and preach frequent condemnations of fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, drunkenness, and revellings—and properly so, since they are condemned in the New Testament as works of the flesh. But these seven works of the flesh fall into a more comprehensive list which also includes the following: "enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings" (Gal. 5:19-21).

As far as quantity of words is concerned Paul devotes as much attention to the latter type of sin as to the first, not that any

essential difference can be made. The point is that envy and party spirit are classified with fornication and drunkenness. And when we begin viewing divisions with the same horror as we now see drunken debauchery, we may hope for unity among God's people. And let us not underestimate the seriousness of the problem. Paul plainly tells us that "they who practise such things (as strife and division) shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21b).

Some of my friends tell me that in matters of Christian fellowship they wish to be on the "safe side." By this they mean that they consider it spiritually risky to receive others as Christian brethren when they may not be truly accepted by God as his children. I too wish to be on the safe side, but I have a rather different view of the risks involved in hyper-selectivity in matters of Christian fellowship. What I most fear is that I may mistakenly or through ignorance cut off one of my brethren from the body of Christ into which Christ has placed him. I greatly fear having to explain to my Lord how I happened so to judge one of his little ones.

When at twilight a storm is brewing and several children, including my own along with others, are playing in the yard, I much prefer to invite them all into the house to share its warmth and shelter until definite identification can be made as to which children are my own. That would appear to be not only the "safe" course but the only sane and loving course.

I have been accused of being wishy-washy or uncommitted in my personal convictions when I openly seek to enjoy the fellowship of Christians who sing with a piano or who have a missionary society or who have a different theology of baptism. (The truth is that I am perhaps too dogmatic in my opinions.) But the reason I wish to have fellowship with my brethren, or rather, to enjoy the fellowship created by the Spirit of God, is because of my deep conviction that such is vital to the Christian life. It is not an optional matter, a kind of silly flirtation. Not at all. If you are my brother and if the Spirit of God has baptized us into one family, I must deny my personal, carnal sectarian jealousies in order to actively seek our mutual peace and growth in Christ.

And this brings us to an excellent stopping point. The fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, meekness, self-control—is in sharp contrast to the works of the flesh. If carnality causes disunity, only the Holy Spirit can produce unity. It is no accident that brethren who are doing the most to seek the peace of Zion are also reminding us of the importance of the Spirit-filled, Spirit-motivated life. Only as we come to a deep appreciation of the Spirit's presence in the church do we find the unity which He alone gives, a unity which we are enjoined to keep until we all attain to the unity of the faith (Eph. 4:3, 13).

NEWS AND NOTES

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

A 4-WEEK SEMINAR

THE SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL STUDIES, Buechel Church of Christ, presents a 4-week Seminar on "The Minister's Role in Marital and Family Problems," Saturday mornings, 10:00-Noon, April 2-30, 1 hour credit.

The leader of the seminar, Gordon R. Linscott, has had six years of experience in individual, group and family counseling. He holds the M.A. degree in counseling psychology from Spalding College and has completed requirements for the Ed.S. from the U of L. He is a professional member of the National Alliance for Family Life.

Rangeland Church: Most churches report good meetings in spite of the adverse weather and Rangeland is no exception. Good attendance considering conditions seems to have been the rule.

The Lilly Dale church, near Tell City, Ind., is sponsoring a "Prophecy Seminar" on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 25 and 26. Speakers include E. C. Ringer, Bruce Chowning, Glenn Baber, Robert Boyd, Julius Hovan.

Spring Lectureship at SCC is scheduled for March 16-18. The basic theme is "What is Man?" Bro. Boyd has accepted an invitation to speak on "Reaching the Deluded." A complete program schedule will be published when available.

A seminar on Church Leadership is being scheduled at the Jefferson-town Church of Christ, April 8, 9. This seminar was conducted last year at Lilly Dale, and is being repeated so that people from this area can benefit from the discussions. As was the case at Lilly Dale, Bro. Boyd will speak on "A Qualified Eldership."

Eighteenth St. Church: Eighteenth St. had a good watch night service with forty-two in attendance, which was very good for so small a congregation.

Cramer & Hanover Church, Lexington: Joe Goins: The last news letter gives

the highlights of a 7,000 mile journey and nearly four weeks actual time on the road. The letter tells briefly of conditions encountered in Europe, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India.

Gallatin, Tennessee: Sumner County Sheriff has invited Bro. Hovan to serve as a chaplain at the county jail. This is non-salaried, with no set working hours. The elders approved this position. (One other area minister will also serve as chaplain.)

Antioch Church, near Frankfort, Ky.:

In 1967 the Antioch church undertook a remodelling program which cost us near \$30,000. When the work was completed we had to borrow \$20,000 from the bank on a ten-year mortgage. The Lord has abundantly blessed, and we made the last payment in Dec., two years ahead of schedule. In our gratitude we set the first Sunday of January as a day of celebration to praise our Father who enableth us.

At the close of the service, Della Goins, the building fund treasurer, handed the mortgage to Bro. John McCann who is chairman of our leader's meeting who burned it before the congregation. We viewed the burning as a type of our sins being destroyed by Christ's death on Calvary. And all the people rejoiced in the Lord. —Jack Blaes

Henryville, Ind.: A number of the congregations gathered at the Children's Home January 29 for a House-Warming party for the Eppersons. Bro. and Sis. Epperson are house parents for the older girls. They are furnishing an apartment where they can spend their off time away from the Home.

Ft. Lauderdale, Fl.: It's a pleasure to worship at Westside. I remember from childhood some of the earnest prayer requests that were made for a little church in Fort Lauderdale, and I remember visiting that little church once with Betty and Dennis

when they were on leave in the 50's.

Several years ago Bro. Willis Allen came back to Florida and renewed his work with the congregation. Later Vaughn Reeves of Lexington agreed to spend two years working with Bro. Allen in a strong evangelistic effort to build up the congregation. Then Ben and Linda Rake ministered here for about 18 months.

Now the auditorium is well filled for most services and there is a spirit of genuine love and concern for one another and for the lost.

Westside is strong evidence that churches that leave everything to the minister or a few church leaders, stunt their own growth. Most of the new converts here are a direct result of the testimony of changed lives throughout the membership.

Our hope is that we will be able to function as "spiritual dieticians" or "nutritionists," that is, to see that the babes, the children, and the more mature Christians progress from milk to meat in their study of the Word.
—Billy Ray and Mary Lewter

Linton Church of Christ, Indiana: One of our deacons complained that the Word and Work was much too brief, as he thoroughly enjoyed it. Others also enjoy the Word and Work.

Over 100 enjoyed the Watch Night service which included singing, various speakers, prayer, quartet, and refreshments. 80 remained past midnight. Five congregations were represented. —Dick Lewis

Lilly Dale Church, Tell City, Indiana:

The Lilly Dale Church of Christ is sponsoring a "Prophecy Seminar" on Fri. and Sat., Feb. 25 and 26, 1977. The speakers are E. C. Ringer, Bruce

Chowning, Glen Baber, Robert Boyd, and Julius Hovan.

—Harry Coultas

Eighteenth Street Church, Louisville:
Bro Bill Ditsch preached his first sermon on Dec. 12th, on the subject of the Second Coming of Christ.

Bryantsville, Ind.: This is to inform you that Bryantsville Church of Christ, R.R. 1, Mitchell, In. 47446 is now looking for a minister to work with us.

Warren Crawford, who was with us each Sunday, is now working in Indianapolis and will preach for us only every other Sunday A.M. until someone else is found. Please let everyone know that you see. Please include this in your News and Notes.

John W. Bridges

R.R. 1, Mitchell, In. 47446.

or

Hollace D. Sherwood,

R.R. 1, Mitchell, In. 47446.

From Here and There

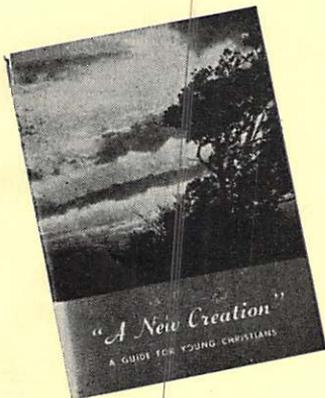
Dugger, Ind.: Find check for \$2.50. My subscription will be out in March and I don't want to miss a copy."
—Mrs. May McCammon.

"May the Lord bless those who write and those who read, and those who publish the Word and Work. May it bring a blessing to all who receive it and read it throughout this coming New Year that is before us if the Lord tarries." —Dollie Garrett

"Sorry I let the time to renew go by. I have tried to do too many things. I can't do as much reading henceforth, and my wife is not able to read much.

—Luke S. Elston

Inside the front cover of this issue, we are publishing a list of Missionary Names and Addresses, as compiled by Brother C. V. Wilson in the current Missionary Prayer List packet. We plan to run this list quite often, and we want to make any corrections that are needed from time to time. We believe that more of our members will write to various missionaries, if they have the addresses easily available. I wish we were able to say the amount of postage to each country, but do not have this information at the present time.



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"A New Creation" has been stocked by a number of book stores over the country since being favorably reviewed by *The Sunday School Times*. Many have found it to be an ideal gift for new converts and young people. One colored congregation in Tennessee bought a copy for every member in the church. A number of young people's groups have used it successfully as a basis for a series of studies on the practical problems which face them. A missionary in Africa has asked for permission to translate it into Tonga using photographs of native Christians.

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