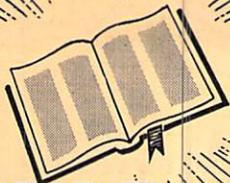
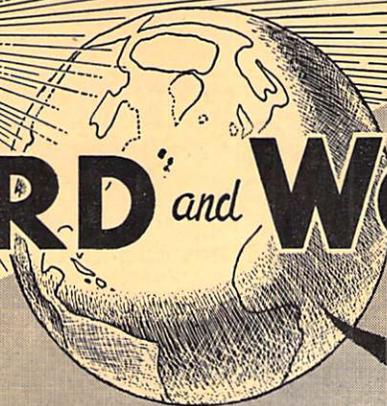


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Robert Heid is a minister in Louisville, Kentucky.



God's Family

W. R. H.

A Distinctive Heritage

Recently, in a planning meeting for expanding the Portland Christian School of Biblical Studies, one leader made the significant statement in question form: "If we do not have some valuable, distinctive characteristics, what reason do we have to continue to exist? Why not let the teaching business to others who are already in operation?" To me, this question is vital, not only to our Christian educational programs, but to the very viability of our congregations. I think the following seven facets of Christianity should be in the spectrum of every Christian activity:

1. *Zeal for the whole counsel of God.* Paul's farewell address to the Ephesian elders stated this accomplished goal. By the "whole counsel" we include: redemption, justification, indwelling Holy Spirit, Gifts of the Spirit, holiness, decorum in the Christian walk, Satan's opposition, prevalence of sin, coming judgment, etc.

2. *Biblical names and practices.* Since the Lord Jesus is the Master-builder of the church, we do well to restore and maintain according to His original plan. "Be sure that you make all things according to the pattern that was shown unto thee in the Mount" said Jehovah unto Moses with regard to the Tabernacle. How much more should we hesitate to make innovations or radical departures in the church of the Lord Jesus? We aim to have and hold all of the attributes of the early church, as God enables and supplies.

3. *Local autonomy, with Christ as the head.* What a privilege it is to hold this position! How it pleases the Lord to see His individual congregations (His candlesticks, as called in Revelation 2 and 3) each holding forth their light in their dark corners of the earth, while they function lovingly and righteously, holding fast unto the Head.

4. *A constant feeding upon God's holy word.* Although literally millions of copies of the Bible have been printed and distributed in all languages and in all lands, there is yet a dearth of Bible reading, and even less Bible understanding. The Holy Spirit is needed for Christians to grasp the Biblical message, so we cannot expect the world to have a clear concept of the mysteries of the kingdom of God. It is the church's place to so well learn from God, that we will be able to "give

answer to any man who asketh us the reason for the hope that is within us." In times that lie ahead, this could become a very frequent question, and an opening to share that hope with many, as the dark clouds gather.

5. *Simplicity in Worship.* "Man looketh upon the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart." "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God chose the weak things, the things that are despised, yea, the things that are not, that he might put to shame the things that are." "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not of ourselves." Any riches or pomp or greatness of men will be a deterrent to heartfelt worship of Him.

6. *Holding forth the Blessed Hope.* To many, the Christian hope for the rapture of the saints, the glorious reign with Christ on earth, and the eternal abode (New Jerusalem, come down from God) are all unknown. And more than that, there is the large segment of Christendom that contends against these truths. Congregations without the blessed hope are like ships without a chart. There is no haven to which they plan to arrive. Today we are witnessing a "Pre-rapture alert" but many have to turn to distant places and unknown writers to know what the Bible has been saying for 1900 years.

7. *An equal opportunity fellowship.* The Church is a fellowship of believers, not an incorporation of saints vesting their leadership in a cadre of officers or directors. Each member (male or female) is free to go on with Christ, to a fullgrown man, encouraged to attain unto the stature of the fulness of Christ. We can all say, with the apostle Paul, "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect," but the "pressing on" is still in order, and the Holy Spirit places no limit upon any individual's growth. D. L. Moody is credited with saying "The world has yet to see what God can do with one Christian who is fully devoted to Him." Amen.

IN CONCLUSION:

Do we have a distinctive heritage that is worthy of propagation? Verily. Do we have need of the School of Biblical studies, or other like efforts? Yes. May our congregations henceforth enjoy and practice all of the Divine communion and fellowship that God has willed unto us.

Jack Blaes preaches at the Antioch Church, Frankfort, Ky. and teaches at the Portland Christian School in Louisville.



Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

FIAT, THE ITALIAN AUTO BUILDER that helped put up the Kama River plant, is planning to invest \$200 billion in doubling the size of Togliattigrad, the Soviet motor city. With a portion of the bill being met by Libya, and no union problems, the expanded Red auto plant will seek to flood the European market with one million cars a year at prices set by the Kremlin to break important sections of the European economy.

A FIRST-HAND REPORT FROM TEHERAN tells of day-long interrogations of American hostages believed by their captors to have C.I.A. connections. At first the questioning was by "militant students," but when they failed to break the Americans a K.G.B. team from Moscow was flown in to continue the interrogations. The report said, "This is a major disaster for the U. S. And the K.G.B. has not only all the C.I.A., N.S.A., and State Department codes, it also has our encoding machines."

A NEST OF SOUTH AFRICAN AND RHODESIAN army deserters in London is maintaining regular contact with a Soviet K.G.B. agent in Paris. Though in possession of the details, British authorities have refused to brief the South Africans.

REPORTS FROM NICARAGUA HAVE CONFIRMED that a unit of 500 Sandinistas has been sent to Angola to bolster Cuban forces propping up the Soviet puppet regime in Luanda.

ANYONE THINKING HIMSELF INDISPENSABLE should try sticking his finger in a bowl of water and noticing the hole it leaves when he takes it out.

AH! INFLATION!!! Someone went to a lot of trouble to bring this one out, so I feel I must share it with you. A Boston teacher with a master's degree and 14 year's experienced received \$21,131 in 1979. If for the next 10 years that teacher continues to receive raises at the rate granted over the past five years he will be paid \$26,033 in 1989. And what about purchasing power? If the rate of inflation we have seen for the past five years continues for the next ten, the teacher would have to see his \$21,131 increase to \$69,675 by 1989 just to keep pace with inflation. And even this figure would not maintain the purchasing power he had in 1979, for his salary of \$69,675 would throw him into a top income-tax bracket.

MOTIVATION AT LAST I'VE FOUND YOU. This might be the sad song of Steven Strait, principal at the elementary school in Stanton, Michigan. He told his students he would move his office to the roof for 20 minutes per classroom the day everyone scored 100 percent on spelling tests. The idea of their principal perched on the roof was all it took to inspire the youngsters. Principal Strait had to pay off, moving desk, chair, telephone, and his American flag to the roof on a day with a 28-degree temperature and 15 m.p.h. winds. "It's just like getting 100 percent in spelling," said Strait, "all mind over matter."

AND YOU HAD BETTER HOPE that Stait did not receive the following note from a parent asking to excuse his recent absence: "My son is under the doctor's care and could not take P.E. Please execute him."

A NAVY CAPTAIN PUT IT THIS WAY. Child behavior can often be improved by parental applause—the one-handed kind.

SINCE CHRISTMAS THE STAFF OF THE FRENCH Embassy in Iran has been gradually whittled down to 10 functionaries for fear that an attack at any moment by Soviet-trained activists would follow the pattern of the seizure of hostages at the U.S. Embassy. Since Mid-March such an attack is believed increasingly possible as the activists tire of baiting the Americans and look for something new to attract the television cameras.

THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION ON LITERACY TESTS. President Carter's appointee, and the nation's first Secretary of Education has announced to the world that she is suspicious of literacy tests before high-school graduation. "One has to be suspicious of tests when one does not know who put them together." Then she added: "There have been instances when literacy tests were totally unfair because the youngsters who were given the tests were not given the education to pass them." It will be recalled that such tests are being promoted so that high-school diplomas might be said to guarantee a prospective employer that a graduate at least can read and write.

IF ANY READERS ARE INTERESTED IN EXPORTING American technology and/or equipment to Communist countries, you only need to contact the State Department. It publishes the *Munitions Control Newsletter*, which provides guidance for contractors wishing to sell military equipment, and in its recent issue lists types of support equipment the United States is prepared to consider on a case-by-case basis for export licensing to Communist China. Defense Secretary Harold Brown made it clear to Peiping on a recent trip there that the United States would consider

sales of technology and equipment with military as well as civilian uses. It's such a nasty business, I'm sure none of you would like to engage in it. But I feel we would do well to stop the President from doing it.

HAVE YOU HEARD OF JAMES WIEMALS? He has an auto dealership in Corvallis, Washington. Last July he flew 60 American flags over his dealership. City fathers told him to take them down, and fined him \$200 inflated dollars, pointing to a city ordinance banning the flying of banners and pennants for advertising purposes. And they maintain that Wiemal's proud display of Old Glory falls under this ordinance. Wiemals has reduced the number of his (your/mine/our) nation's flags to eight, and the Americans elected to protect every citizen's constitutional right continue to insist that they must come down to a total of zero. Let's hope that the city fathers do not resort to shooting them down. Wiemal's attorney says that this is the first time an American has been sued for flying the American flag. But there are a lot of firsts being inaugurated these days, so I guess we shouldn't be surprised. Anyway, Mr. Wiemal's says he will take it to the supreme court if he has to.

THE OLD ARGUMENT CONTINUES—Does the death penalty deter murderer? According to the editors of the *Richmond News Leader*, it does. "Hear the comment of one Ellwood Leuscher, during his Maryland trial for murder of two boys in that state three years ago—murder to which he had confessed. During the course of the trial he was asked about the death of a boy found on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Said Leuschner: 'I want to talk about that boy in Virginia. I want you all to know for sure that I had nothing to do with that boy. I wouldn't kill anyone in Virginia, because they have a death penalty.'" Virginia's death penalty works."

CIVILIZATION IS ALWAYS IN DANGER when those who have never learned to obey are given the right to command.

—Fulton J. Sheen

Carl Kitzmiller is minister of the Oakdale, Louisiana Church of Christ and writes the Sunday school lessons for Word and Work Lesson Quarterly.



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

In becoming Christians do people repent of sin or grow out of sin?

My initial answer to this question is: "Both." But it is an answer that needs an explanation.

The one asking the question is concerned that some people in coming to Christ seem to have the idea that they can hold on to certain wrong things in their lives with the thought that they will eventually grow out of them. Certainly there are those who treat conversion very superficially who often leave repentance out of the "what-to-do" teaching given to inquirers. It is popular in some quarters to call for a commitment to Christ which seems to ask for or expect little more than a signature on a card or a confession that "I want to be recognized as a Christian." There are those asking for decisions for Christ who do not seem to realize that this also involves a decision against sin.

Let it be said very clearly that repentance toward God is a necessary part of our response to the gospel of Christ if we are to be saved. And our repentance is not of some sins, part of our sins, or even most of our sins—it is repentance of sin, whatever is wrong in our lives, whatever misses the mark and is not in the will of God. The very moment we begin to reserve some corner of our life and want to be rid of all sin except such-and-such, we show that we are trying to repent selectively and that is not repentance of sin. What wife wants to hear that her husband has decided to stop committing adultery with six different women, that he has "repented" and now only intends to do so with just one other woman? True repentance is not selective but covers every known area of sinning.

Moreover, repentance is a prerequisite of the new birth. New Testament messengers included repentance in their message (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 20:21). From the beginning to the end of the Bible repentance precedes the forgiveness of sins. It is not something added to faith as a work of merit; it is one of the activities of true faith in a God who abominates sin. But it is there. There is not even a hint that God forgives known sin in responsible persons without repentance.

Now, without retracting even one iota of this above, let us understand that prospective Christians and new Christians do not always recognize some things to be sin which are sin. New Christians are babes in Christ and immature in their thinking. Every Christian in his growth becomes more aware of the terribleness of sin and likely

comes to see things as sin which he may not have earlier understood to be so. In this sense he might be said to grow out of sin.

Let us illustrate. A young man believes that Jesus is the Christ and, repenting of his sinful life, confesses Christ and is baptized into Christ. It is a genuine conversion to Christ. Let us say, however that he has not had much pre-Christian training as to what the Bible teaches and so he does not as readily recognize specific sins as others might. In spite of his immature state, such a one is a genuine Christian. Now let us say that this young man in his life has picked up some language which is not wholesome. He continues to use that language. That proves, does it not, that he never repented of sin? No, it does not. He may have repented of sin as a principle, but his understanding may not have caught up with his principles. He does not intend to do wrong, but he does, without being aware that it is wrong. Now, as a further development, someone declares his language to be wrong without giving a solid basis for it in God's word. He may be deterred a bit, but does that person know what he is talking about? Let us not confuse faith in an individual's judgment with faith in Christ. Finally, he is shown from the word of God that his words are wrong. Now he must repent of this sin. He has not grown out of it, but he has grown in his understanding so that he now includes it in those works of darkness he wants out of his life. Suppose we even go a step further. His words have been spoken by habit, and a habit is not easily broken. He no longer intends to use those words, but he slips. It was not that he had not repented. He temporarily lost a battle with the flesh. But now that he knows this to be sin he cannot shrug it off. Repentance is called for. And if he is living in touch with Christ as he ought to be, it will be done.

There is a sense, then, in which repentance is primarily a matter of the heart. We do not say there is not also a practical side. Some wrongs are so evident that it is foolish in any normal case to talk about repentance while one continues in the acts. Nor are we talking about playing games with God, pretending an ignorance which we do not have. God knows our heart. What we are saying is that it is possible for a person who has repented of sin in his heart to continue doing some things because of ignorance or immaturity which will be recognized as sin by the more discerning. Now we know that when there is a willingness to do the Lord's will (John 7:17), darkness does not persist. We must be fair, however, and recognize that sins of ignorance can only be repented of in the sense of ceasing from them when we come to know them to be sins. And this is often a process of growth.

Another danger to be avoided is this—confusing a human standard with God's. Some there are who are ready to pronounce a cup of coffee or a glass of Coke sin. Nevertheless, that person who drinks these refreshments is not necessarily an unrepenting sinner; he may simply see that there is no solid ground on which such an interpretation stands. I have some neighbors and friends for who holiness is a particular style of clothing and hair style. Am I unrepenting in rejecting this arbitrary standard which they have adopted? I do not like to see Christians using tobacco. I think it hinders their testimony. I can even make the possible connection that it harms the temple of God. I'd like to

see no Christian ever using the stuff in any form. But I have known and know some Christians for whom I have a high regard who use it. It is just not an issue with them. They reject my application of scripture which makes it a sin. They reject my standard, but they do not believe God has made it an issue. Preachers, elders, teachers, and others have been known to be wrong in what they declare to be sin before God. Those persons are not necessarily wicked sinners before God who reject human judgments and applications. Even when the judgments and applications are right, it may involve growth in spiritual understanding to recognize it.

Now for a statement or two in closing. We are not saying that only that is sin which a person recognizes to be sin. God's word, in specific declaration and in principle, determines sin. We are saying that there can only be an active repentance of that specific sin when it is known. Surely this is one area where the continual cleansing of sin for the one abiding in Christ is such a precious truth (1 John 1:7). Again, we are not suggesting that one can deal with *known* sin by growing out of it and that it is to be tolerated until such is achieved. We may grow in strength to overcome (or in our awareness of the provision for strength in Christ), but known sin must be repented of or else our whole outlook on sin is defective.

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THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

ARE YOU A DOER?

Romans 2:13 contains a truth that is very simple to be understood in regard to all human laws, yet multitudes of people have not understood the principle in regard to the things God requires of men. A somewhat literal translation reads, "For not the hearers of law are just before God, but the doers of law shall be justified." That simply says (and who wouldn't agree?) that hearing the statements of what is required is not enough; you must translate that into action.

As I said before, this is easy to understand in human laws. You can read the 55-mile-per-hour speed limit and know it easily by memory, but that is no excuse if you decide to drive 70. You can know perfectly that there is a law against stealing, but you would never quote that law to a judge if you were caught stealing. Yet countless numbers of people believe that if they know and approve the Sermon

on the Mount or its oft-quoted "golden rule" that that makes them right before God. If they would examine their own past history accurately they would see that many, many times they have gone against what they approve, and many will agree to that yet think they are justified because of their beliefs. Paul here is telling such that hearing (and even approving and praising) the law is not enough, they must be doers.

The general subject, may I remind you, of the first sixteen verses of Romans, chapter 2, can be summarized with this question, "Have you kept one hundred percent the moral judgments with which you have bound others?" This is being said to men who do not necessarily have the Bible. Paul will take up those who have the Scriptures and ask them to judge on another basis from verse seventeen to the end of the chapter, but now we are considering those who have some basis that they think men should be judged by but they don't live up to that standard themselves. Does this describe you? It should if you have been judging others, for no man lives perfectly even by his own standards; how much more is it true that men miss the mark when it comes to using God's standards. Stand up by God's standards and you will see how "crooked" you are.

Most translations start a parenthesis at verse 14 and conclude it at the end of verse 15. It seems to me that the parenthesis (remember, there are no punctuations in the original manuscripts) should start with verse thirteen. Read from the beginning of verse twelve and then skip thirteen through fifteen and you will see how smoothly it reads. Then re-read thirteen through fifteen and you see he is adding explanation to the thought in verse twelve. Verses fourteen and fifteen do add explanation to verse thirteen, of course, so let us briefly look at those two verses.

In these two verses Paul simply points out that men who do not have a properly stated law to live by but who have a realization of the rightness or wrongness of certain things and who live by these things as best they know are better off than those who have the full statement of the law and then do not live by it. Their conscience will not bother them if they have lived up to their own standards and it will bother them when they fall short. Since everyone has sinned, verse twelve has already said they will perish without law instead of being condemned by the law others have and fail to keep.

This leads up to the final statement of the principle of God's judgment in verse 16, a verse we must leave until next time. But, my friend, don't wait to have that verse explained; if you have not put your faith in Jesus Christ and have heard His Name preached many times, you have a heavy responsibility. You have something far greater than a statement of Law; you have had offered to you a Savior. Think how terrible it will be through eternity if you refuse the only Savior and find yourself cast into outer darkness, into the lake of fire which is also the outer darkness, into the place where there is no passing out of existence but where there is nothing that can be called life. Think how terrible it will be when you see that you turned down the great gift of eternal life that God is offering you in His Son. You may

not be able to follow Paul's reasoning perfectly (and maybe I have missed some of it too, of course) but you can know the simple facts of the gospel—that Christ died for your sins, that He was buried, and that He rose again to save you—and you can believe them. It is a matter of your will—is it in rebellion against God or do you want to yield it to Him? Come at the invitation of the Almighty Himself to be saved by His only begotten Son.



IS THE RAPTURE A BIBLICAL CONCEPT?

Dr. David R. Reagan

The question may seem silly to those of you who are students of Bible prophecy, but let me assure you it is not. The vast majority of people who are members of the mainline Churches of Christ are absolutely convinced that the Rapture is a totally un-Biblical concept. The reason, of course, is that they have been told this time and time again from the pulpit.

Bro. Guy N. Woods, the esteemed associate editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, recently responded to a question about the Rapture by saying: "Neither the word 'Rapture' nor the idea is in the Bible." He then proceeded to attack the concept as a "fabrication of Pre-Millennialists."

The resident, self-proclaimed expert on prophecy among Dallas area Church of Christ ministers distributes a taped sermon on Pre-Millennialism in which he makes the following statement about the Rapture:

"The word 'Rapture' is not in the Bible."

"I have been studying the Bible for 25 years and have never seen a hint of the Rapture . . ."

"The Rapture is a false promise."

"The Rapture is not just un-Biblical; it is anti-Biblical. It is opposed to the Bible."

Such absurd statements would be downright laughable if it weren't for the fact that they are being presented as "gospel" and are being believed by thousands of people in the pews. The "blessed hope" of Christians (Titus 2:13) is thus being converted into a despised notion of ridicule.

Apathy vs Hostility

One thing has changed. At least the Rapture is being discussed today from Church of Christ pulpits. When I was growing up in the

mainline Church of Christ, I never once heard the concept mentioned by anyone. As I have said before, I was so ignorant on the subject, that if anyone asked me to define the word "Rapture," I would probably have responded by saying that it is a sensation you feel when you kiss your girlfriend!

I grew up in a prophetic vacuum. Prophecy was not abused in my congregation; it was just ignored. About the only time a minister ever got into anything prophetic was when he preached a vivid sermon on "What is Hell Like?" But apathy toward prophecy is probably better than the current wave of open hostility. At least I reach adulthood with an open mind about prophecy. Today, the mainline Churches of Christ are producing a whole generation of young people who have outright contempt for God's Prophetic Word. And that is a real tragedy.

The Biblical Basis of the Word

Well, what about it, is "Rapture" a Biblical term or not? Reproduced in Figure 1 is 1 Thessalonians 4:17 as it appears in the oldest translation of the New Testament—the Latin Vulgate. Please note carefully the underlined word.

Figure 1

I Thessalonians 4:17

<i>Latin Vulgate (405 AD)</i>	<i>King James (1611)</i>
Deinde nos qui vivimus, qui relinguimur, simul <u>rapiemur</u> cum illis in nubibus obviam Christo in aera, et sic semper cum Domino erimus.	Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

The underlined Latin word, "rapiemur," is a declension of the Latin word "raptus" which means "to catch away." It is a translation of the Greek word, "harpazo," which means the same thing. Thus, the term "Rapture" is completely Biblical in nature. It is an English transliteration of a Latin word which appears in the Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible. It is just as Biblical as the word "baptize," which is an English transliteration of the Greek word "baptizo." The popularity of the term Rapture is due, no doubt, to the fact that it expresses a concept in one word which in English must be expressed in a phrase like "to be caught up" or "to be snatched away."

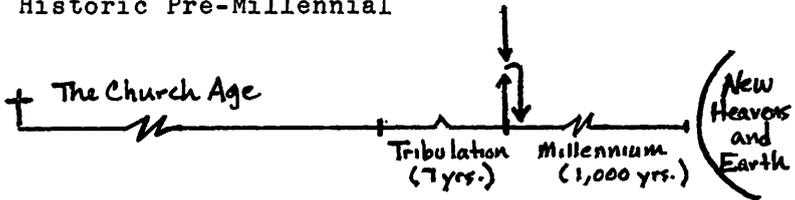
The Biblical Basis of the Concept

Now that we have established that the word, "Rapture," is Biblical, let's proceed to consider the *concept* that the word expresses. Briefly stated, the concept is that at some time in the future Jesus will appear in the sky and that the church saints, both living and dead, will be caught up to meet Him in the air.

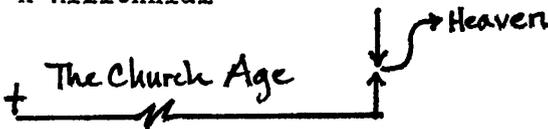
Figure 2

The Rapture in Varying Prophetic Viewpoints

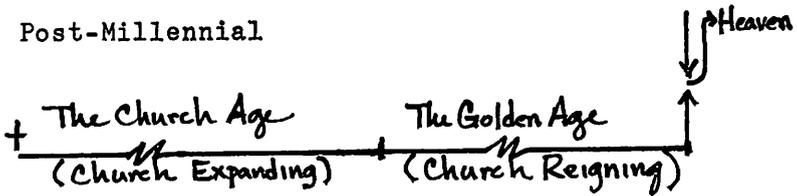
1) Historic Pre-Millennial



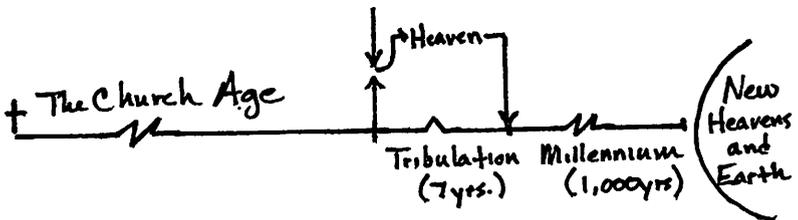
2) A-Millennial



3) Post-Millennial



4) Dispensational Pre-Millennial



This concept is stated in clear and simple English in 1 Thessalonians, chapter 4. Paul writes:

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord.
(verses 16 & 17 - RSV)

As this passage clearly illustrates, it is absolutely preposterous to say that the Rapture "is not in the Bible" or that it "is a false promise." The Rapture is clearly taught in no uncertain terms.

Varying Viewpoints

Furthermore, the Rapture is a central concept in all four of the basic interpretations of the New Testament scheme of final events. In other words, *all* the millennial viewpoints agree that there will be a Rapture. What they disagree about is the *timing* of the Rapture, whether it will occur before the Tribulation or after the Tribulation or simply at the end of time.

Refer to the diagrams in Figure 2, and you will see that the Historic Pre-Millennial view, the one that dates back to the earliest Church Fathers, places the Rapture at the end of the Tribulation. According to this view, the Rapture is the event that ushers in the Millennium. It occurs simultaneously with the Second Coming of the Lord. The A-Millennial view, which spiritualizes both the Millennium and the Tribulation, simply puts the Rapture at the end of the age. The Post-Millennial view, which has pretty well died out, also envisions the Rapture at the end of the age, following a world-wide reign of the church. The most recent viewpoint, the Dispensational Pre-Millennial, which was developed in England in the 1830's, separates the Rapture from the Second Coming by placing the Rapture at the beginning of the Tribulation period and the Second Coming at the end of that period.

The Real Question

Again, please note that all four viewpoints include a concept of the Rapture. The Question, therefore, is not whether there will be a Rapture. The question is *when* will the Rapture occur? Will it be combined with the Second Coming, and, if so, will it occur at the end of time? Or will it occur separate and apart from the return of Christ as an event that will precede the Tribulation?

To summarize, the Rapture is a Biblical word. The Rapture is a Biblical concept. The Rapture is an integral part of all the major prophetic viewpoints. The real question regarding the Rapture is not *if* it will occur but *when* it will occur. It is to this question that we will turn our attention next month.

(Note: Dr. Reagan invites responses to this article. They should be sent to him care of Lamb & Lion Ministries, 2706 Clear Springs, Plano, Texas 75075.)

Larry Miles, a member of the Portland Avenue congregation, is working in Cincinnati and has taken classes at Cincinnati Bible Seminary.

Reflections On The Restoration Movement: The Second Generation

Larry Miles



Robert H. Boll: A Man Dedicated to the Word of God

As we draw near to the end of this series on the Restoration Movement, we want now to write some words on an individual who was very dear to the hearts of many of the saints who read the *Word and Work*. We read about the Bereans in Acts 17 who searched the scriptures daily to see if the words Paul spoke were truly of God. The subject of our essay was an outstanding man of God who directed all he came in contact with to the Word of God.

Robert Henry Boll was born on June 7, 1875 in Baderweiler, Germany. His parents were ardent Roman Catholics. So strong was this faith in Rome that his mother wanted him to become a priest. It must be noted that at that time he also wanted to become a priest. But God works in mysterious ways.

Concerning his early schooling, E. L. Jorgenson wrote these words in *Truth and Grace*,

Here (Muhlhausen) Robert went to school. Here the younger of his two sisters died, and in the same year his father also. At eleven he entered the Lyceum or Latin School. Though a lover of books and precocious also, the German school system seemed to him needlessly severe. But perhaps that hard training accounts in part for the strong student habits . . .

At the age of fifteen, he sailed with an Aunt to the New World. After a while he settled in Zanesville, Ohio. After a few years we find him doing farm labor in central Tennessee. Concerning his pilgrimage to the Christian faith, we give you Bro. Boll's own words in *The Church I Found and How I Found It*,

When I became a Christian—simply a Christian—it meant to me the surrender of the faith and teaching which was instilled in me from infancy, in which I grew up, and which I still held when I turned my twentieth year. . . . It was by God's providence that I met with certain Christians, some of whom took the time and trouble to show me some of the truth. That was another of God's mercies. . . . I had become acquainted with the 'Church of Christ'; and the idea of being simply and only a Christian of the New Testament sort attracted me. But at that time I looked upon the church of Christ as simply a denomination among other denominations. It seemed to me that it arrogated to itself exclusively a name to which, as I judged, all other denominations had equal right. The dogmatism and arrogance (as it appeared to me) of their attitude affected me adversely. For a time I felt and spoke cynically of all the religious bodies. Still I was resolving the problem in my mind; and despite my limited understanding, I saw that I had at least the same opportunity of being a simple Christian as had the people of

whom I read in the New Testament, and an equal right to belong to the church of Christ in that original and universal sense in which the apostles and all the earliest Christians belonged to it. I also began to understand that such a simple Christian stood responsible to his Lord alone for all his faith and practice; and that therefore the word of God, all of it, and it only, must be his guidance—no man having the right either to limit him therein or to impose on him anything besides; that he was free from all men and from every human yoke. With that conception more or less clearly in mind, and understanding little else, I confessed Christ as my Lord and was buried with Him in baptism.

It was on Sunday April 14, 1895 that he became a Christian. In 1895, he entered into the Nashville Bible School. Concerning how he arrived at the school, Bro. Boll wrote these words in the *Word and Work* dated June 1922,

It was a chilly rainy day in the late fall of the year 1895 that I stood on Brother Harding's porch at the Old Nashville Bible School on Spruce Street, homeless, friendless, penniless, but not quite hopeless of an opportunity to go through school. When I presented my mission request, Brother Harding regretted very much, but there really wasn't any work to speak of by which a boy could earn his way, and such applications were many—'Perhaps next year we can find an opening for you,' he said. I turned and slowly walked away. Probably I looked crestfallen. He stood and looked after me. 'You look to be wet,' he said. 'Yes,' I answered. 'How did you get wet?' 'Coming in from the country in the rain.' 'Didn't your wagon have a top on it?' 'I didn't come on a wagon,' I replied. 'I walked.' 'How far did you walk?' 'About twenty-five miles.' 'You mean to say you walked twenty-five miles through rain to come here to school?' And he looked over me again. 'I believe you want to go to school. Go to the dormitory and tell Brother Dodd to show you a room. We'll get through some way.' I am sure he did not see how 'we' could get through. But he didn't want to see. His heart was bigger than his pocket-book any day, and he felt he could afford to risk a thing or two, for there was the promise of God. Such was his faith . . .

L. C. Sears gives us this account of the words of James A. Harding concerning Bro. Boll in *The Eyes of Jehovah*,

I wouldn't take a million dollars for him, and I nearly missed him. He has developed wonderfully within the last six years. He is one of a large number in whom is manifest what wonders, the daily, diligent, prayerful study of the Bible will do for one in a short time.

He held his first meeting starting June 15, 1896 at a schoolhouse named Accident near Nashville, Tennessee. He spent his summers preaching the everlasting gospel. In 1900, he left the Nashville Bible School but was always studying on his own. In 1901 he became one of the editors of the *Gospel Guide*.

In 1903, he made his first visit to the congregation that meets at twenty fifth and Portland Avenue in Louisville, Kentucky. In 1904 he took up the located ministry at Portland Avenue. He continued in the pulpit at Portland until his death fifty two years later.

During the summer of 1903, he preached in tent meeting lasting six weeks. This meeting helped establish the church in Los Angeles. Bro. Boll was considered an outstanding evangelist. He was dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ. He considered it his privilege to go anywhere he could preach to the lost. During his long ministry he proclaimed the good news all over the country.

He was also a prolific writer. In 1909, he became frontpage editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, a post he held until 1915. As we said he was willing to go anywhere to preach. In September of 1909 he and E. L.

Jorgenson preached the gospel message and song in Cincinnati, Ohio. In June of 1911, he and Jorgenson spent four weeks in Maine preaching the primitive gospel. In 1910 we find him teaching the Bible at Lawrenceburg, Tennessee.

As we said he was front page editor of the *Advocate* from 1909-1915. In 1915 Bro. Boll began a series of articles on prophecy. There were some on the *Advocate* staff who did not agree with the conclusions that Bro. Boll was presenting. Rather than allow him the freedom to interpret the scriptures as the Lord has revealed to him, these brethren sought to make it a test of fellowship. The teaching of Pre-millennialism is the common reason that is given for dropping Bro. Boll from the *Advocate*. But this was just a pretense. Those in high places in the "brotherhood" could not let Bro. Boll continue to hold a position of prominence because he would not tow the party line. He was a free man in Christ. It would take a few years to materialize but the rift would come. Today there is virtually no fellowship between the a-millennial and the pre-millennial brethren. The pre-mil brethren have always sought fellowship and have offered fellowship. We must not be willing to make opinions tests of fellowship.

In 1916, the *Word and Work*, which had been edited by Stanford Chambers in New Orleans, Louisiana since 1908 was brought to Louisville. Bro. Boll continued as editor until his death in 1956.

Concerning him as a preacher, Jorgenson wrote these words in the *Word & Work* dated May 1956,

R. H. Boll excelled as preacher, teacher, and writer of religious truth. In which capacity of the three he was the strongest would not be easy to say. In his preaching he denounced sin terrifically, but brought hope and 'strong encouragement' to all who heard. He was logical, his outlines being well arranged and easily remembered; but he was not logical in the sense of being dry or merely intellectual in appeal.

During his sixty year ministry, he held meetings all over the country. Also for over fifty years he held his annual tent meeting, many times behind the Portland Avenue Church building.

As we relayed earlier, he was a great teacher of the Word. For over fifty years he held daily Bible classes in Louisville every winter. Many of our ministers and leaders of today sat under Bro. Boll and received teachings from the Book of Books. In 1924, the Portland Avenue Church established Portland Christian School. It is still around striving to uphold the will of God.

In 1927, Bro. Boll conducted a written debate on unfulfilled prophecy with H. Leo Boles. Bro. Boles was President of David Lipscomb College. For the next thirty or so years he continued to be used of the Lord. In 1954 he celebrated his fiftieth year in the pulpit at Portland Avenue. He retained all his mental faculties till the end. On the Sunday before his death he preached an outstanding message. Death came to Robert Henry Boll on Friday April 13, 1956. He had been a Christian one day shy of sixty-one years. His was a full life of service to the Lord of Glory.

Next month we hope to continue in our series. The subject has not been completely decided on yet. Until next time, MARANATHA!



STUDIES ON PRAYER

Jesse Z. Wood

When is prayer in order? When should we begin to pray? Some people consider prayer as a "last resort", when "all else" fails. A doctor has been heard to say, "I've done all within my power to save your child." Then someone says, "Now, all we can do is to *pray*." Another speaks up, "Oh, has it come to *that*?"

A sailor, believing his ship is about to sink, cried out, "Oh God, If you'll save me, just this once, I promise never to bother you again."

While working in a war-related office job during World-War II, a young lady at another desk heard me say I planned on going to Prayer Meeting that Wednesday night. She asked, "What do they do at Prayer Meeting?" I told her, "We pray." She then said, "Huh, I tried that one time, and it didn't work."

Now it is evident that none of these people know what prayer is all about.

Once I heard a preacher say, "God is too busy to be concerned with trifles." (How wrong this man was!) Just suppose he was right in his conclusion about prayer. How would we determine whether our problem was important or big enough to bring before the God of the Universe? Ah, but Our God says, "All things *whatsoever* ye pray and ask for, believing that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24).

Prayer is not limited to asking for something. It involves "Giving of Thanks." Fathers and Mothers seek to teach their little ones to say, "Thank you" when they receive gifts. So, our Lord, also seeks to instill a spirit of Thanksgiving in our hearts, lest we forget the real source of all our blessings. One of His most touching experiences begins in Luke 17:11. Ten men stand afar off, crying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." So, being merciful, He heals them of a "terminal Disease." Nine of the ten ran, joyfully away. But, one man comes close and falls at the Lord's feet, thanking Him for His great healing.

The Lord Jesus turns, and asks his disciples, "Didn't I heal ten? (Where are the rest of them?) Where are the nine?" He says. Nine out of ten were inappreciative—unthankful! Some one has said, "Ingratitude is a marble-hearted fiend."

Once, in a Prayer meeting service I called on a good brother to lead in prayer. I knew he would understand when I told him I didn't want him to ask the Lord for a single thing. So, he prayed, thanking the Lord for being such a wonderful Savior, he praised God for all

His wonderful promises, for His daily care and protection, and supply of every need of ours. He especially praised the Lord for the Blessed Hope that Christ our Lord will come and take us to be forever with Him!

An old saying says, "Our blessings are tasted twice, when we ruminates (think) on them in Thanksgiving."

Remember the Demon possessed man whom the Lord released from the demons? What a relief and release that man must have felt. He was eager, therefore, to stay with the Lord, going with Him in His travels. But the Lord told him to rather, go back home and tell what great things God had done for him. In other words, the healed man would be worth more in witnessing for the Lord than merely being an on-looker (Luke 8:39). He was told to "Go-tell" of the blessings he had himself received.

And, on this score, Why do we not hear more "Testimonials" regarding prayer-answers we ourselves are enjoying? Are we afraid we'd be accused of "bragging"? How could we brag? For it is the Lord who does the healing, or supplying, or providing, or giving of great things. Ours is only to put trust and faith in Him who does the great work for us. And we cannot brag about our faith, for even our faith is a gift from Him (see Rom. 12:3). "Pray without ceasing--In everything give thanks." I Thess. 5:17-18.

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REPRINTS:

The Supernatural in the Natural

R. C. Bell — 1964

In the midst of a splendid reign, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, lost his mind, deserted his throne, and lived for a season in the fields as a beast. (See Daniel 4.) One time the terrible Assyrians invaded the lands of Israel and took the inhabitants away into foreign captivity. (See Isaiah 10.)

These records are not in the Bible primarily to inform us that kings sometimes become insane or that strong nations often devour weak ones. Secular history is sufficient for this. But their distinctive value lies in the additional fact that God has a hand in such things; "that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will;" that God uses one nation as a battle-axe to punish another nation. In short, that the supernatural is in the natural. And what a flood of light this distinctive truth throws upon the history of both individual men and of nations!

God promised Abraham that his descendants should come out of Egyptian bondage in the fourth generation and inherit Canaan. The books of Genesis and Exodus reveal the method God used in keeping His word. Joseph's bad brothers sold him to slave dealers, who

resold him in Egypt, where he became ruler of the land. As a result of this, Abraham's people in process of time became a slave colony in Egypt, whence they were delivered by Moses and finally settled in Canaan by Joshua, in fulfillment of God's promise made four hundred years earlier. The unfolding of God's method shows that envious brothers, evil slave traders, villainous Potiphar's wife, a forgetful prisoner, and godless Pharaohs were all, unknown to themselves, worked into it. Joseph came to see the guiding hand of God in it all, for he told his brothers that although they meant evil against him by selling him, "God meant it for good" (Genesis 50:20). "Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee" (Psalm 76:10).

Jesse, through natural, fatherly feeling, sent to his three sons who were soldiers under King Saul, some good things to eat. And what more natural than to send them by their ready brother, David? To one acquainted with God's ways, however, the supernatural is very evident in this; for while on this errand, David, by slaying Goliath, became famous and soon entered public life in the double capacity of court musician and armorbearer to Saul. God was overruling that a king after His own heart might be ready for the throne upon the death of the faithless Saul.

Very naturally Ahasuerus, a heathen, Persian king, fell in love with the lovely Esther and made her his queen. But it is another case of the supernatural in the natural. According to Esther 4:14, Mordecai, a man of God, saw God using this incident to prevent the extermination of His chosen people, for in persuading of Esther to intercede on their behalf he said: "And who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" God worked even the king's being unable to sleep into His plan for saving the Jews. (See the sixth chapter of Esther.) God as well as Ahasuerus was awake that night! God Almighty can work wonders with weak things. He can build with stubble as well as with gold. Indeed, a man acquainted with God's ways fears to call the merest natural trifle a little thing, because he knows not what God may be making of it.

After the Jews at Jerusalem had arrested Apostle Paul on a false charge and were doing all in their power to kill him, God undertook to deliver him safely in Rome (see Acts 23:11), but did not disclose the means He intended to employ. However, a reader of the remainder of the book of Acts sees God's way unwound before his eyes. Part of it consists in using nearly five hundred pagan Roman soldiers in order to get Paul safely out of Jerusalem and on his journey to Rome.

These Romans were doing as Romans usually did. They were acting of themselves, knew that they might have done differently, were unconscious of God's presence, and were fully responsible for their decisions and activities. Even so Judas, Caiaphas, and Pilate were worked into God's plan of giving the world a Savior. Neither evil men nor evil angels can escape contributing to God's eternal purposes. And the supernatural blends so kindly with the natural that men untaught of God cannot distinguish between them. Observe that even miracles sometimes blended thus with the natural. For example, when God wanted a dry path through the Red Sea, He made

use of a wind; or, if the path was to be through the Jordan River, the water below ran down to the Dead Sea as usual. How easily can God then, when it suits His purpose, withdraw the miraculous element but still do things!

Although a full understanding of this matter baffles theologians and philosophers, yet a child can see that God in His autobiography (the Bible) claims for Himself the disposition and the power to control and to use all nature, human as well as physical. God wants men to know this truth, else it would not be written so large.

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

J. R. Stewart - Brown

Cape Town, South Africa

February 27th.

We certainly hope and pray that this year and the 80's will with God's help, be a period of continued spiritual, and physical growth for the Church.

On Wednesday evening (Dec 12th) a number of the congregation, spent time to pack up nine large boxes of clothes and toys for Samson Romulumuse and the Masakone Church of Christ in Vendaleland.

We have also just received a letter from Bro. Sams, expressing a very sincere thanks for the boxes of toys and clothing that the congregation sent.

His letter speaks of great blessings, and joyfulness, and happiness, that the clothes and toys have brought to the Church and their families.

The congregation individually made up a total contribution of R153-15 cents, which was given to the Venda Bible School.

In, addition members have committed themselves to make a special monthly contribution to the Venda school totaling R44.

We have enjoyed, many visitors at our services: at our Bellville Church of Christ, several from up country—Barkley East, Louis Tricardht, East London, and Durbon.

My husband and self, went on a visit to see our son in S.W. Africa, and God gave me the privilege of speaking twice to the colored people there, telling them about our wonderful Saviour, and about my mission work in Zambia, and putting Jesus first in our lives—Matthew 6:33.

The past month has witnessed three more souls being baptized into Christ, for which we give God all the Praise and Glory.

Elaine Brittell

Livingstone, Zambia

March 6th.

We received the Oct. *Word and Work* yesterday and also a *Missionary Messenger*. Both had very inspiring lessons. In the

Word and Work Douglas I. Broyles lesson on "Seven Saudi Sermons" is very helpful. Perhaps sometime we can duplicate it and share the message with all the Christians in the church here.

There were 17 at the T.B. hospital for Bible class on Sunday afternoon recently. They love to learn about God and his precious Son. They look up the scriptures and read them, thus learning where the books of the Bible are found in O.T. or N.T. They also are learning many songs of praise and often sing during the week.

At the prison 12 are sewing little children's clothes or hats made from strips of material. Even the ones who don't sew come and sing at the Bible class we have with them on Sunday afternoon. Please pray they will take some of the lessons into their daily living and find the joys of a life pleasing to God.

God sends blessings each day—now good gentle rains come nearly every day and the plants and trees and flowers take a new life.

Shichiro Nakahara

Shizuoka City, Japan

March 15th.

We've set up a motto for this year to have ourselves built up in the Faith, without it we as a church can do so little. Therefore, what we would need most now is trained members for practical services. To this end, we now have three separate classes going throughout the week: in our Monday morning class Bro. Yajima and I spend much time in prayer and in Bible studies. His steady growth in both the knowledge and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is being manifested in many ways. He is coming along fine with greater interest and concern for the work. He can be a very useful servant of the Lord if he continues to grow as he has. Your prayer is appreciated. We praise God for raising such a young man from amongst us for ministry, and therefore, my responsibility is partly now to give him a basic understanding of the Bible in its entirety as well as to give him as many useful and practical experiences as I possibly can by working together. He is to lead other young people to visit from door to door in preparation for the forthcoming evangelistic meeting which is scheduled on March 30, 31 and April 1. On Wednesday night after a prayer meeting we usually spend more than thirty minutes on Personal Work. We've already had a series of lessons on Evangelism in general and right now we're studying the practical side of it. Since last October I've had three young members coming regularly to a Greek class on every Saturday evening and we've already covered one half of the Gk. Grammar of the New Testament written by Mr. Davis. What I am trying to do is help make disciples for Jesus who will be able to make other disciples as well, carrying on the work of the church for themselves. The preparations for these classes certainly take up most of my time and that I remain busy.

There are two meetings coming up this week and the following one. This week's meeting is more or less a workshop in which as many members as possible spend three days together, concentrating on prayer and the Bible studies that will help them grow in the knowledge and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. The following meeting is an evan-

gelistic one. We hope the workshop to be good enough to stir all of us in spirit and help make us more zealous with the work of the Lord.

We have a good number of 6th graders in our Sunday school who are soon going to be Juniors in April. We usually lose many of them if not all, at such a turning point. In order to maintain the rapport we've already established with them, special attention must be paid for their present needs. This is what we have done and are now trying to do again—that is to help them with their school work that is heavily laid upon them, and I am responsible for it, too. We would like you to remember these young souls and that some day they may also be led to the Savior. There are so many thing we can and must do for the Lord but we're shorthanded to do it all. That's what has made me feel ever more keenly the need of making disciples who are adequately equipped with the task assigned by the Lord. We do need your continued support with prayer.

Thomas W. Hartle

Cape Town, South Africa

March 20th.

The work is going along fine where I am labouring; attendances to be admired, and more and more families are opening their homes to hear the word of the Lord and all it should mean to them! And with admirable interest exhibited by visitors, at most of the services and more so at our Bible study, we are hopefully looking forward to precious souls being baptized to the Glory of God!

At a local congregation where I have preached lately over the past month, which included a youth Meeting, two young ladies and a young man were baptized.

Alex Wilson

Manila, Philippines

March 22nd.

Last week we held our weekly chapel meeting at Central Bible Institute for this school year. It has become traditional to use the last chapel period every semester for *testimonies from the students*—voluntary, of course. This time, 18 students shared during our 45-minute period. Here are what a few of them said:

A boy who had been a member of several false cults before coming to Christ said: "I sought religion and found Christ. I sought brothers and sisters, and found C.B.I."

A young lady who is an accountant said she'd been especially stirred by learning that the names of the redeemed were recorded in the Lamb's book of life since the creation of the world: God had us in His mind and purpose long before we ever existed—such amazing grace gripped her heart. (Rev. 17:8).

Several dormitory students told of blessings received living in the dorms we have (there are 2 apartments for men and 2 for women: almost 50 dormers in all). They were thankful for the care expressed and the opportunities to share problems with sympathetic Christian friends. One of our dorm-supervisors mentioned how her responsibility there is very difficult at times, but the Lord uses it to "stretch" her spiritually.

A couple of students were grateful they learned to become reading

Christians at C.B.I. One said he has learned about doctrines and also to know the Lord Himself.

An instance of the Lord's guiding and timing of events impressed me lately. I didn't learn about this till recently, but several months ago a student came for class one evening and found his teacher "happened" to be absent. Instead of doing nothing, the student decided to just sit in on my class in Christian ethics. It "happened" that my subject that time was about one aspect of sexual conduct, though the subject did not know that ahead of time. It "happened" that this student had a problem in that very area, though I did not know that at that time. The class was a help to him, and he later came for some personal counseling too.

We thank our Father for giving us a good school year, and for raising up faithful prayer-warriors and financial supporters who back up the work. One of this year's graduates and her husband, a C.B.I. teacher, will leave to begin a church-planting ministry in his home province far to the south. Please pray for them: Nemesio and Myrna Auxtero. They have converted and built up many high school students in our Manila churches the past several years, and we shall miss them here.

GLEANINGS

Compiled by Larry Miles

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Emphasis and proportion enter into all affairs of life; and whether a life is false or true, whether sane or distorted, depends largely on where the emphasis has been placed and if the right proportion has been observed. In art, if every feature and linement of a face has been drawn exact in every detail, but out of their proper proportion, the portrait would be unrecognizable. In language—enunciation, articulation perfect, only the emphasis (accent) on the wrong syllable the word would be unintelligible. So, likewise, if every doctrine of the gospel be truly presented, but the proportion God gave it is lost sight of and the emphasis misplaced, the result is not the truth of God any longer. It is a false gospel.

R. H. Boll in WORDS IN SEASON

PRAYER

Prayer is no petty invention of men, a fancied relief from fancied ills. Prayer is no dreary performance, dead and death-dealing, but is God's enabling act for man, living and life-giving. Prayer is the contract of a living soul with God. Prayer is God's plan to supply man's great and continuous need with God's great and continuous abundance.

Edward M. Bounds

SHARING CHRIST

Which are you, A Sea of Galilee Christian, receiving and giving, or a Dead Sea Christian, receiving and holding? We have a Great Treas-

sure by having Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Certainly, we should give our knowledge of Him unto others who know Him not. "The Christ we will not share we cannot keep." Let us give Christ to the world. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations."

Howard Marsh

A GREAT WINNOWING TIME

The time has come when there shall be no more truce or parley between God's servants and time-servers. The time is come when those who follow God must follow God, and those who try to trim and dress themselves and find out a way which is pleasing to the flesh and gentle to carnal desires, must go their way. A great winnowing time is coming to God's saints. Oh may the Lord gird up your loins for the nearing battle.

Charles H. Spurgeon

FOUR THINGS IN WHICH PAUL GLORIED

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. In the Lord | 1 Corinthians 1:13 |
| 2. In the Cross | Galatians 6:14 |
| 3. In his infirmities | 2 Corinthians 12:9 |
| 4. In the saints | 2 Thessalonians 1:4; 1 Thess, 2:20 |

John Hannay, in THE WITNESS

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

The Christian life is not denial, but direction. He who sets the Lord always before him is not kept from things, he is led to things.

Bruce S. Wright

FOUR TYPICAL BIBLE MEN

1. A Mad Man—Naaman. 2 Kings 5. "He went away in a rage." It is madness and folly to scorn God's remedy.
2. A Sad Man—Rich Ruler. Mark 10. "He went away sorrowful." The world's saddest man is the one with his back to the Lord.
3. A Bad Man—The Man of Sin. 2 Thess. 2. He is to be "taken out of the way" at Christ's coming. Sin reaches a climax in this man of sin.
4. A Glad Man—The Eunuch. Acts 8. "He went on his way rejoicing." The Christian is the world's most happiest man.

J. R. Clark

THE FIFTY-FIRST PSALM

"Thou art the man!" Nathan had but just pointed his finger at the king and made him to see the grievousness of his guilt, when David falls down before his God, crushed and overwhelmed, his heart filled to overflowing with anguish and shame; and now the Holy Spirit takes control of the pentup floods and shapes his words into a prayer of contrition well pleasing to Him who inspired it. Unto this day the Fifty-first Psalm gives expression to the deepest emotions and longings of the penitent heart. There the sinner may learn how to come and pour out his soul before God. They are good words to follow, for the fact that God Himself inspired them is a guarantee that God will accept and hear and answer them when they come from a sincere heart.

R. H. Boll in WORDS IN SEASON

Until next time, **MARANATHA!**

How Much Is That Preacher?

by Jean Shaw

Good morning, madam. May I help you?

Yes, please, I'd like to buy a minister.

For yourself or your church?

Oh, for my church, of course. I'm already married.

Uh, yes. Did you have a particular model in mind?

I've got a description from the Candidate Committee right here. We want a man about 30, well educated, with some experience. Good preacher and teacher. Balanced personality. Serious, but with a sense of humor. Efficient, but not rigid. Good health. Able to identify with all age groups. And, if possible, sings tenor.

Sings tenor?

We're short of tenors in the Choir.

I see. Well, that's quite a list. How much did you want to spend?

The committee says \$9,000. \$9,500 tops.

Hmmm. Well, perhaps we'd better start in the bargain department.

Tell me, how much is that model in the window?

You mean the one in the Pendleton plaid suit and the gray suede dune boots?

Yes, that one. He's a real dream.

That's our Princeton #467. He has a Ph.D. and AKC papers.

AKC?

American Koinonia Council. He sells for \$16,000 plus house.

Wow! That's too rich for our blood. What about that model over there?

Ah, yes. An exceptional buy. Faith #502. He's a little older than 30, but has excellent experience. Aggressive. Good heart. Has a back-
ing of sermons, two of which have been printed in *Christian Leaders*.

He's not too bad. Can you do something about his bald head? Mrs. Penner especially insists that our minister have some hair.

Madam, all our ministers come in a variety of hair styles.

I'll keep him in mind.

Now let me show you Olympia #222. Four years of varsity sports at Brass Ring College. Plays football, basketball, volleyball, and Ping-Pong. Comes complete with sports equipment.

What a physique! He must weigh 200 pounds!

Yes, indeed. You get a lot for your money with this one. And think

what he can do for your young people.

Great. But how is he at preaching?

I must admit he's not St. Peter. But you can't expect good sermons and a church-wide athletic program too!

I suppose not. Still...

Let me show you our Fresno #801. Now here's a preacher. All his sermons are superb—well researched, copious anecdotes, and they always have three points. And—he comes with a full set of the *Religious Encyclopedia* at no extra charge! You get the whole package for \$8,300.

He's wearing awfully thick glasses.

For \$220 more we put in contact lenses.

I don't know. He might study too much. We don't want a man who's in his office all the time.

Of course. How about this minister over here? Comes from a management background. Trained in business operations at Beatitude College. Adept with committees. Gets his work done by 11:30 every morning.

His tag says he's an IBM 400.

Madam, you have a discerning eye. Innovative Biblical Methods. This man will positively revitalize your church.

I'm not sure our church wants to be revitalized. Haven't you got something less revolutionary?

Well, would you like someone of the social worker type? We have this Ghetto #130.

The man with the beard? Good gracious, no. Mrs. Penner would never go for that.

How about our Empathy #41C? His forte is counseling. Very sympathetic. Patient. Good with people who have problems.

Everyone in our church has problems. But he might not get out and visit new people. We really need a man who does a lot of visitation. You see, all our people are very busy and...

Yes, yes I understand. You want a minister who can do everything well.

That's it! Haven't you got somebody like that?

I'm thinking. In our back room we have a minister who was traded in last week. Excellent man, but he broke down after three years. If you don't mind a used model, we can sell him at a reduced price.

Well, we had hoped for someone brand-new. We just redecorated the sanctuary, and we wanted a new minister to go with it.

Of course. But with a little exterior work, and a fresh suit, this man will look like he just came out of the box. No one will ever know. Let me bring him out and you can look him over.

All right. Honestly, this minister shopping is exhausting. It's so

hard to get your money's worth. Tell me, do you also give Green Stamps with the contract?

Uh—no. But if there's any dissatisfaction after six months we send a new congregation for the balance of the year. That usually takes care of most problems.

Is All This Lavish Living Necessary?

By Gunnar Hoglund

It's time to halt this mad run-away race to extravagance.

We are facing a dangerous upsurge of a sinister disease—materialism. The signs loom all around: extravagantly-built homes, expensive wardrobes, unpaid-for automobiles, constant vacation trips, an inordinate occupation with what the Scriptures call "the things of this world."

And it isn't only the non-Christian public which has fallen prey to this lethal virus. Many followers of Jesus Christ have too.

Example: A young couple establish for themselves such a high manner of living—home, car, wardrobe and such—that the monthly payments climb way out of reach. They "can't afford" therefore to tithe.

Another case: A small-town husband and wife, pursued by the bill collectors, find themselves engaged in a frantic race to stave off bankruptcy. He must take an additional Saturday morning job, and she a full-time position downtown, and a babysitter is hired to care for the youngsters. When the pastor comes and asks them to sponsor a youth group at church they look up, exhaustion written in their faces, and confess, "We can't find time." And they can't. And the youth group goes unsponsored.

Materialism shows its most sinister side at the dinner table when a family gathers, nerves on edge and drained of energy. Everybody agrees that attending prayer meeting this week is out of the question. They're too weary. Sunday evening at church is just as impossible; people deserve an evening of relaxation before the TV after all those days of exhaustion and labor.

This is not an argument against comfortable living. The Lord promised, "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly," and if this includes, as it does for many of us, a modest share of this world's goods, we should exhibit humility and gratefulness.

Nor is it to say that living in the suburbs is out of order. Americans of wealth deserve a Christian neighbor and a Christian witness as much as the immigrant whose home is a hovel on Chicago's West Madison Street. But it is to say that when God gives us a home surrounded by sweeping green lawns, we do not have to copy to the last minute detail the extravagant luxuries of our non-Christian neighbors.

The trouble that stems from materialism appears in a variety of places. A college student dropped out of school so he could take a job to maintain payments on his late model Chrysler. When someone cautiously suggested that maybe his studies were of more value than a

Chrysler, the boy blurted: "My car! I couldn't do without it." The dean of a denominational college confided to me that too many students on his campus were "struggling unduly or quitting school altogether because of their insistence on too high a standard of living."

FLABBY AND LOPSIDED

This flabby and curiously lopsided attitude is perhaps best illustrated in the teaching we hear on tithe-paying. Some of the most eloquent pleas for tithing I have come across are built boldly and unashamedly on the premise that if we give one-tenth or more to God, He will repay by making us richer. In short, tithe-paying is good business.

A strange cloud of sophistication has spread over American Protestantism, a sophistication that regards thrift, frugality, doing without, giving until it hurts as cliches and ancient anachronisms instead of the biblical concepts they really are.

Proving that this virus is, if nothing else, contagious, are the luxurious cathedrals that we know to be our churches. Many of us have chatted with missionary returnees who view these gala temples with open dismay and ask: "Couldn't our building committees demonstrate a fragment of economy and thrift? Must our churches rival the castles of King Midas? Can't we do without a few of the frills?"

The evils of materialism are by no means limited to upper-income brackets. Its work of dry rot can infest the homes and hearts of people of small means, too, for in its final analysis materialism is an attitude, a way of looking at things, a perspective. And perspectives can become distorted as readily in metropolitan tarpaper shacks as in a bi-level bungalow out in the new housing project.

The minister of a downtown church complained that his parishioners had reduced their energies to but one objective, their economic betterment. It was a consuming passion, a dragon that lashed them on day after day, that subverted the church, the Bible, their spiritual betterment to a position of secondary importance. "How can I get these people to realize," he cried with bitterness, "that moving out to the suburbs will not solve all their problems."

The roots of our concentration on the material are, in a way, understandable. America has enjoyed in the last few decades an unprecedented wave of economic prosperity, the greatest in mankind's history. Since early 1961 when we moved out of the latest recession, our gross national product has risen by \$80 billion—an average of over \$300 per person.

Basking in this glow and surrounded by this opulence, are there not some basic questions sincere believers in Christ must ask themselves? How extensively need they participate in this feast? Is there not a line between "living comfortably" and "living extravagantly"? And haven't some of us crossed that line?

When millions throughout the world are destitute of food and shelter, when worthy Christian organizations hang precipitously near the brink of financial disaster, when missionaries move through our churches relating stories of need and oppression and want, are there not con-

trols we need to build around our hunger for the status symbol? Is keeping up with the Joneses that important?

The statistics of poverty are not pleasant to look at. Ten thousand people die throughout the world of malnutrition *every day*. Some 1.5 billion people—more than half the world's total population—live in perpetual hunger. The impact of these statistics is slight insofar as most Christians are concerned. They aren't discernible in the scenic grandeur of our vacation trips. They aren't too evident during our annual Christmas spending sprees. They are largely lacking at our heavily weighted dinner tables. And one must look ever so closely when the passing missionary flashes his slide pictures of the distress he has witnessed.

But it's all there. It's there back of the moneyed facade through which few of us ever penetrate. Grinding poverty. Catastrophic disease. Appalling need. It's there, all right, but we must find the courage to look.

One of the tragic byproducts of materialism is that most Protestantism, by throwing prudence to the winds, has in so doing forfeited its right to speak in judgment against an evil that the Bible denounces again and again, the peril of riches. This probably explains the strange, almost eerie, silence which hangs over Christendom when it comes to materialism. Preachers don't preach against it except when they need money for a bigger church. Writers don't write against it. Everyone takes careful pains to adroitly and skillfully sidestep the issue.

Perhaps the reason is obvious. Alcoholics don't make good temperance lecturers. And people who have bowed in sheep-like subservience to the god of mammon are hardly in a position to mount the soap box the next day and tell this god off.

BRIGHTER SIDE

But there is a brighter side to the story. Even as materialism gathers in its victims there can be found small flowers strewn in the rocky path. I chatted with a middle-age couple in Iowa who were on the verge of selling their 40-year-old frame home in favor of a sparkling new ranch-style structure. The church they attended launched a building campaign, and when funds were slow in appearing they decided against the new home—something that had occupied their dreams for years—and surrendered their savings to the church building fund.

"It's the least we can do," he said, "considering all that the Lord has given us. Besides, the old home has a comfy way about it.

In California I learned of a young man who finished medical school and applied for foreign missionary service. Turned down for health reasons, he married and entered private medical practice. In three or four years he established a lucrative business. "But the surprising thing about them," one of their friends commented, "is that unlike most of their medical associates, this physician and his wife chose a modest home and placed used furniture throughout its rooms. There is no glitter to their place. The doctor and his wife pledged that if they couldn't go over-seas they would like to try to live like missionaries here at home—and let the house they live in reflect the economy and frugality that would be theirs if they had gone to India."

In the midwest I met a pastor and his wife who told of a freezer they had their eyes on for a long time, and for which they had saved. When a denominational need arose their funds went instead to a college building program.

WESLEY'S STIPEND

Modesty and frugality have always blessed the church's ranks. John Wesley, the early Methodist leader, pledged in young manhood to live on a yearly stipend of less than 100 pounds. Though opportunity for fortune came his way, he managed to his death on this frugal annual income.

A letter to the Commissioners of Excise dated Friday, September 9, 1776, mirrored the self-control that dominated Wesley's life. "I have two silver spoons at London and two at Bristol," he wrote. "This is all the plate I have at present, and I shall not buy any more while so many around me want bread."

In one of our American big cities a young lady gives executive leadership to an interdenominational youth movement involving over 2,000 young people—and does it on \$200 a month. Last December she turned her \$200 monthly salary into the organization to offset a rising deficit.

The creeping, demoralizing monster of materialism must be halted and destroyed. Only an informed, aroused and indignant Christendom can bring this about. Ministers must begin preaching against it, and demonstrating by example that they mean what they say. Writers, teachers, parents and all who exert influence must call our people to pause, to take stock, to submerge the dollar to its proper and legitimate place.

The dimensions of the problem are, after all, simple and easily delineated. All we have to do is begin following what the New Testament says—that when I have something my brother lacks I should, without hesitation, go and *share* with him. And we must share generously, openheartedly, to the point of personal inconvenience and discomfort. We must, to use a word that has fallen from favor, share in a spirit of *sacrifice*.

What would happen if American Christendom could catch a glimpse of the good that would eventuate should some of the dollars they heap upon the altar of opulence be directed toward the cause of Christ? New missionaries would be sent out, weak churches strengthened, new hospitals built. Whole new frontiers of attack could be launched against alcoholism, mental disease, racial prejudice and a thousand other blights. A renewed sense of confidence, firmness, determination and purpose would be infused throughout the cause we hold dear.

A return to modest living would benefit our younger generation too. The pampered, gum-chewing crowd we seem to be producing, youngsters whose only goal in life is financial security and the easy ways of luxury, would be replaced by a strong generation, tough, ready and adequate for the tomorrows.

A friend of mine spent two terms as a missionary in China and Japan. He is now back in the U. S. for health reasons. His family's

manner of life reflects the taste of frugality. The other day he told me of flooding an ice rink across the road from his home so his children would have a place to skate. "And I've brought used skates for my youngsters," he added. "Now they can go and slide around to their heart's content."

USED SKATES

I commented that buying *used* skates was a little out of the ordinary. People buy new things nowadays. "Well," he commented, sitting for a moment and leaning back in his chair, "I've noticed that too. The fancy American way of life is a startling sort of thing. It makes you blink your eyes. But when you've lived in other countries, when you've seen what it means to live in a bare little room without running water or electricity; without heat or radiators, with a thin ration of food and poor medical care, it does something to you. Buying used skates for my kids seems perfectly in order."

American Protestantism has come a long way in the last few years. But the lust for lavish living, the insatiable thirst for the niceties of life still constitute a formidable curtain between them and the fulfillment of Christ's will for this age. Just ask the churches and organizations that struggle in financial arrears. Or the unfortunate, the destitute, the racially persecuted, the beleaguered and unevangelized multitudes who crouch in the dark corners of American society. Or the natives in the little African country of Sierra Leone, where 80 out of every 100 infants die of protein malnutrition and its complications. They know.

AT BILL AND BETTY'S

F - - R LETTER WORDS

Bill and I went to the twins' school play at the Tech. the other day and we were pretty disgusted.

"For two pins I'd walk out," I whispered to Bill after the first twenty minutes.

"Perhaps it will improve," Bill answered hopefully.

It didn't improve, and when, during the interval, the twins came up to see what we thought of it, I was rather at a loss for words.

"I don't like the language, Paul," I said. "I'm glad you're not in it. Whatever made them choose a play like that?"

"It was the Senior Dramatic Society blokes who chose it," Peter said. "Although I think a couple of the English Masters helped them produce it."

"I thought it would make Mum curl up," Paul said, with some satisfaction.

"I feel like having a word with the Principal, Bill" I said. "Or I suppose you ought to really. It would come better from a man. He'd just think it was feminine squeamishness if I spoke to him."

"You can't see the Principal, Mum," Peter protested, in horror.

"We'd never live it down if the other blokes got to hear of it. What's wrong with the play anyway?"

"It would be easier to tell you what's right with it!" I said. "It's vulgar and blasphemous—there doesn't seem to be any plot, and the language is foul."

"Lots of modern plays are like that, Bet," Bill pointed out. "It's meant to be good writing even if its not our cup of tea."

I snorted.

I had a word with the Wrights after that. They go to our Church and they were as disgusted as I was.

"I shall go and see Townley tomorrow," Alan Wright said firmly. "I think someone should make a protest."

"Good for you, Alan," I said. "You can tell Mr. Townley that Bill and I are in full agreement with what you say and I'm sure a lot more parents must feel the same way."

I saw Dorothy Wright in the Supermarket later in the week and asked her how her husband had got on.

"He didn't get very far," Dorothy reported.

"I'm afraid you're in the minority, Mr. Wright," the Principal had said. "I haven't had any other complaints. We don't want to regulate the boys' literary tastes into a narrow channel, you know. We aim to encourage them to read and dramatise a wide sweep of literature, and of course this, of necessity, includes some things that you might call a little 'broad'."

"I don't think you would merely call it a little 'broad' if any of your pupils used in the school the kind of language used last night," Alan had protested. "And surely you wouldn't encourage or endorse the degraded way of life portrayed in the play?"

"What did the Principal say to that?" I asked Dorothy.

"Even Shakespeare can offend some people," he said, making Alan feel he was making a fuss about nothing.

I didn't realise that Townley was a Christian until I saw he was the speaker at our Education Sunday Service, and he's available for a Talk Back open forum afterwards. I'm going to make sure the subject isn't allowed to rest. It's time Christian teachers took to heart Paul's advice, *Whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report . . . think on these things* (Philippians 4:8).

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NEWS AND NOTES

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

Enclosed, please find my check for my subscription to *Word & Work*. The subscription expired in February but someone there very kindly sent me the March edition and I want to thank

them. I enjoy the magazine very much and I particularly did not want to miss the second part of Brother Dennis Allen's article on the "Body of Christ".

—Betty Johnson

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