

"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The *Word and Work*



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

JANUARY, 1993

IMPROVING OUR FAMILIES

- Look before your leap
- Strong families require time together
- Dr. Forcade's prescription
- When his and her expectations differ
- Balancing home-life and Christian service

Breath-taking revival in Wales

Thank God for your heritage

LONELINESS

Looking Forward, Looking Back

The following poems were written by women who now are widows. But Elisabeth Howard wrote before she was married. Her poem was prophetic: she married Jim Elliot, a missionary who was martyred by the Auca tribes-people in Ecuador, years later she married Addison Leitch, a Bible teacher who not very long afterwards died of cancer. Amid all her intense grief, the Lord has indeed satisfied her heart.

Becky Briley's husband Kyle died a year ago this month. They are known to some of our readers. Kyle was a man of quiet but deep godliness, and Becky's poem reveals the synergism that results from a Christ-centered marriage.

ALONE WITH THEE

Elisabeth Howard

Perhaps some future day, Lord, Thy strong hand
Will lead me to the place where I must stand
Utterly alone.

Alone, O gracious Lover, but for Thee
I shall be satisfied if I can see
Jesus only.

I do not know Thy plan for years to come;
My spirit finds in Thee its perfect home,
Sufficiency.

Lord, all my desire is before Thee now;
Lead on--no matter where, no matter how,
I trust in Thee.

WALKING WITH WATER

(Finally, for Kyle)

Rebecca Luttrell Briley

Still water cuts a deeper wound than words:
You were the stillest water that I've known,
An oil upon my frothy, fragile waves,
A mirror surface where Christ walked and shone.
Engulfing me within the soul of souls,
Deep calls to deep; your moon: (my turning tide)
Drew me to oneness unfathomable with God
And holds me, rocks me gently, still inside.

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

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REVIVAL, OUR GREATEST NEED

Alex V. Wilson

What did the east coast of North America in 1740, Kentucky in 1801, almost all the U.S. in 1858, parts of east Africa from 1936 through the 1960's, and parts of western Canada in 1971-2 have in common? If you studied the past two issues of **Word and Work**, you'll remember the answer: REVIVAL! Powerful spiritual awakenings were experienced, resulting in a deep sense of God's holy presence, widespread conviction of sin, numerous conversions to Christ Jesus, exuberant worship, holy character, bold witness and an impact upon the surrounding societies and their morals.

I trust that reading about those revivals thrilled you. And challenged you. I trust that it made you spiritually thirsty, and increased your faith, and deepened your praying. Studying about revivals has produced those wonderful results in my life through the years.

But there have been other mighty revivals besides those already mentioned. Learning about them would be profitable too. We have enough materials to make this topic the main theme of several more issues. And we would love to do that--but we won't. **Word and Work** might become lopsided, and we would be neglecting other important topics. So this month we concentrate on the vital subject of family living. And during the next two months our main themes will be forgiveness, and then holiness (Lord willing).

Nevertheless, since the study of revival in general and of various spiritual awakenings in particular is so urgent, we plan to *begin a monthly department* dedicated to this. It is our hope that you will give your most serious attention to these articles, and that the Lord will kindle a fire among us. May we seek with all our hearts for revival. In other words, may we long and pray and work so that all of the Lord's people (beginning with me) will be all that He wants us to be, experiencing the fullness of the power of His unquenched, un-grieved Holy Spirit. Oh, the Church will never be perfect, of course. But it can be powerful--vibrant with life from above. Read now, for instance, what our Lord God Almighty did in Wales at the turn of this century.

BREATHTAKING TRANSFORMATIONS

In 1904-5 a mighty spiritual awakening shook the country of Wales. Numerous Christians were revived and many non-Christians were converted. The reputable newspaper, *The South Wales Daily News*, reported:

Infidels were converted; drunkards, thieves, and gamblers saved, and many thousands reclaimed to respectability and honored citizenship. Confessions of awful sins were heard on every side, and everywhere. Old debts were remembered and paid. Theatres and taverns were in distress for lack of patronage. Several police courts had clean sheets, and were idle. In five weeks, 20,000 conversions were recorded.

Another writer, who was saved during those days, remembers that "statistics appeared in the columns of the daily newspapers announcing considerable

improvement in the attendance of miners and others employed. Because of this fact, output in factories, coal mines, iron and steel works, spiraled upward unbelievably." Obviously this was no revival of mere Sunday-morning Christianity, but a movement with deep and practical results.

But--as always happens in times of spiritual stirring and fervor--tensions and problems arose to plague the churches. Following are quotations from a book written years ago by David Matthews and published by Moody Press. It was entitled *I Saw the Welsh Revival*. By examining the past, we may gain wisdom for the present.

Spontaneity, or Orderliness, or Both?

"Mr. Griffiths [the author's minister] acted with supreme wisdom under what must have been difficult circumstances. He had under his care scores of young souls, newly quickened by the Holy Spirit. They were so overjoyed with this new-found experience of divine grace that they could not contain themselves. They felt that they must express their feelings in hymns, prayer, or testimony. The old formal way of worship seemed utterly impossible. For three months Mr. Griffiths hardly preached at all, much as he loved to preach.

"He knew that many of the older members of his congregation were impatient of this seeming irregularity, although they refrained from expressing adverse criticisms lest they turn some 'out of the way.' But the revival went on! We saw that church, with an estimated seating capacity of a thousand people, crammed to suffocation on weeknights with souls crying for mercy. The pastor acted with supreme wisdom. Careful lest he should 'quench the Spirit' in these young hearts, yet mindful of his sacred obligations to other members of his flock, he evidenced spiritual sagacity and guided us with endless patience."

The writer then tells of various activities that sprang up under the impetus of a deepened love for the Lord Jesus. I mention just a few: "Into the lodging-houses went the groups to sing and pray, exhorting and encouraging the most abandoned people to 'come to Jesus.' . . . They visited homes also and cottage meetings became the vogue . . . Monetary assistance was promptly given to dress neglected children and feed half-starved families . . . Impromptu open-air services were held by these liberated souls in the market place, the city square, or the street corner, where they testified 'with fear and trembling' of what the Lord had done for them."

Strong in Zeal, Weak in Knowledge

"When the revival was at its height, many young people left their homes on the impulse of the moment, claiming to have received a vision which called them to give up all and follow the Lord. Off they went, some to Ireland, a few to Scotland, several to different parts of England. This exodus of inexperienced novices continued for some time. In a very short time, however, many returned disillusioned. Others struggled on until their slender resources were exhausted, and they were compelled to retrace their steps in penitence, exposing themselves to unsympathetic criticisms. Spiritual people were desirous that the good work should not suffer irreparable damage because of precipitate action of some of the converts. Deep concern was felt

when young people were seen to discard restraint and give up their jobs to engage in work the nature of which they were ignorant.

"It should be admitted that the fault was not entirely on the side of these young enthusiasts. People coming from other countries were so impressed by what they witnessed that they foolishly concluded that if they could but induce a few of these 'firebrands' to visit their churches and towns, to testify and sing, a similar revival would ensue. To advertise the presence of the Welsh revivalists, coming straight from the midst of the awakening, would assure large congregations, followed by great blessings--so they reasoned. To some extent they were right, for the very mention of anyone coming from the Welsh revival to conduct meetings commanded wide attention. People came in large numbers to see and to hear. What did they hear? Once the young convert's testimony had been given, often with wonderful effect, their lack of spiritual knowledge and training soon manifested itself, to the detriment of the work. Lionizing young converts, at any time, may easily prove to be disastrous. They are placed in positions for which they possess little or no qualification. So it was that visitors to Wales, impressed by a bright experience and pleasing personality, and profoundly anxious to see a spiritual movement break forth in their home area, would invite these untried young folk to visit their home churches."

Emotions and Edification

"With the passage of time and the removal of Evan Roberts, other men of God were called and equipped to carry on the work. Gradually the fervor began to die down and the time arrived for constructive work, the edification and building up of the young converts. They were becoming more amenable, more ready to sit down in quietness to listen to the exposition of the sacred Scripture by men endowed with power by the Holy Spirit.

"The ministry of the Word was restored to its place of eminence among the converts. The period of unconventionality had expired. In all the revival meetings for which David Evans was humanly responsible, he quietly insisted upon delivering his message. Sometimes, and it happened frequently, he was interrupted by an outburst of fervor; at such times, he remained calm until the enthusiasm ceased. For many years, evangelical and especially evangelistic ministers possessing the revival touch had to be prepared for these interruptions." [This concludes our quotations from David Matthews' book.]

Nearly 90 Years Later

What lessons can we learn from all this? First, the *incredible power* that our Lord has unleashed during times of revival. Re-read the stunning facts recorded in paragraphs #2 and 3 of the section "Breath-taking Transformations" and then paragraphs #2 and 3 of the section entitled "Spontaneity or Orderliness." WOW! Reminds you of the book of Acts, doesn't it? Why doesn't the Lord *always* work like this?

Probably because He knows His people are not ready for it. We couldn't handle the results of such a mighty move of His Spirit. Many churchmembers and leaders would feel so threatened by anything so out of the ordinary that

they would instantly try to stifle it! At best they would seek to force everything into the exact pattern of "the way we've always done it."

Besides that, the Lord doesn't give revival till His people--at least some of them--ask for it. How many folks do you know who are ardently praying for revival? What about yourself? We should pray that our Father will renew and revive us, so that we shall be prepared for ever deeper revivals and more extensive awakenings.

Another lesson to learn from the Welsh Revival relates to "flow" or changes or *sensitivity to the Lord's leadership*. Notice what David Matthews wrote: "The old formal way of worship seemed utterly impossible. . . . Older members were impatient of this seeming irregularity [spontaneous prayers and testimonies], although they refrained from expressing adverse criticisms" lest they cause some converts to fall away: how wise and patient they were! Later, as Matthews recorded, "The period of unconventionality had expired." Yet an ongoing "newness" was undoubtedly there as well. Meetings and "conventional" activities--preaching, praying, singing--were carried on with *greater order* than they'd had for some months, and yet with *much greater ardor* (intensity of feeling) than before the revival began. They found, at least in Matthew's church, new wineskins to contain the new wine. The older believers were wonderfully flexible, and the new converts learned that discipleship includes but also exceeds excitement.

Oh Lord, teach us also those lessons. Most of all, Lord, give me/us the great revival I/we desperately need. Prepare us, and send a great awakening!

Theme: Improving Our Families

THINKING OF GETTING MARRIED?

--A Provocative Checklist by Richard Arndt--

Too many people marry without considering the conflicts awaiting them. Here is a check-list of topics comprising major areas in which marital tensions develop. Within each, questions are offered for open and honest discussion with your potential mate. Doing so should help clarify attitudes and values each of you has in these areas. Perhaps you both may discover that you will need to do serious, prayerful thinking in some aspects previously not considered. Maybe you will uncover and defuse several potential problems which, left undetected, could cause each of you days, months or years of deep distress, family disruption--or even divorce. It is much better to become aware of "irreconcilable differences" now while you still have opportunity to change your mind. Or, you may become more confident that your proposed marriage is indeed God's will. If you need a third party for help, consult your pastor, or a reputable marriage and family counselor who is known to be a Christian.

Religion: What religious convictions do you each have? More specifically, are you both "committed" Christians? Are you aware of Paul's "unequal yoke" command (not a suggestion) in 2 Corinthians 6:14? Are you willing to give up your relationship if he/she really is not committed to "putting Lord first" in everything? What differences in spiritual maturity exist? Does each know, and is willing to obey, the biblical teachings regarding the role and responsibilities of husband/father and wife/mother? Is he willing and able to assume spiritual "headship" and is she willing to "submit" to that authority in an age of liberation?

Education and Vocation: What is each one's current educational level? To what level of educational attainment do you each aspire? What long term vocational goals do you each have? What sacrifices will each have to make in order to achieve these educational/vocational goals--especially she? What are the educational/vocational/professional levels of your married friends?

Money and Possessions: What are your attitudes toward money? What minimum level of income will satisfy you? How would you like to spend it? How would you like to spend it? What are your desires regarding car, home and neighborhood, clothes and expensive "toys" such as a boat or motorcycle? How would you want to spend unexpected extra money? Is each willing to tithe a minimum of ten percent of your income, regardless of size and whatever emergencies arise? Would you be willing to increase your tithe proportionately as your income increases? How do you feel about setting up a budget and rather rigidly adhering to it? How have you been taught to purchase major-cost items--with cash or on credit?

Time and Leisure: How do you normally spend your free time? How would you want to spend free time individually and jointly once married? How do you think vacations should be spent? Will she agree to Monday night football, Saturday baseball and Sunday golf? What amount of time should be spent in church and/or community involvement?

Family (nuclear and extended): Do you want children? If so, how soon, how often, how many, which sex? Do you get along with your future in-laws and family friends? (You do not marry just the person, but the family.)

Motives for Marriage: Why are you getting married? Your first chance? Your last chance? Friends all married? Lonely? Legal sex? Do you feel obligated because you have had pre-marital sexual intercourse? Is she pregnant? Have you honestly and patiently consulted God regarding his will? And have you asked mature Christian friends their opinions? Are you willing to remain single indefinitely?

The Past: Do you believe you should know everything about one another's past?

Sexuality: What are your attitudes regarding sexuality? About physical aspects of sex? Was woman created mainly to fulfill the sexual needs of man? Can you converse together at length in private without physical contact?

Conflict Resolution and Forgiveness: Have you had a really serious argument yet? If so, did you resolve it to the satisfaction of both? How do you usually communicate unhappiness/disagreement? How do you normally resolve conflicts? Do you know how to forgive? Have you learned how to receive forgiveness?

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SHALL WE TRY FAMILY TIME AGAIN?

By Jeanne Hedgerow

I was visiting my parents with my twin daughters. The evening dishes were done, the twins were in bed, and I was playing Clue with my sisters when the game was interrupted by my father, who announced, "Well, let's have devotions, shall we?"

Devotions! I was surprised at the resentment that swept over me. Daddy is just the same--gotta squeeze in devotions, no matter what. I gritted my teeth and went along.

Later I worried about why I resented family devotions so much. After all, I was grateful for the Christian home I'd grown up in, respected my parents' deep love for God's Word, and agreed with them that parents are responsible for the spiritual training of their children.

Now our own children were coming along. I believed strongly that the most effective lessons for them would be taught by the living example we parents set. But we weren't infallible, and they would need God's unailing principles and instructions. Were family devotions crucial to this kind of training?

I realized it would be all too easy to let the whole matter slide, or act out of guilt. I had to sort out for myself and, with my husband, make conscious decisions about what was important for spiritual growth in our family.

Some of my conclusions were:

Devotions should be a means, not an end. "Having devotions" won't make my family more spiritual. Reading God's Word is important in order to know God and how He wants us to live. But our chief end should be living God's Word, not just reading it. Are we able to apply God's Word to our everyday relationships at home?

Devotions should be a celebration, not an inquisition. Priority and regularity are important in establishing family devotions, but unrealistic expectations only lead to frustration and guilt. One good time of family worship per week might be better than daily devotions that are too lengthy or get forced at inopportune times. There should be a freedom for individuals not to participate occasionally and not every family gathering has to have a spiritual ending tacked on.

With these thoughts in mind, my husband and I decided to start small Bible stories at bedtime with the twins, and a once-a-week early morning Bible study together for us. It was a small step, but it was both realistic and meaningful at that time.

As the years have passed, we have followed two major principles: Pick a natural time when the family is already gathered, and keep it short. For us this gradually settled into our breakfast time. We spend the first ten minutes of our morning together at the table singing, reading from Scripture, a devotional guide, or a Bible storybook. (Keeping food hot is solved for us by an electric griddle on which we do pancakes or fried eggs right at the table after devotions. On scrambled-egg or hot-cereal days, we use a covered hot pan to keep the food warm for ten minutes.)

This devotional time is supported throughout the day by singing songs of praise at other meals, reading family-centered books (some specifically Christian, some not) out loud after supper, praying at bedtime alone with each child and joining in spontaneous prayer as a family when a need or thanksgiving arises during the day.

This has generally been successful approach for us. Our girls don't moan and groan about devotions; it just happens to be the first thing in each day. Worship and prayer are a natural part of their lives all day long.

But it's not perfect. There are mornings when glassy eyes indicate someone's still asleep. And getting kids off to school isn't always conducive to long discussions growing out of an Old Testament story. As the twins get older, what was meaningful last year, can become this year's rut. Now that I think about it, it may be time for another evaluation...

Article from David C. Cook Publishing Co., 850 N. Grove Ave., Elgin IL 60120.

MY GOALS YOUR GOALS

Neta Jackson

I don't know about you, but 20 years of marriage have taught me that the majority of problems can be traced back to some form of uncommunicated expectations. For instance, a typical interaction in our early years:

Me (coming home at the end of the day): "Boy, am I tired." (That's what I said, but what I meant was, "I sure would like to have some help making supper.")

Dave: "Yeah, know what you mean. I had a rough day, too. Why don't we just relax tonight in front of the TV?"

Me (now feeling a twinge of irritation that he didn't catch my hook): "Oh, I don't know. I had been planning to wash the kitchen floor tonight."

Dave (incredulous): "Tonight? You just said you were tired! We'll do it Saturday. Let's relax. There's a good movie on at eight."

Me (suddenly determined to wash the floor): "It can't wait until Saturday. We're having company Friday evening. Forget it. I've got to start supper." Which I did, feeling not only tired now, but also unappreciated, overworked, and saddled with an insensitive husband. Dave watched TV after supper. I washed the floor, sighing now and then. He ignored me. That made me mad.

A little thing really, but a pattern of erratic communication took shape that began to have more serious overtones as time went by. Wishing Dave

were different in this or that respect. . . blaming Dave when he failed to read my hidden messages. . . feeling unloved when Dave didn't respond according to my expectations. . . uncommunicated expectations about roles. . . These things left us both feeling bewildered and angry.

But over the years I've learned a few principles that have helped me with those uncommunicated expectations:

Make my needs or wishes known instead of expecting Dave to automatically sense what they are. "Could you peel these carrots for supper? I'm running late and could use about ten minutes of help." (I was surprised how much pride is involved in this. I don't like to ask for help. I want someone to size up the situation and offer.)

State my needs simply, not generalizing or adding blame to the situation. "Could you peel these carrots?" Not, "Why don't you ever help me with supper?"

Things I'd like to have happen regularly should be agreed upon ahead of time. "Could we take turns in the morning--one of us make breakfast while the other makes lunches, and vice versa?"

Don't have expectations for things not agreed on ahead of time. Last minute requests are favors, and may not be convenient for the other person. "I can't peel those carrots right now, Neta. I just promised Julian I'd help him with his math."

Vague comments that give hidden messages ("I sure wish people would pick up after themselves around here!") leave others feeling uncomfortable and defensive. If something is bothering me, I need to speak directly to the person, and be specific.

Timing is important. Just as someone is going out the door or just before bed is not the time to try to solve problems. Also, right in the middle of a upsetting situation is usually not the time to unleash general feelings. Deal with the immediate problem simply: "Rachel, you're late! Get your hands washed and sit down at the table quickly." Later the general problem can be dealt with: "Rachel, you've been late for breakfast three morning this week. This can't continue, so. . ."

Anticipate problematic situations, and agree ahead of time what the mutual expectations are going to be. Does leaving early for our family vacation mean 5 a.m. or 8 a.m.? Who shops for whose relatives at Christmas? Do we want to be with friends on our night out, or just the two of us?

Don't test each other's love. ("If he does this or that without me having to ask, then I'll know I'm really important to him.") This is game playing at its worst and totally unfair to the other person. Back rubs or remembering the anniversary-of-the-day-we-met may not be what comes to his mind when he wants to express his undying love--although he may be perfectly willing to give a back rub (et al) upon request.

Keep in mind that love is forgiveness. We rarely set out to hurt each other, even though we may do it unintentionally. Not jumping to conclusions or judging each other's motives or blaming each other, but rather sitting down to discover where misunderstanding occurred or communications broke down goes a long way to putting out small fires. After all, Christ's love for us is a forgiving love, accepting us with all our weaknesses and failures. We would extend the same forgiving love to each other.

Neta Jackson and her husband Dave are writer-editors who live in Evanston, Illinois. They have two grown children. This article used by permission of David C. Cook Publishing Co.

HOW WE ORDERED OUR HOME

Dr. J. Miller Forcade

My wife and I came from very different backgrounds, but we have been happily married for more than 62 years. Two of the most important factors that have kept us together for so many years can be simply stated. First of all, we married for life. Soon after we married I told my wife: "Esther, you just as well get ready to keep me for I have come to stay." Second, we have had "family worship" almost every day since we married, May 25, 1929. Christian couples need to begin marriage with a firm resolve to make it last for life and use family worship to implement that resolution. As a child I learned to swear and fight, but I never learned to read the Bible and pray. Humanly speaking, I am indebted to my wife and her family for helping me to realize the importance of regular family worship.

I want to tell you how we had family worship, not how we ought to have family worship, and what a great blessing it has been to us and to our children. We all learn better from example than we do from teaching and admonition. Someone once said, "It is easier to preach by the mile than it is to practice by the inch." It may help to teach and preach about family worship, but to help our own homes we must learn to worship God together as a family.

First of all, we began to worship together as husband and wife even before we had a family. Second, we involved our children in family worship soon after they were born. We did not wait until they learned to read. Our children were taught to listen reverently to the reading of the word of God by our example and some gentle restraint. We tried to have family worship when our children were wide awake. We sought to involve our children every time we had family worship. They were taught very young to follow the reading. When each child was six years old, she was given a New Testament of her own. We trained them to follow the reading. Their mother pointed to the words. This helped them to learn to read.

We did not teach our children to repeat formal prayers. But they all learned to pray. Neither did we explain the scriptures to them at first. We preferred to let them hear the word of God and get their own fresh impression of its meaning. Parents can help their children get the right impression if they have the right impression but they can also help them get the wrong impression if they have the wrong impression. There is a right time to begin teaching children, but sometimes that is difficult to determine. Third, we made family worship part of our daily routine. We read a chapter in the Old Testament each evening, followed by a prayer. Each morning we read a chapter in the New Testament, followed by a prayer. If this method is followed faithfully, it enables the family to read the New Testament through each year and the Old Testament every three years. By the time a child is six, he or she has been exposed to the Old Testament twice and the New Testament six times. Granted, they will not understand all they have heard. However, our children surprised us by how much they understood. Fourth, we included our entire

household in family worship as often and as much as we could. By reading Ephesians 6:1-9 and Colossians 3:18-4:1, it is evident that we should include our employees in family worship as much as possible. When we had hired servants, black or white, we always invited them to join with us in our family worship.

Fifth, we tried to live consistent Christian lives daily, in harmony with what we read and how we prayed. Parental inconsistency is self-defeating. Following a lecture on child training in Toronto, Canada, a lady from the audience came forward and said to the lecturer: "It is just too difficult. We cannot get it done. No matter what we say, they do just like we do." Any time our profession is not matched by our deeds it becomes evident that we are sinners without excuse (Romans 2:1).

I heard this story many years ago and it made a deep and lasting impression on me. A brother told about a Christian mother and her son who lived in Florida. They lived in a second story dwelling that looked out on the beach. When her son saw other children playing on the beach, he was very eager to play with them. But his mother did not want him to play on the beach so she finally told him that there were bears out there that would get him. Small children are usually very sincere before they learn to deceive. So, when he saw some other children playing out there, he said, "You better get away from there or that bear will get you." Of course, there are always older children who know better. One told the little boy his mother was not telling him the truth. She finally admitted she had deceived him and said, "We better kneel down here and I will ask God to forgive me." The little boy answered, "You better let me do it, Mamma. God won't know whether you mean it or not." This story may amuse you, but it is painfully true to life.

[J. Miller Forcade is a beloved veteran preacher & personal worker. He and his wife have three daughters, all with their own Christian families. This article is available in tract form from him at 212 W. Third St., DeRidder, LA 70634.]

THERE'S MORE TO LIFE THAN MINISTRY

Cheri Walters

Everyone, including ministers, needs time off. But for most, the only way to find time--for yourself, your spouse or your children--is to schedule it into your calendar.

The clatter of coffee cups and silverware subsided as the waitresses withdrew. Our senior pastor rose to close our monthly ministers' brunch.

Reflecting on the morning's topic, "The Minister's Family," he shared with us his greatest regret. "If I had it to do all over again," he said, "I would put my family ahead of my ministry." His voice broke as he confessed that only one of his grown children was serving the Lord. The others, particularly his son, were bitter toward God and refused to have anything to do with church.

"I urge those of you who are still young, who have children at home--leave the paperwork at the office. Take your day off; spend time with your family. They need to know they're important to you."

During the two years my husband and I served with this man of God, we learned many positive things from him. But perhaps the most profound lesson he taught us was expressed in those poignant words in the back room of a coffee shop--our need for a life apart from the ministry.

All of us need time off. First, let's look at the need for time off for ourselves. God created our bodies with the need for rest. He Himself established the pattern of working for six days, then taking a day off. And He commanded man to do the same.

Regular time away from the pressures of the ministry is a great weapon against stress. *Time* magazine labels stress a national epidemic, noting that "two-thirds of all office visits to family doctors are prompted by stress-related symptoms." Hypertension, chronic headaches, heart problems and ulcers are all too common even to those in Christian leadership.

Ministry usually means long hours, some of them rewarding, some tedious, many stressful. It means working with people and trying to meet their needs. It takes time to unwind from the day-to-day tension of interpersonal relationships. Just because we are "doing God's work" does not make us immune to the effects of overtaxing our bodies.

We need time off for emotional and spiritual recuperation as well. On several occasions Jesus withdrew from the crowds who followed Him. He must have known how short His earthly ministry would be, yet He took time from it to fellowship with His Father, renewing His strength for what was in store. He didn't substitute His public ministry--eternally essential as it was--for His private relationship with His Father. Jesus knew who the source of His ministry was, and He went regularly "to the source."

When we are submerged in the endless details of a busy ministry, it becomes easy to confuse time spent in God's service with time spent in His presence. We need to get off the merry-go-round of services, staff meetings, fund-raisers and committees and reflect on why we're doing all this and for whom.

A day away for prayer, meditation or just enjoying God's world gives us a fresh perspective that can't be seen from the inside out.

Second, let's consider the need for time with our spouses. Too many times, we make our life's partner take second place to the paperwork that seems to multiply overnight on our desks or to our own lack of planning--all in the name of ministry.

Jim, a former missionary, admitted that when his wife complained about his long hours away from home, he accused her of "getting in the way of

God's work." With 20/20 hindsight, he saw that many of the ministry obligations he had labeled "God's work" were actually self-imposed.

Studies show that "leadership types," from presidents to corporate heads to ministers, are highly motivated individuals with a stronger-than-average sense of responsibility. Jim fit that profile, feeling duty-bound to be everywhere and do everything. His time and talents were squandered on the paper-shuffling duties that he could have delegated, freeing Jim for more important things--like his wife and family.

Nancy and Gregg determined early that the greatest gift they can give their four children is a strong marriage. Every Friday, at the close of the school day (Gregg is principal of the Christian school where Nancy teaches third grade), they have a standing date. Whether they go out for a nice dinner or just get ice cream cones, it's their time together. When Gregg attends an annual administrators' convention, Nancy arranges to join him for the final two days and the long drive home. And each summer, they plan a short trip together immediately following the family vacation. They see their time together as an insulator against today's harsh climate of disintegrating marriages.

Third (but not necessarily in that order), we need time just for our children. How often have we heard, "It's not the quantity but the quality of time that counts"? James C. Dobson, whose "Focus on the Family" films have been seen by over 37 million people, rejects the rationalization of "quality time" without quantity time.

"With children, values are caught, not taught," he says, explaining that children learn less from what we say than from how we live. It takes time to nurture a relationship that provides the opportunities for sharing ourselves and our values with our kids.

One ministry mom has made it a point to take her children on individual outings--shopping at the mall, eating hot dogs, walking around the neighborhood--where each child has her undivided attention. And it's paid off--there are no silent, uncommunicative teen-agers around her house. "They're always vying with one another to tell me about their day," she says.

So how do we balance the demands of a busy ministry with needs of our children, our spouses, ourselves? It's an ongoing juggling act with no magic solutions. But, in reviewing the experiences of many busy Christian leaders, some principles emerge:

First, and most important, we have to make family time our first priority after our relationship with God.

There will always be people tugging at our sleeves for attention, or "old business" left on the agenda. If we wait for an opportune time to take a vacation or spend time with the kids, it will never come.

Dobson calls it the "tyranny of the temporary" (first cousin to the "tyranny of the urgent"). "Well," we rationalize, "after this a)building program,

b) Christmas production, c) financial crisis, d) all of the above, I'll take some time off." But there is always another temporary situation to replace the previous one. Wayne Rickerson, in his book **Getting Your Family Together**, puts it this way; "Each family has its own set of 'impossible circumstances' that hinder it from having enough family time. However, an irrefutable fact of life is that we do the things we feel are most important. If the family is at the top of our list of priorities, we will be able to find family time."

Second, we must be willing to sacrifice to maintain that order of priorities. For author and pastor Charles Swindoll, it means sometimes refusing invitations to speak. For songwriters Bill and Gloria Gaither, it has meant limiting their concert tours while their children are school-age. The "Focus on the Family" film series came about when James Dobson realized that he could not possibly accept the hundreds of invitations he received to speak to people about their families without sacrificing his own.

When husband and wife are both working or involved in ministry, it may mean sacrificing some career goals until the children are older. Tammy, a Christian education director at a large church, could not justify working the six and a half or seven days a week that were required of her. When she learned she was expecting her first child, she and her husband decided to look for another position, even though it meant a less "prestigious" church for her and a loss of job seniority for him.

Third, we need to use our leadership influence to reinforce the importance of family and personal time. Some churches and ministry organizations set aside a "family home night," but many have activities every night of the week. When we have control over scheduling upcoming events, we need to be protective, not only of our own family time, but of those within our circle of ministry. With preparation and some creative planning, many meetings and age-level activities can be shortened, combined or scheduled to dovetail on the same night, rather than scattered throughout the week.

Last, we need to make written appointments with spouses and children. Evangelist Leighton Ford makes it a practice to write into his calendar every year certain days he will spend individually with each of his children. One minister has his secretary pencil in two or three two-day blocks of time each year when he will take his family out of town, in addition to his vacation.

Scheduling dates with a spouse or child allows the busy leader to keep that time free by saying truthfully, "I'm sorry, but I have another commitment." Even more importantly, it tells the family member, "You're important to me," words that have to be acted upon as well as spoken.

Sadly, it sometimes takes a heart attack, a divorce or a prodigal child to awaken us from our busy ministries to the need for "time out." But it doesn't have to be that way. By making our personal and family time a priority, we can balance ministry and home. To paraphrase a well-known Scripture verse, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world but lose his own family?"

VOICES from the FIELDS

Winston and Irene Allen

Eagle River, Alaska

December 1992

About a month early this year here in Alaska "termination dust", the first fresh white snowfall, covered the tops of the nearby Chugach Mountains above the green and gold slopes. The message was clear, Time is running out; get ready for winter. The last week in October we had a 12" snowfall and a 30-hour power outage. Previous preparation helped us to keep functioning. The signs of the times world-wide are a type of "termination dust" warning us that the time for serving the Lord and laying up treasures in heaven is running out! "Therefore be ye also ready, for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:44).

As we look back over 1992, memories and challenges crowd the mind. The church has experienced increased attendance in the meetings, and more responses to the Lord's great invitation. We had a number of visitors from the S-48, including five preachers who brought messages. Progress has been made on the required landscaping, and striping of the church parking area has been completed.

At ages 73 and 71 Irene and I are going into our 29th winter in the Northland. We continue to pray for younger leaders of the Lord's choosing and sending. We have no plan to visit relatives in the S-48 this year, but a brief trip in '93 might be worked out.

Earl Mullins Sr.

Back from Russia

Winter 1992-1993

The trip to Russia was one of the most interesting and challenging experiences I have ever had. One of the most exciting aspects of the trip was to be part of a group of believers in Christ from many different backgrounds working together to present the good news of Jesus Christ to a people who are still reeling from the collapse of their government, as well as the political, economic and social systems which were built upon what their nation believed to be true: Marxism.

You can imagine the thrill and challenge of seeing Russian educators warmly accept and listen to citizens from a former enemy nation. This was even more impressive as it became evident we were talking about a "book" and "person" they had been taught to believe were "make believe". These educators were far from gullible. In most cases they were skeptical, but eager to examine the evidence that the "Book" could be relied upon, and the "Person" is who He claims to be.

I took part in two "New Life Education Convocations." Their primary goal was to introduce Christian morals and ethics curriculum for use in the elementary and secondary government schools of Russia. This curriculum is

based upon the reality of the Bible being God's word and Jesus being who He claimed to be, the Only begotten Son of God.

A fifty to sixty member team of U. S. Christians is put together to hold two four day convocations with teachers, directors and inspectors of the educational system associated with two cities or school districts within Russia or former Soviet republics. The cities in which the convocations were held in November were Penza and Vladimir.

It is strictly a plowing and sowing opportunity. Most of those in the administrative track were individuals who range from confirmed atheists to skeptical believers about Jesus. There were between 460 and 470 Russian educators in attendance at Penza, and 400 to 450 at Vladimir. Something like 80 to 90 percent have never had a Bible before, or have had their first one (Bible or Testament) given to them within the past year.

The following presentations are made during each convocation: Christianity and the Moral Society; Jesus the Servant Teacher; The Reliability of the Bible; The Uniqueness of the Bible; The Pivotal Events in History; The Crucifixion and Resurrection. The following seminars are also presented: How to Build Strong Families; Teaching Values; Science and Christianity; Discipline and Self-Esteem. The film "Jesus" based on the gospel of Luke is also shown.

During the week the following printed and video materials were given to each Russian educator (all in the Russian language) : A complete Bible, a New Testament, a Gospel of Luke, four of Josh McDowell's books on evidences, four Bible games for children, copies of the elementary and secondary curricula with full color teaching pictures, a music tape related to the curriculum, and a complete video of the "Jesus" film. Some \$60,000 worth of materials were distributed during each convocation..

This program is already in place. Over twenty cities have already hosted a convocation. It is planned by the end of 1993 to have held one in 100 cities. Present plans are for me to return to Russia during February and March for convocations in four cities plus approximately a week in Moscow to see first hand the preparations in progress for the September, 1993, opening of a Bible School in one of the professional schools of Moscow and to visit one or more of the newly established churches.

[Bro. Mullins will speak on "Russian Opportunities NOW," Jan. 28, 7 p.m., Sellersburg.]

Mark, Candy and Kathryn Garrett Columbia, SC December 7, 1992

These are topsy-turvy packing days for us, but we rejoice as we reflect on God's goodness on our behalf. These last eighteen months have stretched us, and perhaps because of that we've come to know God more personally.

Over thousands of miles of travel we've never had any significant car trouble while out on the road! Now that's not to say that it hasn't been event-

ful. A dying battery lasted (for night driving!) from Knoxville, TN to Columbia SC, then refused to "crank" in our driveway! A constant velocity "boot" cracked two days after returning from a 1500 mile trip and two days before a ladies' retreat!

Despite a slow South Carolina economy the Lord has provided a steady, yet flexible job for Mark. He has sent in 97% of our monthly financial support and 100% of our one-time needs to get us to Senegal! Praise our Jehovah Jireh!

We're eager to be on our way! Last week Mark talked with Stan Bruning of SIM. Stan has just returned from several countries in West Africa, including Senegal. He reports that our team is now "broadcasting" (actually it's a "boom" box plus loud speaker system!) three hours a day from the reading room. They're able to play tapes of some of the Scripture stories and music that have been translated. And people stop to listen. So, until permission is granted for a radio station, the word can still go out over the sound waves!

We plan to pull our little caravan (car and trailer) out of Columbia tomorrow morning, touch base and spend Christmas with friends and family in Kentucky, and then begin our trek north to the snowy hinterlands of Quebec [for extended language study before going to West Africa].

We appreciate your financial and prayer support for us and the Wolof people. We are your "extension arm" to accomplish God's work in Senegal. Without your prayers, all human strategies to reach the Wolof will be ineffective. Through prayer we claim the promise that Christ will build His church among the Wolof people!

Address in Quebec: Apt. 101 2071 Presqu'île, Quebec City, QUEBEC G1P 3Y1

JENNINGS, LOUISIANA CHURCH CELEBRATES 75 YEARS

Mrs. Joyce Broyles

On November 1, 1992 a church which has grown and remains an influential part of Jennings life since its inception celebrated its 75th anniversary. "Seventy-five years, at least," chuckled 88-year-old Betty Valdetero Istre, as she related stories of her work with her husband, the late Ivy Istre. "I was sixteen years old when I was baptized in the bayou, and the church had been here for about five years already."

According to Douglas Broyles, who researched the church's growth, the first recorded history tells that "seven made the good confession at Jennings on the first Lord's Day in November, 1917." (*Word and Work*, December 1917) Maston Sitman, W.J. Johson, A.K. Ramsey, and Evariste Herbert were the initial missionaries to Southwest Louisiana. "Another in training is a younger man by the name of Ivy Istre, as fine a young man as I have ever met anywhere. He will certainly become a power for God," wrote Stanford Chambers in the May issue of *Word and Work*. In June of 1922 he added, "Jennings has a house of worship."

In 1920, members of the Church of Christ purchased from the German Baptist Brethern Church the lot and small building known as the Dunkard Church. In 1940 that building was enlarged, with Raymus Prather the chief carpenter. Additional major renovations continued until 1970. By the late 1970's, there was no more room on the property for further expansion, so five acres were purchased on North Cutting Avenue and a new building was erected

Many years ago the church adopted the motto of "Christ Meets Every Need." Through the years the church has grown in many outreaches to meet those needs. In 1946 a radio ministry began on KVOL, Lafayette and continued until 1947 when it was broadcast on KSIG instead. In 1951 KJEF began to broadcast the program and continues to do so at 8:15 a.m. Sunday mornings. At 9:00, the church also sponsors the program "Words of Life," an international program out of Louisville, Kentucky.

The church began a Christian Youth Encampment in 1954, with help from other congregations in Louisiana and Texas. In 1957 property in DeRidder was purchased, named Ingallwood Park, and has operated each summer since then for children ages nine through college.

The first elders to serve the congregation were Lawrence Prather and Marquette LeDoux. Others have been Clifton O. Istre, Sr., Ivy Istre, Jake LeDoux, Kenneth Istre, Arba Reed, and Alfred "Fred" Smith. Current elders are David Bowers, A.J. Istre, Ed Hahn, Marlin Comeaux, and Douglas Broyles. Ministers who have served the congregation besides the early missionaries include Frank Mullins, Sr., Maurice LaFleur, Paul Clark, Earl Mullins, Sr., Antoine Valdetero, Jr., A.J. Istre, Sr., Douglas Broyles, and since 1991, Paul Estes

From 1927 to 1967, Ivy Istre ministered full-time. Forty Years! He continued to help until the 1970's when he became ill. He passed away in 1985. A.J. Istre served as minister from 1971 until 1991 and continues to serve the congregation as an elder.

Young men from the congregation who have entered the ministry and young women who are serving as minister's wives include Harry Prather, Mac and Peggy Dennis LeDoux, Antoine Valdetero, A.J. Istre, Buford Smith, Tooger Smith, Jo Anna Smith Morrow, Joyce Smith Broyles, Dem and Paula Trahan St. Cyr, Lowell LeDoux, Marlin Comeaux, Dale and Ricky McLean, Matthew, Richard, Robert, and Kenneth Istre, and Dennis LeDoux. Kent Bowers is presently preparing for mission work.

The Day of Celebration, Nov. 1

After months of planning and with much help from the men and women of the congregation, we had a great day in the Lord! In spite of foul weather, some 259 enjoyed the morning service and spilled over into Sunday school classrooms to enjoy the noon meal. Some left and some new ones arrived until 165 of us were there for the 2:30 service.

Bro. A.J. Istre spoke at the morning service and Bro. Douglas Broyles was emcee at the 2:30 service. He gave a summary of the church's history. Guests came from Indiana, Kentucky, Texas, Arkansas and Mississippi. "Pie" Istre Satterfield, from Indiana now, echoed our sentiments for this congregation when she said, "I don't know more than half of this crowd. That's good! It shows that you are growing and reaching out." **Praise God!**

HEALING AND "THE PRAYER OF FAITH"

Alex V Wilson

(Last in a series of four articles)

Kenneth Strachan was a missionary leader in Latin America. In Elisabeth Elliott's biography of him, she tells how Strachan--only 55 years old and at the peak of his ministry--was stricken with lymphoma, a dread disease.

More and more people began to pray for the recovery of Kenneth Strachan. One lady, a missionary in Costa Rica, believed that God had given her a special task of praying for Ken. She was not merely to ask that he be healed. She was to believe absolutely, and never to waver in that belief, that he would be fully cured. Scripture verses were "given" to her as proof of God's intention, and she held on so confidently that she did not even need to add "if it is Thy will" to her petitions. She knew it was His will.

Billy Graham visited Strachan and told him he prayed for him every day. He said he had a strong assurance that the Lord would heal him. "He said he did not pretend to have any absolute knowledge, that it was a mystic experience, and God might have something better for (Strachan), but he added the he had frequently experienced this sense of assurance in his praying "

The missionary leader became worse and had to be hospitalized because of his critical condition.

There were those who prefaced every prayer with "If it be Thy will, Lord." and there were those who were sure enough of His will to see no need for such a preface. Some came to his hospital room to pray, and some tense little battles were waged across his bed between those who felt that no Christian has an inalienable right to claim physical healing, and those who believed that such an admission was a mere failure of faith, or worse still, an actual capitulation to Satan himself who held the sufferer in his grasp.

After some weeks he died, leaving behind him a host of confused Christians and perplexing questions. Some felt his death proved that those who had demanded that God heal him were wrong; their demands were contrary to God's will. The others felt that if only enough Christians had exercised real faith, God would have healed him. They believed that those who prayed with uncertainty in their hearts had hindered God from demonstrating His healing power. (*Who Shall Ascend?* pp. 151-156)

The incidents recorded above lead us to a study of James 5:14-16.

Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if

he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.

This passage raises several interesting questions: Is this teaching still for us now or was it only for apostolic times? Was the oil used as a medicine or as a symbol of God's Spirit? If a church has no elders, what then? But we lack space to discuss these details. Let us simply assume that the passage is still valid today, since there is no explicit Scripture to the contrary. The main emphasis of the passage is obviously on prayer, which is mentioned seven times in the six verses of this paragraph (vv. 13-18). And so far as prayer for the sick is concerned, the crucial phrase is "the prayer of faith." What is meant by "the prayer of faith shall save the sick man"? There are three main interpretations.

View 1

Many who believe that healing is included in the atonement (see last month's article) contend that many Christians are not healed because when they pray for healing they add, "if it be Thy will." To say this implies unbelief, they feel. To them faith means absolute certainty, with no doubts. We can have this certainty regarding every sick person or at least every sick Christian, because--to quote a tract--"God never puts sickness on anyone. God does not want anyone to be sick, or suffer pain or weakness. He is ready and waiting to heal every sick one now." The writer continues.

Jesus said that when we pray we must believe that we receive (Mk. 11:24), and then we shall surely have that for which we pray...Continue to say to every pain, disease and weakness in your body, "Go before the mighty name of Jesus." God will make all pain, disease and weakness to wither up and leave us, as we continue to bid them to go in Jesus' name: but, we must never doubt that the work was done when we prayed. If you doubt that Jesus healed you when you prayed, you will lose your healing.

In this view, then, the prayer of faith means praying with complete assurance that God will heal, because it is His will to heal every sick Christian.

View 2

Others would define the prayer of faith as simply praying with confidence in the Lord that His will is best. It means trusting Him to answer "yes" or "no" each time a sick one is prayed for and anointed, according to His love and wisdom. It means saying, "We have faith in Thee, Lord. We know Thou canst heal, if it is Thy will. If it is Thy will, then give courage and comfort. If it is Thy will, then heal by Thy power. We leave it in Thy hands."

Not very many churches still practice prayer and anointing for the sick. One that does is the Portland Church in Louisville. Most or all of the elders there in recent decades have held this view. Over the years God has at times healed supernaturally: a doctor from Georgia recovered dramatically from cancer; a man was marvelously cured of perforations in his intestines. But a

number of other persons anointed by the same elders remained sick, worsened and died.

Speaking personally, this view of the prayer of faith appeals to me except for one unsolved problem. The statement in James sounds universal. It seems to allow for no exceptions. It says, "The prayer of faith will save the sick" and does not add--"if it be God's will." Of course conditions are named: calling for the elders; confessing of sins; prayer; anointing; faith. But James seems to imply that every time these conditions are met, healing will occur. Yet neither the teaching of the whole Bible nor the experience of Christians harmonizes with this. So we are led to consider another alternative.

View 3

James McConkey writes, "The prayer of faith is the prayer in which God Himself gives the petitioner an inward assurance by His Spirit that the thing he prays for is according to God's will and has been granted. The prayer of faith can thus only be prayed in that which is according to God's will. If the petition is not according to His will, God withholds this assurance." He then gives two examples.

Friends had gathered to pray for a fellow friend who was lying at the point of death in a distant mission field. As we prayed there came into our hearts a marked, conscious spirit of assurance that our prayer had been answered. One month after, tidings came by letter that although the family of the sick man had gathered at his bedside several times to see him die, yet a short time after the day on which we had received the assurance from God of his recovery, he had been suddenly restored to health and was then about his usual duties.

Not long after we were called to the room of a young friend whose eyes were also turned toward the foreign field, but who was being hindered by illness. We prayed again and again for him. At last, we arose from our knees without a shadow of assurance concerning his recovery. We could get no liberty except in resting in submission to God's will, whatever it might be. In one week the young man had gone home to be with the Lord. We had all faith in God's ability to heal the last named friend as well as the first. But we had no assurance of faith from God that He would do so. The lesson seemed clear. In one case it was God's will to heal; in the other it was not.

In other words, in this view the "faith" involved is not the same as saving faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior, nor general Christian faith in His loving care. Rather it is a special faith that may be bestowed by God at certain times to help his servants meet special needs. Note that in 1 Cor. 12:9 the spiritual gift of "faith" and "gifts of healing" are mentioned together.

R.A. Torrey, noted evangelist at the turn of this century, took this view. He wrote, "The prayer of faith shall save him that is sick. In many instances the elders may not be given faith. Are they to blame for that? Not necessarily. It is not always the will of God to heal His sick children." Later he explained further. "Sometimes as I have prayed, God has given me clearest

assurance of His will..."; note that it was sometimes. He described in detail several times when God gave "to me faith as I have prayed for some sick one, and immediate and complete healing followed." (See *September Word and Work* p.273 for an example in Torrey's ministry.)

A contemporary writer, J.K. Van Baalan, remarks, "Praying in faith is a wrestling to discover, through a surrendered will, the guidance of God in order to pray in accordance with His will. This is a long cry from having one's mind made up that God must grant our desires, and that He can be commanded to do our bidding." He recounts an experience in his own ministry to explain his statement. He was called to the bedside of a young mother who according to the doctors had thirty-six hours at most to live. Van Baalan found the family members yielded to God, whatever His will might be. (The woman herself was in a coma.) He then prayed,

asking God to do one of two things; if it were not in the divine will to heal that we might receive courage and comfort. If, on the other hand, God should be willing to spare this young life for the husband and two small children, that we might receive the courage to pray for her recovery in boldness of faith. I then waited, and after a pause in prayer, the answer came. My heart and mind were strongly impregnated with a desire to plead for this young life, to ask God to glorify His name. The next morning the family physician pronounced that "something has happened here that medical science is at a loss to interpret; this woman is going to be well."

Twenty years later Van Baalan met the woman again, still well and strong and living for the Lord along with her family.

If I may speak personally again, it seems to me that this interpretation of the prayer of faith best explains James 5:14-16. It escapes the difficulty involved in the second view. Yet it carries a built-in difficulty of its own: We might mistake our subjective feelings and wishes for God-bestowed assurance or the gift of faith. Remember the strong certainty which Billy Graham, and the lady in Costa Rica, and others had regarding the healing of Kenneth Strachan, mentioned at the start of this article? They all were mistaken about the Lord's will and guidance in that case. When I was a student at Portland Christian High School, I believed God gave me a clear conviction that He would heal a Christian with terminal cancer for whom many were praying. But He called her to His presence instead. Years later a deeply spiritual friend of mine believed the Lord told him that He would cure a young person who was gripped with a dread disease. Many had prayed, and kept praying, for him; yet he went to be with Christ. May our Lord deliver us from rashly leaning on our own inner feelings, and yet make us sensitive and obedient to those inner promptings which His Spirit may indeed put in our hearts from time to time. Holy Father, we desperately need wisdom from above, and we ask for it.

SUMMARY

To summarize, the first view says the prayer of faith can and should be prayed for every sick Christian. We should pray for healing with full assurance that God will heal, because it is definitely His will to cure all His sick

people. Only lack of faith (i.e., lack of assurance, according to this view) or of repentance hinders Christians from being cured. But Scripture contradicts this interpretation, as we saw earlier.

The second view says the prayer of faith means praying, "Lord, Thy will, not ours, be done. We believe in Thy power and we trust Thee to heal or not, according to Thy wisdom." This attitude is surely basic for all praying in which God's will is unclear. And He heals in answer to such prayers, if He pleases. (To pray, "if it is Thy will," is a sign of unbelief only when we make requests for what is certainly His will. E.g., Daniel did not need to say, "If it is Thy will, restore Thy people, city and temple." He knew it was God's will to do so, because the Lord had said so through Jeremiah (Dan. 9:1-3; Jer. 25:11f.; 29:10f.). In the same way when we pray for the Lord to raise up workers we should not add any "if" clause. But when asking Him to call John Brown as a full-time preacher, the "if" is proper. Compare Daniel's three friends before Nebuchadnezzar: Our God is able to deliver us from you furnace...but if He does not...

The third view agrees with the second on the necessity of submission to God's will, and that He does not choose to heal all His people. But it believes that when He does choose to heal someone, He may then give a deep inner assurance of that fact so that as a result intercession may be made with certainty. It is such intercession which James means by "the prayer of faith (which) will save the sick," for God prompts such praying only when He intends to heal.

If James 5 were practiced by more congregations, probably the Lord would heal more among us than we see at present. And if we saw more of such healings within the local church, probably fewer members would be attracted to mass meeting of healers, in which there are often doctrines or methods which are unbalanced or even unbiblical. Following James' instructions about confessing sins to the elders would result in more repentance among backslidden members, also.

CONCLUSIONS

Finally, some things are very clear: It is right to pray expectantly for the sick (James 5; also 3 John 2: "I pray...that you may be in health"). Yet we should teach that God nowhere promises wholesale healing for His people, much less for the unsaved. The sick disciple whom He does not choose to heal should practice praise and beware of bitterness, for "Who makes a man dumb, or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?" (Ex. 4:11). It is also right to use medicine if God does not heal miraculously (1 Tim. 5:23). "The man who trusts God only and rules out medical means, is in error. Yet the Christian who trusts medical means only and rules out God is just as much in error. *If the first man confines God to the supernatural, the second limits Him to the natural*" (McConkey). Let us trust our Lord in sickness and in health, while yearning for that day when He shall appear and banish sickness and tears, pain and death forever.

(End of Series)

PORTLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL HOSTS FOREIGN STUDENTS

Donald W. Rucker

Back in the summer of 1989, we got a call from a Japanese Christian whom we had known for many years. He said a young lady in his church was very interested in coming to America to attend school but had no idea as to how to go about the welfare of their daughter while she was so far away from home. She would be a senior in high school and wanted to know if we could help by allowing her to come to our school and by finding a Christian host family for her to live with. It took some time to get the paper work straightened out but that fall we enrolled Grace Yamanashi as our first foreign student in many years.

It seems that her letters home were very positive and that her parents were well pleased with her education because the next school year friends of her parents inquired as to how they might enroll their two children in our school. That was interesting in light of the fact that this family was not Christian. So the 90-91 school year saw us with two students from Japan. The next year it was three and this year it is four plus one student from Thailand. These students come to us with limited English skills but they work very hard and are successful. It only takes them a short time to "fit in" and generally they are considered a regular part of the student body.

With all that we hear about how excellent the education system is in other countries, especially Japan, why is it parents will send their children literally half-way around the world to a school they know only by reputation? In addition to that, they are trusting us to find host families who will love and care for their children as though they were our own. When you think into consideration air-fare and room & board as well as tuition, it is also a costly experience. So why do they do it?

I believe it is because they are finding in a small Christian school something they desperately want, but is not available in Japan. First of all, our classes are small so individual attention is assured. Secondly, teachers demonstrate a personal care and concern for each student. Also, the education is not so rigid as it is in Japan and there is not the tremendous pressure to excel in order to get into college. Above all, I truly feel that the love of the Lord Jesus Christ shines through. We were visited two years ago by the parents of one of our students. These parents were not Christians and despite the fact that they spoke no English, when they returned to Japan, they reported to our friend that they "had met true Christian people" in America.

Last year, towards the end of the school year, one of our Japanese students spent the night with a friend of hers and they stayed up almost all night talking about what it means to be a Christian. The next morning, she went forward in church, accepted the Lord Jesus as her savior and asked to be baptized. This was the culmination of all the activities and teaching that had gone on during the school year. What this young lady saw in the students around her was something she wanted for herself. And so, one soul has been added to the kingdom.

Christian schools do have an impact, sometimes in the least likely places. Pray the Lord would use all Christian schools as His instruments to spread the Gospel, both to those who are here and to those whom He may send our way, even from unlikely places.

Donald W. Rucker is Principal of Portland Christian School.

Our "Restoration Heritage"--

THANK GOD FOR WHAT'S GOOD IN YOUR LEGACY

by Leonard Allen and Jack Reese

Churches of Christ have experienced much upheaval and change throughout their history. Because of the commitment never to follow mere human traditions but always the Word of God, leaders have challenged not only other religious groups, but also one another. Both growth and division have resulted.

We believe that we now face a particularly critical time in our history. It is a time of reassessment and resolve. But unfortunately, it has also become a time of destructive criticism by some, both of the movement itself and individuals within it. It could be a time of phenomenal growth, as the secular world becomes more open to spiritual concerns. Or it could well be a time of further division.

For this reason, we want to affirm the Restoration Movement and its ideals. We believe that God has worked powerfully through it. Both of us are children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of this movement. We owe a great debt to faithful Christians within it. While this is not the time for glorification of the movement, white-washing its faults and problems, neither is it the time to attack it, undermining its strengths and value.

We are grateful for our restoration heritage. Because of this we want to underscore what we think is right with the movement:

The Bible's Authority

1. The deep commitment to the authority of the Bible. From the earliest days, leaders of this movement have been committed to doing biblical things in biblical ways. In a religious world where church policy is often determined by its ecclesiastical tradition, the desires of its leaders or the spirit of the age, to find a group devoted to the Bible as its only source of authority is truly refreshing.

It is in the Bible that God's actions in history are revealed. In it we learn who God is and what he desires. Through it we discover his incarnate Son. We confront Christ's divine power and humanity. We see the purposes and effect of his ongoing Spirit in the world. And through it we are forced to encounter the truth about ourselves: We are dreadful sinners in need of God's redemption.

We believe the Bible to be fully authoritative, revealing God's nature and the appropriate human responses of faith and obedience. And while we recognize that it is embedded in a time and culture which seem strange to modern western people, requiring careful examination of its teachings within

its original historical contexts, we also believe its truths are accessible to all. The task of understanding the Bible is not reserved for the scholar, but resides in every pew.

This is an essential teaching of the Restoration Movement and for it we are grateful.

Biblical Ordinances

2. The practice of baptism and the Lord's Supper. In the restoration tradition baptism and the Lord's Supper have always been at the heart of our response to God. Alexander Campbell said that the "distinguishing characteristic" of the movement was "a restoration of the ordinances . . . to their place and power."

A basic reason for this emphasis on the ordinances was that so many Protestant churches were neglecting them. They tended to focus on grace as a private, inner experience. As a result, they down played the formal and institutional means of grace. Churches of Christ have attempted to uphold baptism and the Lord's Supper as two crucial responses to the saving work of God.

At the core of the biblical witness stand the death and resurrection of Jesus. In them God has revealed his nature most clearly. The cross and resurrection deeply imprinted the earliest Christian communities. They appeared not only in the way in which the Christians lived, but also in the faithful practice of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

We believe that baptism is the work of God, forgiving penitent sinners who respond in faith, empowering them with his Spirit. In baptism we experience Christ's death and resurrection. We take on his nature and become part of his very body.

In the weekly supper we encounter the crucifixion event again and again. We re-experience his sacrifice and forgiveness. We recommit ourselves to his purposes and are renewed by his presence among us.

Part of the strength of our heritage lies in its faithfulness to the work of God in baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Unity in Diversity

3. The commitment to unity within diversity. In its beginning the Restoration Movement was a unity movement. The early leaders sought to unite Christians under the banner of Christ, despite many differences among them. And differences there were!

This goal has always been difficult. Our history is noted more for its divisions than its unity. Yet the impulse for unity still lies at the heart of our identity. If we are earnestly seeking truth, devoted to the study of the Bible, determined to become a cross-shaped, Spirit-filled people, we will love each other with the love of Christ, even when we disagree.

A Christian tolerance for diversity is fundamental to our identity as a movement. This is not to say that we uphold a laxity toward truth, that it does not matter what one believes or how one lives. Never. But it does mean that godly men and women may disagree and still consider one another brothers and sisters in Christ. It means that we will treat one another without rancor, gossip or mean-spiritedness because we stand united by Christ, not by the precision of our arguments.

This impulse toward unity in the midst of diversity is one of the things right with our movement.

Freedom, not Creedalism

4. The rejection of creeds as tests of fellowship. One of the distinctive characteristics of the restoration tradition is its aversion to human creeds. The movement began as a loose network of believers rejecting faith dominated by creeds and calling for a return to the unadorned text of Scripture. "The Holy Bible our only creed and a sufficient rule of faith and practice" became a common slogan.

But the issue has never been simple. Campbell, for one, did not reject all creeds out of hand. What he rejected was the authoritarian use of creeds, imposing them as tests of Christian character or using them to dictate terms of Christian fellowship.

A fundamental principle is at stake: People need freedom from constricting human traditions, so that each person can search the Scriptures afresh.

But creedalism has remained a subtle temptation throughout our history. In the early 19th century Barton W. Stone noted that one's opinion of what the Bible teaches can easily function exactly like a creed. This happens when "one believes his opinion of certain texts to be the very spirit and meaning of the texts--and that this opinion [is] absolutely essential to salvation."

We view this wariness of authoritarian creeds--even unwritten ones--as a treasure of our heritage. We believe doctrinal summaries and confessional statements have an important place. But we say amen to our movement's rejection of the authoritarian use of creeds.

God Calls Us To Be Different

5. The call to separate from the fashion and allures of the world. From the earliest days the Restoration Movement has presented itself as an alternative to the prevailing social values of our society. Men like Stone and David Lipscomb emphasized that the Christian must be willing to surrender all "worldly gain," and even to see his family suffer hardship and persecution.

The great spiritual snares, Stone warned time and again, are "the love of money . . . the love of ease and the dread of persecution." "To make religion wealthy and honorable in view of the world," he said, "and to confer on it worldly ease and comfort, were among the first causes of its ruin and fall." Christians should live lives of simplicity, sacrifice and service, expecting as a matter of course the misunderstanding and scorn of the world.

Each generation has struggled with the temptation to live by the spirit of the age, rather than the spirit of Christ. But the fundamental impulse of the restoration tradition is to reject the values of the world. We rejoice in this focus, believing it to be one of the great strengths of our spiritual heritage.

Care For The Poor

6. The deep concern for ministry to the poor. This concern has also been an important part of our heritage, one tied closely to the call to separate from worldliness. Our churches have not always practiced it well, but strong voices in our movement have continued to remind us of Jesus' compassion for the poor.

No one in our heritage epitomizes this concern more than David Lipscomb, editor of the *Gospel Advocate* for 50 years and without doubt the most influential leader of the southern churches in the second half of the 19th century.

One of Lipscomb's basic assumptions was that the "poor of this world were the chosen vessels of mercy, the especially honored and blessed of God." He believed that the "great mass of true and honored followers, in all ages of the world, have been, ever must be, from the poor."

With this concern at the very center, Lipscomb urged, the church must maintain an atmosphere where the poor will feel welcome and not alienated. For this reason he deplored the pouring of money into church buildings. "When I hear of a church setting out to build a fine house," he wrote, "I give that church up. Its usefulness as a church of Christ is at an end."

For the same reasons Lipscomb believed that the "whole plan of a preacher's putting himself up to the highest bidder, shifting about from place to place, for the sake of a little higher salary, is at once a degradation to Christianity."

"Don't seek the rich and honorable to preach to," he advised, "but preach to the poor, the neglected, the degraded, and if you live poor, you will . . . be one of the world's true heroes and Heaven's crowned victors."

The words are stinging, but the concerns issue from the very heart of Christ. We urge our churches to continue to face this issue and are proud to hold up such a heritage.

One does not have to look far to find shortsightedness and failure in our heritage. But in its best impulses and its clearest insights, the Restoration Movement has proclaimed forcefully (1) that Scripture remains the basic standard for our life under God, (2) that believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper are vital means of divine grace, (3) that the denominational divisions of Christ's disciples are scandalous, (4) that historic creeds can easily become golden calves, (5) that wealth and worldly fashion pervert the religion of Jesus, and (6) that concern for the poor is a fundamental mark of the true church.

The Restoration Plea is a means of critiquing human traditions and dissenting from worldly standards and pressures. For this reason it will never fit comfortably with establishment forms of Christianity.

We are proud of that heritage. We are consciously restorationists. We will continue to pursue restoration ideals in our work and ministries.

We also know that it will not be easy for any of us who attempt to restore the Christianity of the New Testament to the modern age. Restorationists are constantly putting burrs under the seats of the sleepy and comfortable. They work from the conviction that accommodation and compromise are far easier and more subtle than most suppose and that the call of Christ is much higher, more serious and more demanding than most people care to entertain. But the consequences of this work have eternal significance. And we are committed to it.

--[Leonard Allen and Jack Reese are professors of Bible and Ministry at Abilene Christian University. Reprinted by permission from CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE, March 1992. Leonard Allen is author of *Discovering Our Roots* and *The Cruciform Church*, discerning and loving critiques of Churches of Christ.]

TELL CITY/ LILLY DALE MISSIONS PRESENTS:

OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE IN ACTION

FEBRUARY 26-28, 1993

Lilly Dale Church of Christ, Gatchel, Ind.

Friday: 7:00 - 8:30 pm EST "How Should the Holy Spirit affect our Christian Life?"
Dale Offutt

Saturday: 6:00 - 7:30 pm EST "How Should Prophecy affect Our Christian Life?"
Earle C. Mullins, Jr.

Sunday: 7:00 - 8:30 pm ES Personal Testimony:
"Preparation for the Field"
Jim Broaddus

* Refreshments and Fellowship after each session

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NEWS and NOTES

Important Dates in 1993, to Mark in Your Calendars

Jan. 13 (& the 2nd Wed. of every month), Louisville area church leaders' luncheon 11:30, Portland Christian School south campus.

Feb. 9, Restoration Lectureship. Theme: "Christianity and Human Sexuality." Location, Louisville Bible College. See below for details.

Feb. 26-28, Lilly Dale Workshop, Gatchel, Ind. See page 29.

Mar. 11-12, SBS Training Conference. Theme: "Tell Others of Jesus, with Joy and Confidence." Speakers: Julius Hovan, Kevin O'Brien. Place: Southeast Church of Christ, Louisville. See below.

April 24, Ladies' Inspiration Day, this year at Hamburg, Ind.

May 28, Portland Christian High School commencement, 8:00

Aug. 2-5, Louisville Christian Fellowship Week. Theme: Worship

Oct., Ladies' Overnight Retreat. Date, place and program to be announced.

Nov. 15-18, Central Louisiana Christian Fellowship Week, Glenora.

Nov. 25, Louisville area Thanksgiving Service. 10-11 a.m. (Unless, as some have proposed, the meeting will be held on Wed. night instead of Thurs. morning. Let Mike Abbott know your feelings about this.)

Important Training Conference

Don't miss the chance to become better equipped as a personal witness for Christ. Most of us are hesitant & fearful in personal evangelism. So on March 11-12 (Thur./Fri. nights) Julius Hovan & Kevin O'Brien will share principles & PRACTICAL. HANDS-ON TRAINING in personal witness. Bro. O'Brien from Indianapolis has done this at Woodland Camp's young adults retreats on 3 occasions, & the response has been extremely favorable. Learning & PRACTICING Biblical principles will enable you to grow in faith, in loving outreach, & in talking with other people. The tentative theme is "Tell Others of Jesus, with Joy & Confidence." You who are the most afraid to evangelize will benefit the most.

These Training meetings will be at Southeast Church of Christ in Louisville. Time: 7:00 p.m. till 9:00 approximately. Everyone come--preachers, elders, deacons. Bring ALL your members. You'll benefit from this whether you're a new convert or a veteran.

All this is sponsored by your School of Biblical Studies, as it seeks to aid the churches in equipping their members to serve the Lord.

Restoration Lectureship

The Kentuckiana Consortium of Restoration Colleges is a fancy name for the cooperative efforts made by the School of Biblical Studies, Louisville Bible College, and College of the Scriptures to train workers for Christ.

This year the consortium is holding the first Restoration Lectureship. Place: LBC. Date: Tues. Feb. 9. At 11 a.m. Dr. James Kurfes, a medical doctor & a Bible teacher, will speak on "A Christian's Perspective of AIDS." At 2 p.m. there will be a forum on Child Abuse, by experts on that subject. At 7 p.m. Dennis Kaufman will speak on "Singleness, Marriage & Parenthood." LBC is at Beuleh Church Road & Snyder Freeway. Ministers & Bible students will especially benefit from this.

Gratitude From Tell City

The congregation at the Tell City Church of Christ would like to offer our appreciation and thanks to those that were steadfast in prayer for our congregation while we searched for a minister. We give praise to the Lord that Bro. Tim Hill and family (wife Annette & daughter Haley) are now ministering at the Tell City Church. A special thanks to the Word and Work for their support and especially to those men (and their families) that acted as "fill-in" while the search was on. Again, we praise God for His goodness and greatness in all matters!!

New Minister At Buechel

The Buechel Church of Christ in Louisville has called Richard Handy of Oklahoma to be their minister. He, his wife Bonne and daughter Jessica are scheduled to arrive on Jan. 12, according to Buechel's bulletin of Dec. 14.

Missionary Prayer-booklet

An illustrated, 36-page list of missionaries & overseas workers is available from Victor Broadus, P.O. Box 54842, Lexington KY 40555. They are free, but we suggest you send a donation to help Victor's important ministry to missionaries

around the world. The booklet gives information about over 40 workers, in Alaska, Africa, Greece, Honduras, Japan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, the Solomon Islands, Russia; also specialized ministries. Get copies; USE them! Missionaries value prayer more than anything.

2 People, 1000's Of Sermons

Dr. Horace Wood of Dallas (known to many W&W readers), & his dear wife Rosalind, run a world-wide sermons-on-cassettes ministry. He has over 6,000 sermons or Bible classes of fine preachers on tape, and distributes over 5,000 tapes yearly. Over 300 foreign missionaries get his tapes regularly, plus many folks in the U.S. And Dr. Horace is only 91 years old! "Give God the glory," he says.

A Victorious Entry

Speaking of Dr. Wood, he just sent us this news re: the Homegoing of his brother, Clark Wood of Lubbock, Texas:

"Clark became tremendously interested in Israel, God's chosen people. He was asked to serve on the board of the Friends of Israel, a large mission to Jews, located in New Jersey. I often flew with him to the conferences held there. He would tell me, 'I don't want to sit with you on the plane, I want to sit next to a stranger and tell him about my Lord Jesus Christ.' He received many responses.

"Clark was deeply in love with his Lord. We talked most every day by phone. The discussion always turned to the Lord and His love for us.

"For the last 1 1/2 years Clark was in and out of the hospital with leukemia. On Nov.17 he was taken to the hospital with double pneumonia. The family gathered in his

room. A nurse was standing by his bed, as was his doctor, who was a believer. Clark's last words were as he looked at the nurse: 'I am going to heaven, are you going to heaven?' Then God's angel came and took Clark into the presence of his Lord whom he loved so much."

Parksville Church, Ky

In November a youth Sunday was held. Young people of the church led most aspects of the service that morning. Ron Russell Jr. did a fine job preaching. Jason Russell read the Scriptures & Jeffrey Vaught led singing. Young people also taught in Sunday school, & passed the emblems of the Lord's Supper. It was a good day. Bro. Harry Coultas of Mackville had held meetings for us the preceding week; probably that helped inspire the youth as they served on the following Lord's Day. --Kenneth Preston

Central Kentucky Singspirations

According to a notice sent by Bennie Hill of Cramer Church in Lexington, various churches take turns hosting singing meetings on "5th Sundays." In Nov. the meeting was at Cramer. On Jan. 31 it will be at Belmont (Winchester). Salem Church (Cynthiana) will host it on May 30, and Antioch (Frankfort) on Aug. 29. Time: 3:00. Each church provides special singing. "Bring a group! Bring song leaders! Plan to stay afterward for an extended time of fellowship with refreshments."

A Practical Suggestion

"Perhaps your readers would be interested in something we have been doing for a long time now, which has proven very good for us. Maybe others would find it workable for them.

"At the end of each quarter we use the entire Sunday night meeting

for a 'closing program' for all Sunday School classes. Each class presents some part of what they have learned for the quarter. It may be memory work, a song, a skit, short drama, etc. Attendance is always good and we continue to see improvement in the children each time. They enjoy doing it and adults enjoy it as well.

"This quarter the Junior High had something a bit different. Each student was a Bible character. He gave clues as to his identity and the congregation had to tell who they were." --Glenn Baber, Turkey Creek, La.

A Cruise To Alaska

Julius and Claudia Hovan will lead a group on a cruise to Alaska around July 3-9, 1993. Cost of flight to Vancouver, a 7-day cruise and return flight will be around \$2,000. (Differences in cost will depend on your choosing cabins on a different deck.)

We plan to be in Eagle River with Winston and Irene one Sunday.

A trip to Denali can be included for about \$ 400. We would take the domed train up, spend the night, take the tour and return to Anchorage by motor coach.

A color brochure is being prepared to give full details. If you are interested in coming along, send for a free copy to:

Julius M. Hovan
P.O. Box 984
Gallatin, TN 37066

Act now to take advantage of the best rates and to be assured of a place. (Please make this information available to your congregation.)

Evangelism To Plant New Churches

Planting new churches is the New Testament method for evangelizing the world, as Paul showed. "Church planting is the single most effective way to fulfill the Great Commission" says Peter Wagner. Churches die, just like people. New churches are necessary for survival. New churches attract unchurched people and grow at a more rapid rate of growth. "One of the immediate implications of rapid culture change is that many members of the new generation will not be won to Christ in their parents' churches."

If individuals or churches want help in applying church growth principles, or help in planting churches, my services are available. I have studied and observed these principles work successfully for many churches. I've spent thousands of dollars for this training, please accept and use these resources. I welcome your assistance in my efforts and hope you invite me to assist you in yours.

For further information and working relationships contact:

Jerry Overman
104 Crews Drive
Louisville, KY. 40218
(502) 491-7412

Church Loses 3 Leaders In 24 Hours!

The Lilly Dale Church in Gatchel, Ind., lost 3 longtime members & active workers on Jan. 2-3. All were deeply involved in the leadership & ministries of the congregation, & all died suddenly & unexpectedly! Dick Storchman, Curt Howell and Archie Satterfield are sorely missed by the church.

The stunning loss of these brothers is a loud call to the remaining members at Lilly Dale to fill the gap by serving the Lord wholeheartedly, as they did. It is a loud call to the unconverted to make your peace with God now—none of us knows when life will end. It is a loud call to all believers in other places to pray fervently for the bereaved church in this time of great grief. Bert Wolf is elder there. & Sam March preaches

Should You Join This Group At SBS?

One is a respiratory therapist who plans to be a preacher. One is a deacon who works in a lumber processing plant. Two are housewives. One is a pediatrician planning to become a missionary. Two are auto mechanics and another works at the Ford plant. One is a youth minister at the Fisherville Church and another has become assistant minister at the Portland Church of Christ. And that's not the complete list.

Despite their diversity these SBS students have in common a deep love for God and His Word, His Church, and a perishing world. They desire to know Christ their Lord more intimately, and to serve Him better. So they have enrolled at SBS. Their enthusiasm is exciting!

They number only thirteen, but a year ago this time we had only five--so we are encouraged. (These numbers do not include extension classes taught in various congregations, but only those studying at our campus at 2500 Portland Ave. in Louisville.) We are thankful for each student and invite you to join their number.—Newsletter of School of Biblical Studies

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