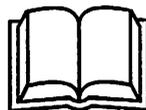


"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The **Word and Work**



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

SEPTEMBER, 2004

**Errors to avoid,
Miracles to be grateful for,
Storms to endure,
A Coming to yearn for,
Citizenship to consider wisely. . .**

All that, and More, in this issue!

30th Annual Central Louisiana Christian Fellowship

Nov. 15-18, 2004 at Glenmora, La. Church of Christ

NIGHT Theme: The Church's Responsibility in the 21st Century

EXPOSITION Theme: God is Light, Love, and Life (1 John)

DAYTIME Theme: Prophetic Portrayals of Christ in Exodus

Prayer Time: Tues.-Thur., 9:30 a.m. **Singing:** Mon.-Thur., 7:00 p.m.

MONDAY NIGHT, Nov. 15

7:00, Develop a Longing for Heaven in the Home

Sonny Childs

TUESDAY, Nov. 16

10:00 (after prayer-time, 9:30) The Burning Bush

Dale Foster

11:05 God is LIGHT (1 John)

Robby Bacon

1:15 The Passover Lamb

Bud Ridgeway

7:00 Train Young Men to Serve the Lord

Don McGee

WEDNESDAY, Nov. 17

10:00 (after prayer-time, 9:30) The Manna

Jack Harris

11:00 God is LOVE (1 John)

Robby Bacon

1:15 Water from the Rock

David Ramsey

7:00 Practical Methods of Evangelism

Sonny Childs

THURSDAY, Nov. 18

10:00 (after prayer-time, 9:30) The Tabernacle

Dick Reuben

11:05 God is LIFE (1 John)

Robby Bacon

1:15 The High Priest

Dick Reuben

7:00 The Threat of Islam

Don McGee

Youth Speaker Wed. and Thurs. Nights: Jason Barnard

For Tapes: Don Stump, 502: 477-2252.

For Housing: Dennis LeDoux 318: 748-4243

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

Dennis L. Allen, Missions

Bennie Hill, News & Notes

The Word and Work is published monthly except December by Portland Ave. Church of Christ, Inc., 2500 Portland Ave. Louisville, Ky. 40212. Subscription: \$11.00 per year; bundles of 10 or more to one address = \$10.00 per subscription. Address correspondence to Word and Work, 2518 Portland Avenue, Louisville, KY 40212.

Periodicals Postage Paid at Louisville, Ky. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Word and Work, 2518 Portland Ave., Louisville, KY 40212.

Vol. XCVIII

September, 2004

No. 9

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Errors to Avoid

Alex V. Wilson

For the past two months we looked at some complicated and controversial subjects: If we are saved by grace, must we repent? If so, how much? And if repentance is required, doesn't that contradict salvation by grace and instead become legalism?

And once we are saved, can we become un-saved again? If so, what kind of assurance can we have? Also, if we can lose salvation, how can God be considered sovereign? But if we cannot lose our salvation, are we robots? And how do God's invitations, warnings, and conditional promises fit into the picture? Etc. etc. You might remember we even had a debate between A. W. Tozer and A. W. Tozer--or so it might have seemed.

Well, we haven't run out of questions yet. They're just on other matters, unrelated to the ones just mentioned. This month's articles raise these inquiries: Should Christians serve in the military or not—and if so, should we be conscientious objectors? Should we vote and/or run for office, or not? (That's timely, isn't it?)

Again, one article this month tells how God miraculously healed a believer as elders prayed and anointed her. But right after that we learn of numerous believers who are dying or have died of cancer.

That's followed by an article that says, "We're not in Heaven yet." Then a poem tells us, "But we might go there very soon, and 'what a day of rejoicing that will be.'" So let's pray with John, "Come, Lord Jesus."

So it goes, on and on. The many-sidedness of life and of truth. Not that everything is relative. Not that there are no absolutes. But let's just be reminded that both truth and life are complex. And that we can't put God in a box.

So may we avoid the error of being *simplistic*. If we think we know and understand everything, we'll surely become *dogmatic* and then maybe *cantankerous*, and *close our minds* to further insights the Father wants to teach us.

But don't forget the other side of that coin, either. May He keep us from being perpetually *wishy-washy*, lacking convictions on the core facts of the Gospel of salvation and the foundational doctrines of the faith. Paul told his apprentice, "As for you, continue in what

you have learned and have become **convinced of**" (or, **assured of**; or, have **firmly believed** (2 Tim. 3:14 NIV/ASV/RSV). Thank God we can also be "**confident of this**, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6). There's no wishy-washyness in those verses. Most of all, may we be able to say truly, "I know HIM in whom I have believed, and I am **persuaded/convinced/sure that HE is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day**" (2 Tim. 1:12). Do you have *that* sureness? Other things can wait, but not that.

The Lord's *Miracles* for Lesley

Mrs. Joyce Lyon

Eight years ago, my daughter, Lesley, received a severe head injury while on a youth mission trip to St. Louis. This accident happened while her youth group was bowling at a church-owned bowling alley. Because there were no automatic pin setters, Lesley volunteered to set up the pins and to place the bowling balls up on the tracks that returned the balls to the bowlers.

Instead of traveling up the track as it should have, one ball came back down the track and fell two feet down onto the top of Lesley's head. The bones in her head, spine, and the left side of her body were all moved out of place. As a result of her injury, she has had several serious medical problems:

(1) The flow rate of her spinal fluid was cut in half, leaving her barely enough energy to walk. She fell asleep almost every time she sat for longer than ten minutes. This lasted throughout her freshman and sophomore years of high school.

(2) When a new doctor made it possible for her spinal fluid to flow normally again, her heart reacted violently to the extra fluid, often beating up to 200 times per minute. This put strain on her heart and added the possibility of her passing out.

(3) On several occasions, the bones and muscles around her stomach would restrict her stomach in such a way that the stomach would revolt and cause Lesley to throw up everything (including water) that entered her stomach.

(4) For the first two years, Lesley was in constant severe pain. For the last six years, she has been treated by a wonderful Christian

Osteopathic doctor who has been moving her bones, by hand, slowly back into their proper places. Under his treatment, her pain has not been nearly as severe, but it has always remained constant. She has had an eight-year headache without one second of relief. She has never been allowed to use pain killers on a regular basis because the only ones that gave her relief are narcotics.

During all of those eight years, Lesley knew about the scripture in James 5:14 where God promises to heal those who have the elders of the church pray over them in faith and anoint them with oil. She believed the verse, but felt that for some reason God was using this period in her life for a special purpose. During the last few months, she felt that God was telling her it was time to be healed. On Sunday, August 15, Lesley had the elders anoint her and pray. Her headache was gone immediately and it has not returned.

On the next Saturday, August 21, Lesley went for a pre-arranged doctor's appointment.

She did not tell the doctor that God had taken away her headache because she wanted him to see the medical evidence first. After examining Lesley, his first words were, "Something has changed dramatically. What we have been working on for years, has happened." When Lesley told him that God had healed her, he commented, "I know it wasn't me because some of the bones that moved were not ones I was working on. I thought your pain was coming from somewhere else." He would not charge us for the hour he had just spent with Lesley because he said, "I cannot charge you for something God did."

This was only the first part of the miracle that God worked in Lesley's life. A year and a half ago, Lesley suddenly developed an eating disorder. Her stomach would not tolerate (without pain) meat, dairy products, wheat, potatoes, hydrogenated oils, or caffeine. She visited several doctors, and they could find nothing wrong except for a slight wheat allergy. About two weeks after Lesley's head was healed, God also healed her of the eating problem.

On September 27, Lesley made the last visit to her osteopathic doctor. He requested that she make this visit because he wanted to see if God was planning to do anything else. He wanted to observe and learn from the "Perfect Physician."

Needless to say, I am thrilled that I serve a God who can work miracles, and I am thrilled that He chose to work one in Lesley's life. But I do not just praise Him for the healing. God was good to us every minute of those eight years. He was the One who held us,

cried with us, and gave us the strength we needed. Through those years, we got to see into the very heart of God. I read recently a book called, *Walking Taylor Home*, by Brian Schrauger. It is the story of a Christian family as they helped their young son die of cancer. When Taylor could not stand it anymore, when he needed to scream in anger, pain, fear, and frustration, his earthly father understood. His father held a pillow up to his own chest. As his son hit the pillow, the father absorbed all the son's anger and frustration through the pillow and into his own body. And, as he held the pillow, the father wept. That is exactly how our heavenly father acts when we cannot take it anymore. He understands; He absorbs all our blows into His own body, and He weeps.

It is important that I thank everyone who "wept" with our family during this trial. There were many people who encouraged, comforted, and prayed us through the last eight years. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to two wonderful Christian doctors who not only dedicated their practices to God years ago, but were true servants of God as they treated Lesley for the last six years. They prayed for her every morning and often while they were treating her. When both doctors were needed to accomplish her treatment, one always worked without pay. Twice, one of her doctors came back from vacation for the sole purpose of treating Lesley. And once when Lesley was experiencing a great deal of pain, her doctor looked her straight in the eyes and said, "Lesley, I would take all your pain if I could." In such people, we observed probably the greatest blessing that trial can bring because, in them, we caught a glimpse of Christ.

We do not, as yet, know exactly all the reasons why God allowed this accident to happen to Lesley. We know that God uses experiences like this to build Christian character, to bring us closer to Him, to give us friends and prayer partners to stand with us, to bring people hope and comfort, and to bring glory to Himself. As Lesley has often stated, "God must have had something wonderful in mind, and I expect Him to bring it to pass."

Soldier On!

JESUS IS WITH US, BUT IT IS STILL STORMY

Leroy Garrett

Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. – Mt. 28: 20

Ouida and I take our turn in the Prayer Room at our congregation – the Singing Oaks Church of Christ in Denton, Texas. A number of us give an hour a week to this ministry, which makes for a continual all-day prayer vigil for most of the week in behalf of those who make requests. Some requests are turned in during our assemblies; some are phoned in or e-mailed. Ouida and I take turns. She goes one week and I go the next. We sign in, noting the hour, and post a notice on the door that the room is occupied, allowing for privacy. There is a stack of "Request for Prayer" cards on the table before us – sometimes more than a hundred.

Those in the prayer ministry do not consult with each other about how to do this, not even Ouida and I. If one takes the cards one by one, and prays for each one, naming the problem to the Lord, one would never in one hour get through all the cards – not nearly all of them – unless one employs a highly accelerated method of praying. We might solve this by dividing the cards, so that one would take up where the previous left off. Even then over a week's time all the people would be prayed for again and again. But we don't do this, even though I sometimes find some cards separated, as if the previous person was suggesting I might start where he or she left off.

But we don't talk to each other about how to go about it. We just do it, each on his own, however differently. A private thing, I suppose. One thing especially interests me. When we pray for a person, we initial the back of the card, noting date, so those in charge will know the request has been honored. The older cards are saturated with initials, with hardly any place to write. Even new cards are soon abundantly initialed. It looks as if everyone is prayed for by all of us, every time! Perhaps as many as 150 cards, and in an hour!

It makes me wonder how the others go about it. Maybe they use my method. I *do* get through all the cards, scores and scores of requests, each time, but I thought I might be cheating. I read all the names to be prayed for, one by one and card by card – sometimes in a whisper, sometimes silently – mentally noting the request, which in itself can be a communion of prayer. Then, as suggested by the

apostle Paul, "I bow my knees to the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family of God in heaven and upon earth is named," and I hold up all the cards together to the Lord, and pray for them all together. There is enough time left to hurriedly initial the cards.

One cannot help but be overwhelmed by the vast sea of trouble and heartache reflected on those cards! Ouida comes home from her turn somewhat chastened. "Cancer!" she sometimes moans, "So much cancer!" Yes, there are those who fear the "C" word as they undergo tests ("Please pray that I don't have cancer!"), or they are facing surgery for cancer, or they are dying of it – or a loved one is. How do you pray for someone whose body is riddled with cancer? And what is one to think when a card is removed from the stack marked "Deceased" -- one initialed and prayed over abundantly?

The Lord is with us, isn't he? But it is still stormy.

The prayer cards are about more than cancer – much more. A young wife and mother asked that we pray that her truant husband will come back to her and the children. Another fears her husband is about to leave. Some are looking for a job or a better one, others seek decent housing. Some can't pay their rent ("I don't know what we're going to do"). One card requested prayer for a son sent into harm's way in Iraq. There are loved ones in the hospital, in wheelchairs, in a nursing home, in prison. We are asked to pray for peace, freedom, and justice in our cruel, terrorized world. Others ask that we pray that our youth might not go astray, for our elders and deacons, our ministerial staff.

Surprisingly, some request that we pray that they might be more spiritual and closer to the Lord. I was touched by a single line on one card, "Please pray that my husband will come to the Lord."

Sometimes as I hold up the cards I think of them as a microcosm -- a miniature of our sinful, troubled world. I could be praying over millions, even billions, of cards as well as a hundred or so. And the problems are much the same, all around the world. Even when many of the problems are of our own making, even our own sins, it is no less tragic.

I also sometimes think – and even dare to say to God himself – *and this is the world to which the Messiah has come! This is the world that God so loves that he gave his only Son – but look at it!* Jesus is with us, but it is still stormy. I think of all those that we pray for as on a ship at sea, with all their problems – a large cancer ward of course! – and Jesus is the ship's pilot. Not only is the ship a kind

of halfway house, coping with problems, problems, problems – but the sea itself is stormy! Jesus is the pilot and he is in charge – and he is omnipotent – but still the storms rage on.

It is a question I don't know how to answer. I accept the reality of what the Scriptures refer to as "the mystery of evil" in a world over which God is sovereign. I can live with mysteries and conundrums. Isn't that what faith is about? We are to walk by faith, not by sight. But one can point out that Jesus never promised that discipleship would be easy, or that there would be no problems – some of them very serious problems. He spoke plainly to his disciples, "In the world you will have troubles," and then added, "but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

That was the passage that led Malcolm Muggeridge, the British cynic and skeptic, to accept the Christian faith in his latter years, and to become an effective apologist for that faith. Jesus was not misled by a deceitful world – and he overcame it by being authentic – and that is reason enough to be his disciple, Muggeridge concluded.

Jesus overcame the world by dying for it. He came into a stormy world and ministered to a stormy world. And he died amidst the storm. The world will apparently always be stormy – at least until God's tomorrow. The good news is that Jesus is with us amidst the storms. That is what he promised – not to steer us around the storms, or above them, or below them, but *through* them. And in the mystery of it all God uses the storms to mold us into what he wants us to be.

Perhaps that is the lesson of Jesus calming the sea to the astonishment of his disciples – "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey him" (Mark 4:41). Not that he will drive away every dark cloud in our lives, but that he will bring the sunshine of peace within, however fierce the storm.

Going on 81 and 86 as we are, Ouida and I know that, if the Lord tarries, one of us will soon face a storm of cyclonic force – going on without the other. As of now I can see it only as unbearable to give up Ouida, assuming that I draw the short straw. It is a storm that I dread and would choose to avoid. But I've been through storms of hurricane force before, and I've had something to hold on to – the promise of promises: "I will be with you always, even unto the end of the age."

The storm is sure to be fierce – aren't they always? -- but there will be peace within.

You're Not There Yet

by Rubel Shelly, in The FAX of Life, Aug. 23, 2004

Billy Bob lived "way out in the sticks." Maybe it wasn't exactly the end of the earth, but it was rumored you could see it from there. Then he won an all-expenses-paid trip to New York as the designated caller in a radio contest.

He took his first ride on a jet. He landed at LaGuardia only to have a long black limo waiting for him. He was still wide-eyed as it pulled up to the entrance of a posh hotel and people rushed to open doors, carry luggage, and otherwise tend to his needs. A bellhop said he would show him to his suite.

Then came his first disappointment. Following the attendant, he walked through the lobby and passed into a room lined with mirrors, trimmed in mahogany, and railed by brass. It was nice, but it was smaller than he had envisioned for a penthouse. And it seemed he was going to have to share it with other winners, for two people were already there when he walked in.

Sensing something wrong, the bellhop asked, "Is there a problem, sir?"

"I don't mean to complain," he said. "I was just expecting a bigger room."

"Oh, no sir!" he replied. "Your luxury suite is prepared and waiting thirty-nine stories up. This is only the elevator we use to transport you there."

What are you facing today? Cancer? Bankruptcy? Bad job? No job? Frustration? Anger? Alcoholism? Unhappy customers? No customers? Being single? Being married? Being a parent? Being a child?

Don't think for a moment that today's situation has to be the story of your life, the sum of your existence. The good, the bad, and the indifferent of today are only mile-markers on your total journey to eternity. The terrain over which you are traveling must not be confused with its destination.

"You won't see us drooping our heads or dragging our feet!" wrote Paul. "Cramped conditions here don't get us down. They only remind us of the spacious living conditions ahead. It's what we trust in but don't yet see that keeps us going" (2 Corinthians 5:6-7, *The Message*).

If a lack of patience is a serious problem for you today, perhaps it's because you have confused your pilgrimage with your destiny, the elevator with the penthouse. Hold on. Stay the course. You're not home yet.

“Behold, He Cometh”

(Revelation 1:7)

R. H. Boll

“Behold He cometh with the clouds!”
A heavy shadow falls before,
Men’s hearts are failing them for fear,
Foreboding judgments at the door.

“Behold, He cometh with the clouds” --
For His beloved dawns the day;
They lift their heads and look aloft
And take new courage on the way.

“Behold He cometh with the clouds” --
From Heav’n descending with a shout,
With angel’s voice, and trump of God
His hidden ones to gather out.

Caught up they meet Him in the air,
Theirs not to taste the wrath below,
Their lately tear-stained faces now
Reflecting Christ in radiance glow.

Well are they paid for all their pain,
Forgotten now the thorns, the cross,
Forever with and like their Lord,
For whom they counted all but dross.

“Behold He cometh with the clouds”--
The careless dwellers on the earth
Are overtaken with a snare,
Seized as with sudden pangs of birth.

“Behold He cometh with the clouds”--
What is the message to my soul?
Is it of terror and dismay
Or joy that views the longed for goal?

Be thou prepared, O my heart,
That that morn may no darkness bring!
“Behold He cometh with the clouds”--
The lost shall wail, the saved shall sing.

should they express themselves in the polls? Does that vote suggest that they have placed their emphasis on the affairs of this world rather than "seeking a better country" where Christ will be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords? Since we are citizens of two worlds, are there burdens we properly carry for the present one as we place our hope firmly on the next?

Practical experience teaches us how difficult it is to be actively partisan in our political outlooks and still remember to "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness." With a nation as bitterly divided as the United States seems to be at present, it is extremely difficult to take sides and yet to keep the political contest in the background behind our more consuming desire for the Coming of Jesus. And as Lipscomb observed during the Civil War, how tragic that Christians find themselves angry with each other over earthly political issues and allowing that anger to result in the separation of brothers and sisters in Christ. This is particularly true in the light of Jesus' exhortation to "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Sincere Christians who study the Scriptures will probably continue to come down on different sides of this issue. The tension between the coin with Caesar's image and the things of God remains with us and probably will until Jesus returns. In the meantime, young people faced with the difficult decisions relating to that tension continue to need our love and our prayerful counsel, along with serious study of the Scriptures. And perhaps the most helpful support we can give to people making those decisions is to begin by acknowledging the fact that such choices are never simple ones. The long bibliography accessible on the web or in the local library regarding the relationship between Christians and their civil government suggests that serious people continue to search for a Christ-like decision on this ancient question.

During the nineteenth century, the leaders who advocated fuller participation in the life of the government tended to be among the "liberal wing" of the church ("liberal" then meaning primarily non-exclusivist), and the pacifistic advocates tended largely to include those whose attitudes led them toward the emerging conservative Church-of-Christ wing of the Movement. It is particularly interesting that in the present American culture, the liberal churches tend more often to advocate pacifism and vigorous criticism of the Government, while the "evangelicals" often support both governmental programs and, on occasion, even wars.

For young people who are considering their future lifework, military or civilian, there remain numerous questions about the Christian and the "powers that be." From the standpoint of the Law of Moses, it is clear that "Thou shalt not kill" did not mean that there were no circumstances where it was proper to execute wrongdoers, either among the chosen people themselves or among the enemies of the Lord's people on the battlefield. Even Old Testament models are not clear guides for the Christian reader: David, "a man after God's own heart," was acclaimed for his military prowess from his youthful victory over the giant, Goliath, until the day the women of Jerusalem sang, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands!" (1 Samuel 18:7). David's abilities as military leader were used greatly by the Lord in establishing the kingdom of Israel, but when the time came for the building of the temple of God's Presence, those very abilities sullied his qualifications to be the builder (1 Chronicles 28:3).

When Jesus taught His disciples to "turn the other cheek," did He mean they should not help defend the weak and helpless, or their families and neighbors from violent attack? (One instance when even that was forbidden was the case of Peter in the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus told Him to put away his sword, for "Those who live by the sword shall perish by the sword. ") Does Paul, in telling us to obey our rulers for the sake of good order, suggest that Christians should not participate in maintaining that order as police or guards, even though we ourselves are part of the citizenry in a republic where we represent both governed and governors?

Why, we can wonder, did the Lord choose a military officer of the Roman Army to be the first direct Gentile convert to Christianity (Acts 10:1-2)? When John the Baptist counseled the soldiers as to their proper Godly behavior, why did he speak of honorable service but not tell them to change their profession (Luke 3:14)?

And when Christian men and women believe that one political candidate might champion Christian values more than another,

Not all the pioneers among the Disciples/Churches of Christ agreed with the extreme disassociation concept of Campbell, Lipscomb, and Harding. Even the tender Thomas Campbell, Alexander's father, wrote in answering a letter from a reader in Ohio,

For he that said, "Resist not evil;" also said, (Matt. xxii:21), Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." And by his Apostles, Peter and Paul, he has given us the most solemn charges to honor kings, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work. See Romans xiii. 1-7, Titus iii. 1; I Pet. ii. 13-17. Wherefore there can be no inconsistency between the two lines of duty, so distinctly respecting our private personal duties to our fellow-creatures . . . and our political duties in relation to civil society. In the mean time, however, our civil obligations do not bind us to do any thing that the Lord has forbid us to do. For while we are to render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, we must also render to God the things that are God's (MH 1839:577).

Thomas Campbell was educated according to Presbyterian polity as a minister of the Gospel, and the Presbyterian theology of citizenship may be reflected here in some contrast with the evolving beliefs of his son. But disagreement on the broader subject continued as the Movement developed. Some of the leading conservative disciples were pacifists during the Civil War, partly because they were concerned about Christian being arrayed against Christian and the church's division as a result, while others felt constrained to actively support the political and military objectives of their regions. Leroy Garrett, in his history of the Movement, notes:

While both Stone and Campbell were confined pacifists, as were J. W. McGarvey, Benjamin Franklin, Moses E. Lard, Tolbert Fanning, and many others, there were those who took up arms against each other. Stone and Campbell both had a son in the Confederate army, James A. Garfield, destined to be President, was a Union general, while J. R. Garrison was a colonel. Some were fiercely belligerent (*The Stone Campbell Movement*, 1981, p. 503).

The Scriptural understanding of the Restoration fathers heavily emphasized the *New Testament Church* as opposed to the Old Testament, a position which to some extent diminished the normative position of Old Testament ethos in terms of ethical behavior. This probably contributed to the separatist syndrome by many of them. There has always been some fuzziness about the place of the Ten Commandments, for example, in the minds of Disciple Bible students, in relation to Paul's emphasis on freedom from the Law. The almost exclusive reliance upon the Gospels and the Epistles as ethical norms has made pacifism and separatism more natural concepts than for some theologies which place more emphasis upon Old Testament examples.

Bible students during later generations of disciples. Thus by the time of World War II the heirs of Harding who became my mentors were able to suggest non-combatant service with a military group as one option for the future young draftees in their classes at Harding College.

Politics, Anyone? Pacifism, Anyone?

Lipscomb and Harding were solidly in tune with the philosophy of the earliest leaders in the Stone-Campbell Movement in their opposition to Christians' direct participation in the political process. Alexander Campbell, who at various times expressed his deep love for the United States, his adopted country, still believed that the contests of political parties and candidates were not appropriate arenas for the exercise of Christian discipleship. In 1840, the year of the founding of Bethany College, Campbell wrote a section on politics under the title "Morality of Christians." His summary paragraph concludes:

Surely then, the Spirit of God cannot be an inmate in that bosom that exhales so foul a breath, and that delights in words so contrary to the law of love. The spirit of politicians and the spirit of God are as antagonistic as flesh and spirit, as hatred and love, as heaven and hell; and he that would faithfully and truly serve the one, must abjure all allegiance to the other. "*You cannot serve God and Mammon.* This is but one of many reasons why Christians cannot take an active part in the politics of the present day. Would to God that they would set their affections on the politics of heaven, and leave the politics of earth to those who cannot soar above the Allegheny mountains" (*Millennial Harbinger*, 1840:413).

There is one problem which makes the decisions of Americans about their relationship to the political life and military responses asked of them even more difficult than the options faced by Paul and Peter. It is the fact that, unlike those men ruled by Nero or other tyrants of the New Testament era, the American system does not allow for an I-Thou difference between the governors and the governed. While Paul may teach us to obey "the powers that be," thinking of those rulers and agents "out there" who require our obedience, in the American arrangement we who are governed *are* the governors as well. Campbell believed in a "separation of church and state"--perhaps a slight hangover from his youth in the British Commonwealth. "It is indeed a great misfortune and a sad error to attempt at any time to unite religion with 'politics' in the sense now under consideration" (MH 1840: 569). His post-millennial views perhaps led him to hope, early in his American years, that the United States might prove to be the very place where the reign of Christ might be realized. But by 1840 his assessment of the political system no longer allowed him to consider that his contemporary politicians would be a leading part of millennial perfection!

soldiers a like sense of mission. So, in one sense, as we prepare to cast ballots, to take part in national campaigns for political leaders, to take positions about the wars of liberation and the preemptive strikes against terrorists waged by the United States, the old equation emerges once again.

Important Scriptures, Differing Interpretations

In two of the classic passages about Christians and civil obedience, Paul and Peter both approach the question of constituted human authority as an "other" --as an entity quite separate from the life of the Christian but one which is to be honored and respected (Romans 13; I Peter 2). Both acknowledge the right and duty of the human government to maintain order, even by force if necessary, and Paul even ventures to mention the word "sword" in his dissertation upon civil authority. Both Peter and Paul claim that the civil authority functions under the authority of God Himself, and that it is incumbent upon us to obey, within the limits of conscience, as though we were obeying the Lord.

That "other-ness" concept seems to have been particularly active in the beliefs of David Lipscomb. Earl West, in his Restoration Movement history (*Search for the Ancient Order*), says:

It was, therefore, a profound conviction of David Lipscomb's that for Christians to enter into politics was not only wrong in principle but sinful against God. He refused to vote and urged others to refuse. Likewise, of course, did he refuse to participate in carnal wars which were but strifes between political governments brought on by jealousy and greed. Human governments, owing their origin to man's rebellion against God, would be overthrown when men the world over would all submit themselves to the government of God (Vol. II, p. 213).

L. C. Sears, husband of J. A. Harding's granddaughter; reports a similar position toward military participation on the part of Brother Harding. Young Harding's initial negative response to war grew out of his revulsion when the mutilated body of his youthful friend was shipped home from a Civil War battlefield for burial. Sears notes his evolving attitude, however, over his years of Scriptural study:

It was an emotional reaction, but with maturity and his study of the Scriptures the emotional repulsion changed to a deep religious conviction that war with its slaughter and hate is contrary to the spirit and teaching of the Christ and no Christian could engage in it (*The Eyes of Jehovah*).

The radical separation between the Christian and civil government advocated by these two pioneers softened somewhat with many

draft board in Arkansas readily gave me the classification, 1-A-O. After I entered the army and was sent to the Army Air Force, my service record carried the words, handwritten in red ink, "conscientious objector." When I changed duty assignments and my service record was handled by military clerks, I received numerous strange looks, some critical and occasionally snide comments, and on rare occasions even a few words of approval from fellow soldiers who were not registered as conscientious objectors.

When I requested overseas service, the only two assignments open to me were in the medical corps and as a chaplain's assistant. My service with the Twentieth Air Force was in the latter category, where I was assigned to a wonderful man of God from the Northern Baptist denomination--a man who served both the Lord and his country faithfully and who touched my life in many positive ways.

Knowing my heart, he even called me into a life as a preacher when he *ordered* me to carry the Gospel up the road on Guam to a naval station where the sailors had been deprived of spiritual leadership for a long time! (Yes, I felt I had received a very substantial "call" to preach!) "Chappie" was not a conscientious objector. Earlier as we shipped out for overseas duty and I was erroneously issued a carbine in spite of my CO status, he quipped, "If we get into a tight spot, you toss me that thing as fast as you can!"

Many young Christian men with various theological backgrounds elected only to perform national service as civilians. They were assigned to various camps, usually operated by the traditional "peace churches" such as the Mennonite Brethren and others, where they often labored at conservation and civil construction projects.

World War II, of course, was the "Just War" in our recent national history. It highlighted the tension confronting every American Christian in the options we face as members of a society which enjoys--or used to enjoy--strong Christian roots in our national ethic. The war itself was a response to a murderous attack on Pearl Harbor. And as it developed, the realization that Jews and others were being systematically brutalized and murdered in the Holocaust surely gave American Christians cause to feel that if ever, surely then they were justified in being part of the military response to the atrocities and aggressions conducted by our enemies. Troops liberating Holocaust death camps, experiencing the shock of their first encounter with the horror, must have felt that they were truly doing "God's work" in eliminating those abominations.

Some of the current mail from troops in Fallujah or Najaf detailing atrocities by insurgents carrying out "jihad" may well give those

An Ongoing Dialogue:

GOD or CAESAR?

Dale Jorgenson

Then he said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21b).

In the spring of 1944 I received my letter from Uncle Sam--alias President Franklin D. Roosevelt--which said pointedly, "I want you!" My eighteenth birthday a month earlier thrust me into the dilemma faced by thousands of young Christian men in that era, and by both young men and women now who are considering a military career: Can I serve my country as a member of a military organization and be true to the Lord Jesus Christ in the fullest sense? And the question, by extension, confronts American citizens who are facing a national election, or even considering public service in a political capacity. And what should we make of the debate over Christian prayers and symbols in public places, ranging from monuments of the Ten Commandments to prayers at important public school events?

Having been a student at Harding College (now Harding University) for two years before receiving my draft notice, I had been granted ample opportunity to think and pray about the meaning of this event in my life, and to discuss it with men and women of spiritual depth at the College. Chief among those influences upon my conscience was Brother J. N. Armstrong, son-in-law of the eminent James A. Harding and in a sense heir to many of the concepts held by that giant pioneer among Church of Christ leaders.

Brother Armstrong--along with numerous other members of the faculty at Harding, and in concert with Brother Boll and some of the Biblical scholars in the pre-millennial group surrounding him--was an American patriot. But he held firmly that since a Christian's first duty was to God, only secondary loyalty was due to country. "We must obey God rather than men." He stressed the non-resistance of Christ at the cross as our example, together with the teachings of Jesus and Paul about Christ-like treatment of our enemies. Thus Armstrong advised young Christian men in the position where I found myself in 1944 to serve in the military when called, but to do so with a basic caveat: I will obey any orders I am given, and go wherever I may be sent, but I will not kill another human being.

My own course at that time was to register under the privilege accorded American citizens with such a conscience, and the local

TWIN TYRANTS

Edward Fudge

A gracEmail reader who works hard to do good and to help others feels sad and frustrated because his work often goes unnoticed, while others who seemingly do less work and do it less well receive public attention and praise. He asks how to find freedom from his disappointment and dismay.

* * *

Your experience and struggle are common for God's people. Perhaps the key (which I do not always properly use myself) is in doing our work "for the Lord" in the first place and at each step along the way. Then we need only his approval -- of which we may be sure when we have done our work with love and with care. That allows us to take pleasure in knowing that we have done the work well, whether anyone else on earth acknowledges it or not. It also frees us from undue concern about human criticism, since we are not working for other people but for Christ.

One man who learned this lesson was Watchman Nee, the Chinese apostle and martyr who died in 1972, ending 20 years of confinement and torture in a communist prison. Throughout his ministry, Nee suffered unjust accusations, betrayal and desertion by supposed friends and gospel coworkers, as well as times of great popularity in China and even international acclaim. Yet he did not seek the praise of other humans and did not defend himself against their unjust criticism. God had taught him that his only master was Christ, and that the opinion of anyone else -- whether a good opinion or bad -- was simply irrelevant.

Jesus knows what you have done and are doing for him. Give your labor and productivity to him, for his honor and glory -- a gift from you to the Master. That elevates your work beyond anything human recognition can possibly reward. It removes your work from the authority of human judgment. It frees you from the twin tyrants of human criticism and of human praise.

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Another WAR in the MIDDLE EAST!

Alex V. Wilson

Here's a remarkably up-to-date story from the Bible:

Now Saddam Hussein of Iraq -- *Oooops! I mean:* Now Ben-Hadad king of Aram [or Syria] mustered his entire army. Accompanied by 32 kings [more like tribal chiefs] with their tanks and rocket-launchers --*Oooops!*—their horses and chariots, he went and besieged Kuwait --*Oooops!*-- Samaria [the capital city of Israel] and attacked it.

[I'm having trouble reading clearly, so I'd better turn it over to you: It's 1 Kings 20, NIV, with some italics and also some bracketed comments added.] Let's review: Ben-Hadad king of Aram had raised a large coalition army and invaded the kingdom of Israel, surrounding its capital city, Samaria. Trapped in that city is Ahab, king of Israel, with the royal family but also many of the citizens. But not all was hopeless. Some cities were besieged for years, yet survived.

2 He [Ben-Hadad] sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel, saying, "This is what Ben-Hadad says: 3 'Your silver and gold are mine, and the best of your wives and children are mine.'" 4 The king of Israel answered, "Just as you say, my lord the king. I and all I have are yours." [Try to imagine all that!]

5 The messengers came again and said, "This is what Ben-Hadad says: 'I sent to demand your silver and gold, your wives and your children. 6 But about this time tomorrow I am going to send my officials to search your palace and the houses of your officials. They will seize everything you value and carry it away.'"

7 The king of Israel summoned all the elders of the land and said to them, "See how this man is looking for trouble! When he sent for my wives and my children, my silver and my gold, I did not refuse him."

8 The elders and the people all answered, "Don't listen to him or agree to his demands."

9 So he replied to Ben-Hadad's messengers, "Tell my lord the king, 'Your servant will do all you demanded the first time, but this demand I cannot meet.'" They left and took the answer back to Ben-Hadad.

10 Then Ben-Hadad sent another message to Ahab: "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if enough dust remains in Samaria to give each of my men a handful."

11 The king of Israel answered, "Tell him: *'One who puts on his armor should not boast like one who takes it off.'*"

12 Ben-Hadad heard this message while he and the kings were drinking in their tents, and he ordered his men: "Prepare to attack." So they prepared to attack the city.

13 Meanwhile a prophet came to Ahab king of Israel and announced, "This is what the LORD says: 'Do you see this vast army? *I will give it into your hand today, and then you will know that I am the LORD.'*"

14 "But who will do this?" asked Ahab. The prophet replied, "This is what the LORD says: 'The young officers of the provincial commanders will do it.'"

"And who will start the battle?" he asked. The prophet answered, "You will."

15 So Ahab summoned the young officers of the provincial commanders, 232 men. Then he assembled the rest of the Israelites, 7,000 in all. 16 They set out at noon while Ben-Hadad and the 32 kings allied with him were in their tents getting drunk. 17 The young officers of the provincial commanders went out first.

Now Ben-Hadad had dispatched scouts, who reported, "Men are advancing from Samaria." 18 He said, "If they have come out for *peace*, take them alive; if they have come out for *war*, take them alive."

19 The young officers of the provincial commanders marched out of the city with the army behind them 20 and each one struck down his opponent. At that, the Arameans fled, with the Israelites in pursuit. But Ben-Hadad king of Aram escaped on horseback with some of his horsemen. 21 The king of Israel advanced and overpowered the horses and chariots and inflicted heavy losses on the Arameans.

22 Afterward, the prophet came to the king of Israel and said, "Strengthen your position and see what must be done, because next spring the king of Aram will attack you again."

23 Meanwhile, the officials of the king of Aram advised him, "*Their gods are gods of the hills. That is why they were too strong*

for us. But if we fight them on the plains, surely we will be stronger than they. 24 Do this: Remove all the kings [32 of them, remember?] from their commands and replace them with other officers. 25 You must also raise an army like the one you lost - horse for horse and chariot for chariot - so we can fight Israel on the plains. Then surely we will be stronger than they." He agreed with them and acted accordingly.

26 The next spring Ben-Hadad mustered the Arameans and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel. 27 When the Israelites were also mustered and given provisions, they marched out to meet them. The Israelites camped opposite them like two small flocks of goats, while the Arameans covered the countryside.

28 The man of God came up and told the king of Israel, "This is what the LORD says: *'Because the Arameans think the LORD is a god of the hills and not a god of the valleys, I will deliver this vast army into your hands, and you will know that I am the LORD.'*"

29 For seven days they camped opposite each other, and on the seventh day the battle was joined. The Israelites inflicted 100,000 casualties on the Aramean foot soldiers in one day. 30 The rest of them escaped to the city of Aphek, where the wall collapsed on 27,000 of them. And Ben-Hadad fled to the city and hid in an inner room.

LESSONS To OBSERVE & LIVE BY

#1. The Craziiness and Power of Bad Habits:

Ben-Hadad and the 32 kings allied with him were in their tents getting drunk. "Addictions," we call it. The word "habits" is more accurate. It reminds us we are not totally helpless nor guiltless. We are responsible for habits we form.

There are so many enslaving cravings: *Drunkenness*, still a major problem. It destroys families, leads to crime, causes accidents and death, and on and on. *Tobacco* is so costly, leading to expensive medical bills for everyone (for instance, insurance). It ruins health, killing painfully and prematurely. *Gambling* is still spreading like wildfire, causing bankruptcies, crimes, divorces, poverty, suicides. When will folks ever learn?

The Web also forges chains. It's fascinating, enlightening, a wonderful servant to use but a monstrous master that can kidnap us if we're not careful. *Soap operas* on t-v keep many folks enchained. To some viewers the characters seem more real than their own children. They even celebrate their birthdays! Not all *Video Games* are

totally bad, but many are full of violence and sexual lust. And some kids are so bewitched they miss out on numerous valuable interests due to countless hours weekly entranced by the "games." (Do young people read good books anymore?)

Pornography is degrading, whether it's "soft" or hardcore. It twists God's beautiful, joyful gift of pure sex. It is spread everywhere - in mags, TV, movies, videos, email and the web. It is vicious, destructive, and demeaning to women--turning them into "things," mere tools for gratifying men's cravings. It breaks up homes, and often leads to rapes.

Then there's *Easy Credit: World* magazine said, "The big banking corporations are fully aware of our weakness, and altogether ready to exploit it. That's why your mailbox is cluttered every month with invitations to apply for still one more credit card, maybe with no interest at all--for a while. But the interest rate will soon be hiked, and not to something reasonable like 10-12% but to something like 20-25% -- and then economic *slavery* sets in. A young man, just 18 years old and a senior in highschool, over the last few weeks got enough such offers that, if he had responded he could already be \$100,000 in debt."

Lesson #2. Enemies Often Strike AGAIN. One victory (or even more) does not mean we can sit back/relax. The prophet said, "Strengthen your position and see what must be done, because *next spring the king of Aram will attack you again.*" Satan and the world and the flesh are like that, too.

So we must beware of over-confidence, of trusting in our own strength: "*One who puts on his armor should not boast like one who takes it off.*" As our Lord reminded us, "Watch and pray," trusting God's Spirit to empower us, but also remaining alert. One major way of doing that is to ask a Christian friend or friends to help hold us accountable.

#3. Ben-Hadad's Astounding Demands, and God's RIGHT Demands:

King Ben-Hadad said to Ahab: "Your silver and gold are mine, and the best of your wives and children are mine." And Ahab answered, "Just as you say, my lord the king. I and all I have are yours."

What incredible tragedy! Ben-Hadad had **no right** to do such a thing! But our holy God - powerful Creator - wise Preserver - loving Redeemer **d-o-e-s** have the right to say that to us.

And He does make such total demands, because He loves us and knows His demands and commands are for our good, our eternal benefit!

#4. To Trust God & Experience His Victory, we Must KNOW Him:

Thinking inaccurately regarding the LORD will keep us from Victory. The Arameans believed, "Their gods are *gods of the hills*. That is why they were too strong for us. But if we fight them on the *plains*, surely we will be stronger than they. [Next time we will] fight Israel on the plains. Then surely we will be stronger than they." "...the Arameans think the LORD is a god of the hills and *not a god of the valleys*."

Some church-members have a god of the Hills only. Camp-time, conferences, amazing answers to prayer – these are mountain-top experiences: "Wow! God is great!" That's good, but only if it carries over to day-by-day trust, to obedience in hum-drum times. Do we walk with God in the *valleys* too?

Some folks have a god of the Valleys only. When problems multiply, or if crises or emergencies strike, then it's "God, HELP!" They'll attend church, pray, volunteer to help--*then*. But when the crises are solved and the problems pass, they slide back into apathy, laziness and carelessness. You may not see them for weeks, months or years at a time. (I confess: Sometimes I pray, "Lord, please send John and Jane some problems!")

You and I need to promise God: "Lord, I'll follow You during the thrilling Mountain-top times, and also during the traumatic Valleys of troubles and sufferings, and also during the ordinary, routine, plain Plains of Life—when life is neither especially high nor low. For You are the God of the Hills and of the Plains and of the Valleys. So I will give You ALL of myself for ALL of my days, for You are Worthy!

See poem on next page regarding this.

‘Thou Art with me ALL the Days’
I TAKE THY PROMISE, LORD

H. L. R. Deck

I take Thy promise, Lord, in all its length
And breadth and fullness, as my daily strength.
Into life’s future fearless I may gaze,
For, Jesus, Thou art with me “all the days.” *

There may be days of darkness and distress,
When sin has pow’r to tempt, and care to press.
Yet in the darkest day I will not fear,
For, ’mid the shadows, Thou wilt still be near.

Days there may be of joy, and deep delight,
When earth seems fairest, and her skies most bright;
Then draw me closer to Thee, lest I rest
Elsewhere, my Savior, than upon Thy breast.

And all the other days that make my life,
Marked by no special joy or grief or strife,
Days filled with quiet duties, trivial care--
Burdens too small for other hearts to share--

Spend Thou these days with me, all shall be Thine;
So shall the darkest hour with glory shine.
Then when these earthly years have passed away,
Let me be with Thee in the perfect day. Amen.

* Literally, Matthew 28:20 says, “I will be with you *all the days.*”

VOICES From the FIELDS

From Karen Ashley

Solomon Islands

9-24-04

[James is now the field director for the Wycliffe Bible Translators in the Solomon Islands.—avw] Our box number remains the same here in Honiara [the capital city]. The difference is that now we are the ones who actually get all the mail for the translation group and distribute it by ship or by friends going the right direction to all the other teams. As mundane as this sounds, keeping up with the mail can be a challenge. At one point in our history before email became so popular we heard from the post office that our box got more mail than any non-government box in the entire country!

Here is a brief update on things here. James officially became director about a month ago, and proceeded to get malaria his second day in the office. [He had it a number of times in past years. —avw] He's fine now, but that first week was pretty rough. We are finding that in this job there is always something that needs taking care of that is just not going according to the plan, and we end up spending days on tasks that should be the simplest things. We have been to the electric company at least 6 times trying to straighten out a bill that was wrongly figured and to the bank 5 times to get the new signature card to be activated. One team has been trying to fly back to their allocation, but their flight has been cancelled four times, which means they have packed and stored their belongings and done the chores like washing the sheets and cleaning out the fridge three times. (They are learning, so this time they decided to leave the chores a little closer to last minute.) It is frustrations like this that make this job difficult. The core tasks of promoting Bible translation and facilitating nationals in running translation projects just gets drowned in the flood of the mundane things.

BUT---in between the little things we are seeing good things happen. We held a workshop recently during which one of the participants wrote a letter resigning from his job as a school teacher so that he could work on translation full time as a volunteer. The consultants from Dallas who had come to hold the workshop said they had never seen such enthusiasm to get the work done. These national translators were starting at 7 in the morning and often asked us to leave the conference room open in the evenings so they could keep working after supper.

People here want God's word in their own language, and we just don't have the resources to give them the help and guidance they really need. We so badly need more people to join us in the task. Thanks for your prayers for us.

James & Karen Ashley, Bible Translation Advisors to the Sa'a people. Box 986, Honiara, Solomon Islands

The Bryantsville, Indiana Hunger Relief Project

The Bryantsville Hunger Relief Project feeds hungry people all over the world. You can help.

HUNGER FACTS:

About 24,000 people die every day from hunger or hunger-related causes. This equals over 8 million people every year. 6 million of those deaths are children under the age of five.

The BHRP sends high-lysine corn to the poorest of the poor – people who are subsisting with almost nothing and no appreciable resources for food. Often they are victims of natural disasters such as earthquakes or floods, or politically induced disasters such as war and deprivation. In the last two years, most of our corn has gone to Central America to help people in areas devastated by hurricane Mitch.

A TRUCKLOAD OF HIGH LYSINE CORN . . .

Contains 700 60-pound bags of high-lysine corn and can feed 6,000 people for one day; costs approximately \$2,700 (shipping is additional) and requires about 30 man-hours to bag and 18 man-hours to load.

More than 100,000 bags have been shipped since 1985. That's enough to feed over 8 million people for one day.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Make a financial contribution to The Bryantsville Hunger Relief Project Inc., Attn: Calvin Tincher, Treasurer, P.O. Box 1023, Bedford, IN 47421.

Volunteer to help with bagging or loading.

Talk with your church or other association to encourage them to become a sponsor of the Bryantsville Hunger Relief Project; *Pray for this ministry*: that it will prosper and grow; that the corn gets to those who need it when they need it; for the safety of the workers; and for our direction and guidance.

[This highly commendable ministry was begun many years ago by brother Hollace Sherwood of the Bryantsville, Ind. Church of Christ. -avw]

Feedback on July W&W

Dear Brother Alex,

The latest W&W [July] on salvation was an excellent presentation of the issues regarding assurance and warning. I enjoyed the issue and benefited from it. Can a person lose his/her salvation is a question that seems to come up on a regular basis. I am glad to see it addressed in the W&W. People want assurance (and the Bible gives that, as your issue pointed out), but we need a balanced approach. My standard response to the question of losing salvation is that one cannot *lose* his/her salvation, as if you will wake up one morning and find your salvation missing. Losing your salvation is probably not the right terminology. I think the better question (and the one I believe scripture addresses) is "can one *leave* his/her salvation or faith in Christ?" The W&W did a good job in addressing that question.

One other point of emphasis that is worth noting is that the scripture is filled with tension between two positions. Predestination vs. freewill, grace vs. works, the hardening of a heart vs. God's desire to redeem all, the humanity of Christ vs. the deity of Christ, and certainly assurance of salvation vs. warning against apostasy. It seems that any system of thought and theology (and, as you know, there have been many of these "systems," some even becoming mini-religions in my opinion) trying to explain away completely the tension in any of these areas does an injustice to the Word of God. I believe God wants us to live within these tensions--between assurance and warning for example. These tensions keep us from becoming prideful and arrogant. Also, much like the engineering principle of tension being used to support bridges and other structures, the tensions given in scripture as we live between them support our faith. Living in the tension . . . deepens our faith in Christ, it sharpens our focus on Christ, it gives determination to our walk with Christ, and ultimately it reaffirms our constant dependence upon our Lord.

Thanks for your faithful service in the ministry of the W&W and know that the Lord is using it for the edification of His church. In Christ, James Girdley [James ministers at Highland Community Church in Louisville.]

Sexual Purity and Sexual Garbage

My Body and Me: "You are always dragging me down," I said to my Body.

"I drag you down?" replied my Body. "What do you mean! Who taught me to like tobacco and alcohol? You, of course, with your stupid immature idea of being 'grown-up.' My taste hated both tobacco and alcohol at first, but you insisted on having your way."

My Body continued to scold me. "Who put an end to all your angry and revengeful thoughts last night? Me, of course, by insisting on going to sleep. Who does his best to keep you from talking too much and eating too much, by giving you sore throats and indigestion? Me, of course."

"Well, what about sex?" I asked.

"Yes, what about it?" exclaimed my Body. "If you and your wretched imagination would leave me alone, I would not cause you any trouble. Mind, you are unreasonable: **you give me orders and then blame me for carrying them out!**" --Source unknown

* * * *

"Pure Intimacy"

[Focus on the Family's website]

As a Web site ministering to those struggling with online sexual temptation, *Pure Intimacy* received more than 366,000 visits in 2003. [Here are some sample testimonies:]

"This site is very helpful and has awakened me to the scope of my own problem. Please continue to provide this help! There are so many hurting people, especially Christians like myself who need this kind of resource."

"Porn is like holding onto a shiny rock when God wants to give you a purely cut diamond. Your articles have been helpful and a "slap in the face" coming at a time when I was slowly losing my grip. I'm 17, and I couldn't look at girls--even God-loving girls--with a clear conscience. I sought help.

"I can't say that I'm miraculously cured, but God won't ever let me go. Yes, I still carry a lot of pain, but reaching out to others going through worse situations makes me forget my own complaints. God bless you. "

"This is a great resource. I first visited this site a few years ago, but wasn't ready to face my problem. This site helped me start on the road to recovery. I know this is just the beginning, but I now feel that I can truly overcome this. "

"This is one of the few sites I have found on the Internet dealing with a woman's view on sex addiction. I believe that Satan took advantage of my situation when I was young. My problem started as a seed and is now a tree that has grown into every area of my life. Thanks for offering this site. Even in the dirtiest places of my life, I see that there is hope. "

" My wife found out four days ago that I was addicted to Internet porn. Needless to say, this has brought my marriage to the brink of ruin. Your site has given me courage to pick up the pieces and rebuild my marriage. "

"I stumbled across this Web site not knowing where it was leading; it's a great blessing and benefit to me. A one-time view of your site made a definite difference in my thinking about pornography and other aspects of sexuality. I cannot wait to pass this insight on to others and help my children learn to treat sex in the way that God intends. I've found freedom and forgiveness at the feet of Jesus as I cast my cares upon Him and rejoice in my increased faith. There is hope for my future through Christ. "

To learn more, visit www.pureintimacy.org.

TV's Latest Assault on our Children

Tim Winter, Director of the Parents Television Council, writes: I'm totally disgusted with TV networks -- and the sponsors that pay for their shows -- manipulating our children and sliming their minds and morals with off-color, smutty programming.

TV's latest assault on our children is the NBC-TV network's premiere of a new cartoon show called "Father of the Pride." This a new show that NBC endlessly promoted during its broadcast of the Summer Olympics as "from the makers of Shrek," a delightful animated feature film for kids. Possibly the most disgusting thing about *Father of the Pride* is that the producers had to know full-well that children would be attracted to an animated program, especially one with cute, cuddly-looking animal characters. And yet the animated lions deliver a powerful sucker-punch to families -- a barrage of sexual innuendo and profanity.

You see, when "Father of the Pride" actually premiered, it turned out to be "one big off-color joke" and "downright smutty" (review in the Deseret Morning News of Utah). I won't offend you by quoting this show's filthy content. If you want the documentation, it's there on the PTC's website. <http://www.parentstv.org/ptc/action/fotp/mainh.asp>

Muslims Terrified of Terrorists

a.v.w.

Finally, after the brutal school siege in Russia, a number of Muslim writers and editors around the Arab world dared to speak out against Islamic terrorism. (Of course some Muslims had done so earlier, but they were like lone voices crying in the wilderness.)

The general manager of a widely watched satellite t-v station wrote in a pan-Arab newspaper, **“It is a certain fact that not all Muslims are terrorists, but it is equally certain, and exceptionally painful, that almost all terrorists are Muslims.”** He went on to say that it is “shameful and degrading” that not only were the Beslan hijackers Muslims, but so were the killers of Nepalese workers in Iraq; the attackers of residential towers in Saudi Arabia; the women believed to have blown up 2 Russian airplanes; and Osama bin Laden himself.

He continued, “The majority of those who manned the suicide bombings against buses, vehicles, schools, houses and buildings, all over the world, were Muslim. What a pathetic record. What an abominable ‘achievement.’” He then recalled that “in the past, left-ists and nationalists in the Arab world were considered a ‘menace’ for their adoption of violence, and the mosque was a haven of ‘peace and reconciliation’ by contrast. Then came the neo-Muslims. An innocent and benevolent religion, that calls murder the most heinous of crimes, that says explicitly that if you kill one person you have killed humanity as a whole, has been turned into a global message of hate and a universal war cry.”

The editor of a daily newspaper in Beirut wrote, “All of us today are dehumanized and brutalized by the images of Arabs kidnapping and beheading foreign hostages.” And in Saudi Arabia a columnist in a daily government paper wrote, “The propagandists of *jihad* succeeded in the span of a few years in distorting the image of Islam. They turned today’s Islam into something having to do with decapitations, the slashing of throats, abducting innocent civilians and exploding people. The time has come for Muslims to be the first to come out against those interested in abducting Islam in the same way they abducted innocent children.” (from an article by John Kifner)

We surely should deplore the Muslims’ rabid anti-Israel hatred. And we surely should warn people of the dangers of terroristic Islam. As the Muslim leader admitted: “Almost all terrorists are Muslims.” A number of terrorists are egged on by passages in the Quran that promote violence and force. Some other passages have a differ-

ent tone, however (see paragraph 3 above). So let us remember not to lump all Arabs together nor all Muslims together. "Not all Muslims are terrorists."

Islam has its various branches and "denominations," just as Christendom does. To many people the term "Christians" means the medieval Crusaders, the pillar hermits, Quakers, Jehovah's Witnesses, evangelicals, Roman Catholics, fundamentalists, Mormons, liberals, and the Jim Jones cult—all lumped together. We rightly abhor such a simplistic approach. So let's not use it.

We may have neighbors or co-workers who are Arabs and/or Muslims. It is likely that they are rejected and hated by others in the community. Let us reach out to them with golden-rule love and understanding. The Bible tells us so. Jesus said, "Love your enemies."

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Bennie Hill, BHill40482@aol.com

PCS ALUMNI are getting ready for their annual White Elephant Sale on Saturday November 13, 2004. Each participating church will receive a free business card size advertisement in the program. Contact James Heid, @ PCS Alumni Association, 2500 Portland Ave., Louisville, KY 40212. Make plans now to visit your school and renew old acquaintances.

Woodland Bible Camp celebrates 50 years! The service of praise to the Lord was enjoyed by everyone who squeezed into the chapel. Over 200 showed up during the day-long activities on Sept. 11 at the campgrounds near Linton, IN. About 175 people stayed to enjoy the "pig-

pickin'" and share more memories.

Senior Citizen's Week at Woodland began the next day. It carried on the themes of celebration, praise to God, and appreciation for the human instruments He used. In addition to the Bible messages and discussions, there were talks about "Pioneers of the Camp Movement" among our Ky. & Ind. churches: Hall & Alice Crowder, Eugene and Alleyne Pound, Orell and Frances Overman, and Howard and Bessie Marsh.

Other highlights included rich fellowship, prayer-times, reports about various ministries, plus challenges re: world-missions and also the need to reach

out to many "Rahabs" around us here.

Perhaps as many as 40 Southeastern Christian College alumni were at camp during the week.

KBC/SCC Reunion... is being planned for Memorial Day, May 30, 2005. Special activities are now being planned to be held in Winchester, KY at the College Park. All friends, staff, past students, and alumni of KBC/SCC are encouraged to make plans now to attend this special chance to renew great friendships and times that the Lord blessed us through the college. For information regarding the construction of a monument to commemorate our rich heritage, contact either

J. R. Satterfield,
114 Brandywynne,
New Albany, IN 47150,
Or:
Julius Hovan
3124 Sarah Lane
Danville, KY 40422

Fall Revivals:

Sellersburg Church of Christ (Indiana) announces a "Seminar for All Ages" on October 3-6 with Bro. Sonny Childs. Fellowship to follow each evening in the Christian Center. For information / directions call Bro. Dale Offutt at (812) 246-2524.

Mackville Church of Christ (KY) 9/27 - 10/3 with Julius Hovan. 7:00 p.m.

Ebenezer Church of Christ (KY) 10/10 - 10/13 with Don McGee. 7:00 p.m.

Tell City, IN (David Johnson) Revival coming with speaker: Bro. Tim Hill. It begins Sun. October 3rd through Wed. Oct. 6th. Theme: "Putting Christ First" with messages from 1 Peter 2:1-10, 1 John 3:1-24 and Hebrews 13.

LaGrange Church of Christ, October 11-15, 2004, 7:30 p.m.
Mon, Elmer Wheatley, "Don't get even, let God"

Tues, Nathan Burks, "Open your ears & shut your mouth"

Wed, David Tapp, "Let God do the lifting"

Thu, Mike Abbott, "Don't stumble over your riches"

Fri, Joe Stone, "You make me sick"

Buechel Church of Christ Homecoming & Revival, October 24-27, 2004 (Sun-Wed), Julius Hovan, Preaching

Thought: "Don't tell God how big your storm is -- Tell the storm how big your God is."

Annual Thanksgiving Day Services in the Louisville/Southern Indiana areas will once again be held Thanksgiving Day from 10-11 at the Atherton High School auditorium.

As usual, we look forward to the PCHS chorus singing for us. And the speaker will be Mike Abbott.

Locust Street Church, Johnson City, Tenn. Rejoice -- "A nurse came forward this morning (9-26) to repent, ask the church for prayers, and place membership. Also, Debra Brewer, retired from the Armed Forces, is now a student at Emmanuel School of Religion and tutors there in Greek and Hebrew. She has helped us much this past summer assembling a little pictorial church directory. She also gathered stories and pictures for a booklet covering the past 70 years of Locust St. history (to be distributed at Nov. homecoming). And she summarized church news items from 1994-2004, picking up where Phyllis Kitzmiller left off in 1994. She and Jeanna Hall help with the children at church. We are blessed to have them."

-Janell Lewis

Appreciation for the Ladies Retreat and its team of planners (Louisville area): "Ladies, the program was excellent! A sister who came with us said she thought it was well done: It seemed like everyone worked together well. She didn't feel any one person was there to steal the show -- didn't sense a 'pecking order.'

"We appreciate the abundance of talent exhibited there in that brief 24-hour period. Don't believe I ever saw such a great variety of people utilized in such a brief period. It seemed things ran as smooth as silk. Know there were many hours spent planning in order to make it run

efficiently." --Janell Lewis. About 100 ladies &/or teen girls attended.

Leroy Garrett writes: We continue to get positive responses to my autobiography -- *A Lover's Quarrel: My Pilgrimage of Freedom in Churches of Christ*. Some say their favorite part is an addendum on "What I Want for Churches of Christ." Others find that they identify with some of my rather stormy experiences.

A telephone call was from a dear brother who had read the chapter on "Becoming An Editor And Landing in Jail," in which I told of how 26 preachers had signed a statement approving of the college's action in jailing me, which was published in the *Gospel Advocate*. He called to tell me he was one of the 26, and wanted to apologize. He was young then, he explained, and he had regretted all these years signing the statement. Fifty years ago! I told Ouida that that was his victory, not mine.

Maybe I've talked you into giving the autobio a read. If you send a check for \$14.95 to Leroy Garrett at 1300 Woodlake Dr., Denton, TX 76210, we'll put one in the mail to you, and we'll pay the postage.

[a.v.w.'s comment: We highly recommend Bro. Leroy's book. Ruth and I found it fascinating, sometimes humorous, sometimes heart-breaking, and thought-provoking. Please order from him, not us.]

BETTER THAN SALVATION . . .

Gordon R. Linscott, 1963 *W&W*

Yes, there is a blessing that is even better than being saved. It is the companionship of the One that saved you! Many—maybe most—Christians expect too little from God. “If I can just make it to heaven, I’ll be satisfied,” we hear. And so the whole of life is a drudgery, doing the things that just have to be done. God has higher ground for you, higher privileges, higher joys.

Moses enjoyed this privilege. To the Israelites God said, “Return you to your tents.” To Moses: “But as for you, stand here by me, and I will speak unto you . . .” (Deut. 5:30,31).

The Psalmist had discovered the joy of this personal relationship with God: “I love Jehovah . . .” (Psa. 116:1). For him, praying was not mechanical or impersonal; it was not just a crank you turn to work a machine. It was a personal conversation with God. What a privilege that is! And to think that God has time for us or wants us!

More than our service, more than our worship, He wants us. It is not that He does not want our service or our worship, but it is not the highest or the best until He has us.