

# **“LIFT UP YOUR EYES”**

Being the  
**Abilene Christian College  
Annual Bible Lectures**

**1965**

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## PREFACE

In the present day, when materialism is such a common thing, it is difficult for Christians to remain constantly focused on high-level spiritual aims and goals. Since we are obligated to rise above "the world and the things of the world," it behooves us to maintain a constant challenge before our eyes of the spiritual opportunities that are ours today.

The Restoration Movement has made tremendous progress in the last century and a half, and particularly in the last half century when the church of Christ has been "officially" distinct from the restoration groups who would lead us back into denominationalism or on into modernism. Even in the past 25 years the church of Christ has "lifted up her eyes" to a remarkable degree and has made perhaps more progress than most of our religious neighbors. The present estimate of more than two million members is perhaps conservative and, in view of our progress in buildings, individual wealth of members, and even gains in spiritual strength and outlook, is worthy of being noted. The Restoration Movement is the largest religious group indigenous to the United States, and we have been reported as being eighth in size of the major religious groups in this country. Many leaders in denominations have chided their members on the fact that the church of Christ is making such great progress in comparison to them.

In spite of the progress indicated above, however, we have not really begun to "put first things first" in our lives, nor have we really "lifted up our eyes" to view the teeming mil-

lions all around us who are yet unaware of the gospel plan of salvation. This book is purposed to help us get the vision of what the Lord would like for us individually to do.

The Abilene Christian College Annual Bible Lectureship is purposed to further the cause of Christ. This, of course, is the *raison d'etre* of the college itself. The Lectureship Program provides for its visitors both information and inspiration. It is a place and time for fellowship and prayer and the exchange of great ideas. The college is anxious to keep the Lectureship as one of the brotherhood's greatest gatherings for achieving these purposes, and the Lectureship Committee will always welcome constructive criticism and suggestions as we strive to keep the program the very best.

We dedicate this volume to all who have "tasted of the heavenly gift."

J. D. THOMAS  
Director

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# THEME SPEECHES

Lift Up Your Eyes



# TO OUR SOURCE OF HELP

JAMES LeFAN

James LeFan was born in Bailey, Texas, February 17, 1923. In November of 1944 he married Jackie Lusk of Eastland, Texas, and they now have three children—Mike 18, Loris 14, and Kevin 10.

He received his education at Abilene Christian College.

LeFan has been minister of the Western Hills Church of Christ in Temple since 1950. Prior to moving to Temple he served churches in San Antonio (Jefferson) 1944-46 and Baytown, Texas, 1946-50.

Brother LeFan is the chaplain of the 140 member Temple Lions Club and a member of the Board of Directors. He also serves on the board of the "Lions' Crippled Children's Foundation, Inc." He is president of "Bell County Society for Crippled Children."



He is a District Committee Member in charge of Leadership Training in the Heart of Texas Council of Boy Scouts of America.

His other activities include:  
1. Member of Advisory Board of Gospel Press. 2. Director-at-large on Board of the ACC Alumni Association. 3. Temple Campaign Director of the March of Dimes.

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If you have come to know much about life, you have come to know something of the problem of agonizing

need. The deeper we go into the experiences of life, the better we realize our inadequacies.

Our needs are varied, numerous, and sometimes as deep as the ocean's depth. We are weak and need strength, hungry and need food, and naked and need clothing. We are lonely and need friendship, blind and need sight, and sinners and need forgiveness. We are lost and need a Saviour. We are mortal and long for immortality. Physical death is our lot, but eternal life is our hope.

To what source shall we look for help? As we contemplate the deep needs—the need of forgiveness, of a Saviour, of eternal life—it becomes immediately obvious that we must look beyond human resources. Our wants go so far and go so deep, that human sympathy, wisdom, and power cannot avail. We must look up. We must “lift up our eyes to the hills, from whence cometh our help,” for our “help cometh from the Lord” (Psalm 121:1, 2).

### *God Is Our Source of Help*

The great message of the Holy Scriptures is that God can be depended upon to provide for His children. The psalmist sings: “When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up” (Psalm 27:10). “Our soul waiteth for the Lord: He is our help and our shield” (Psalm 33:20). “I will lift mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slum-

ber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from evil: He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore" (Psalm 121:1-8). Then in the New Testament we have such reassurances as these: "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). And if there is any doubt in your mind about God's willingness to supply even our deepest needs, all you need to do is to look at Calvary, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16).

*God's Omniscience, Omnipresence, and Omnipotence  
in Relation to Our Need*

Sometimes, despite these assurances, we find it difficult to see how God can help in our particular situation. Sometimes we permit the weight of our need to so bend us down, we cannot see up. Hence, we need to be reminded of certain great truths about God. Nowhere are the great attributes of God—His omniscience, His omnipresence, His omnipotence—set forth so strikingly as in the 139th Psalm, and nowhere do we see more clearly the practical significance of these qualities in relation to our need.

"O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.

er. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139: 1-16, 23-24).

The first great truth we see in the psalm is the *omniscience of God*. He knows all our needs. Sometimes we forget this truth. We are so overawed by the vastness of the heavens and the magnificence of God's creation, that we reason, "God can't be concerned about me." He can't know my problems, my heartaches, and my yearnings. Then I turn to the words of this psalm and find that all my reasoning has been false. For on the very threshold we read, "O Lord thou has searched *me*

and known *me*. Thou knowest *my* downsitting and *mine* up-rising, thou understandest *my* thought afar off . . ." God knows me! Hug this truth to your heart.

The second great attribute of God the Psalmist mentions is the *omnipresence of God*. The psalmist asks, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" The obvious answer is, there is no place where God is not. He is not limited by time-space concepts. Paul declared in his sermon on Mars Hill, that God is "not far from every one of us" (Acts 17:27). He is just as near to our brethren in Australia as here in America. We and they may pray simultaneously and God is present in both places to answer. He does not have to leave these shores when they call. God simply inhabits His creation. There is no place on earth or in space where you would be nearer to God than you are right this moment.

What a comfort this has been to those who have been separated from loved ones. The mother sends her son off to boot-camp in San Diego, and says, "God go with you, my son," and her heart is comforted that God will be with him there. A father sends his daughter away to college or to work in a strange city. He knows something of the dangers that threaten and the strong temptations she must face. Then he says, "God be your guardian all the way, my dear," and his anxious heart finds peace in the assurance that God will be her guardian.

To impress upon our hearts the truth of God's omnipresence the psalmist presents a series of contrasts.

*Heaven and hell.* "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." There is no place above or below where God is not present.

*Light and darkness.* "If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day." God is with us not only in the light of day, but also in the darkness of the night when fears so commonly enter our hearts and rob us of quietude of mind and soul. As the poet expressed it, "He stands within the shadows, keeping watch over His own."

In the third place, the psalmist points out the *omnipotence of God*. He is all powerful. He is able to help us in every time of need and every hour of crisis. To Abraham of old He said, "I am the Almighty God." This power of God is the most obvious of His attributes.

We have seen His power in a thousand places and demonstrated in a thousand ways. The Psalmist sees His omnipotence in man's creation. "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." We see His power in snow-capped mountains, or lush green valleys. We see it in a grain of sand or a blade of grass. The clap of His thunder, the flash of His lightning, or the roar of His wind declare it.

And this power He is eager to use in our behalf. "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him" (II Chronicles 16:9). He who loved us with an infinite love will not fail to hear us when we call. Jesus made this real when He said, "Ask, and it shall be given

you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7). When every other source of help has been tried and failed, there is a mighty reservoir of power in God who will not fail. I do not mean that God is a cosmic bellhop that jumps every time we snap our fingers, but I do mean that our God is concerned about our well-being and will answer our prayers. I do mean that our God "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20).

I do mean that God enables us to come to grips with life and emerge victorious. Do you believe that God will so strengthen your life? Are you living as if you believe it? If not, perhaps that's the reason you receive so little help from the Lord. Many of my brethren depend more on "lady luck" than they do on the Lord.

Do you find it difficult to break a bad habit? How about trusting God for help? Are you having some rather serious problems in your marriage? How about trusting God to help? Have you lost your job? Do you think the Lord can help in this situation? Are you an alcoholic? Do you believe God can give you the power to overcome?

We have failed so often, because we have sought to accomplish through our own strength. We have failed because we trusted in our own wisdom. We are made strong through the Lord, not in ourselves. We need to remind ourselves of the truth that the Lord spake unto Zerubbabel in the long ago, "... Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6).

*The Faithfulness of God*

These assurances of God's faithfulness in providing for our needs are sufficient for most of us, but there are some for whom they are not sufficient. Their tragic experiences with life make it difficult for them to believe that God provides. They reason, "If God loves us and provides for us, why cancer? Why insanity? Why was our little boy killed by a drunken driver? Why blindness? Why doesn't my child's mind develop?" I do not know the answer in every case, but one thing I do know; I know that the character of our God can be utterly trusted. This one great truth I want to impress so deeply on your heart that you are more likely to forget your own identity than you are this truth—God is faithful.

Paul in writing to Timothy declared, "... He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself" (II Timothy 2:13). Then Abraham voices this sentiment, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25)? Job declared, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him" (Job 13:15). Though separated by the centuries, they were not divided in their sentiment concerning the faithfulness of God, and with one voice they chorused, "God abideth faithful." Paul argues that it couldn't be otherwise because God cannot be false to Himself. Abraham, out of his experience with God, affirmed, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Then back when the race of man was in its infancy, the patriarch, Job, lost his children, cattle, and health, yet never doubted the faithfulness of God. Though he did not understand why he was called upon to endure such misery and heartache, yet he declares, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him . . ." (Job 13:15). *God is faithful!*

Thumb through a concordance and you will discover this to be a favorite theme of the Bible. The beautiful strain is heard over and over again in varied forms throughout. There are pieces of music in which some sweet air recurs repeatedly, now you hear it loud, now soft, now stirring in sonorous strains, now soothing in plaintive gentle tones; but it is still the same air. And the blessed thought of the faithfulness of God thus recurs throughout the Bible. It is the dominant note of the Psalms, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations" (Psalm 89:1). It is the unwavering conviction of the prophets, "... great is thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:23); God's faithfulness is the underlying assumption of all that Jesus taught about the Father's care. In the Epistles, in more than a score of places, you hear Christians reminded of the faithfulness of God, "Hold fast your faith without wavering for he who called you is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23). He will not fail you. You can be sure of Him because He is utterly dependable.

The entire Christian life and hope is based upon God's fidelity. Our belief in forgiveness of sin, the indwelling of His Spirit, His providential care, the ultimate triumph of righteousness, our resurrection from the dead, and the satisfaction of our needs—all these are undergirded by our confidence in the consistent character of God, and His abiding faithfulness.

In all areas of life, and in the manifold working of God this great principle may be traced. Test it first in its most obvious manifestation—in the dependability of nature. The constancy of nature is the most visible expression of the abiding faithful-

ness of God. As our scientists and researchers probe into the secrets of the universe, they are again and again reminded of the unity and utter dependability of God. You plant a seed in the ground, and it grows and produces after its kind. Astronomers can predict an eclipse 50 years from now and there it appears to the split second. On what does the fixity of these laws rest but just the faithfulness of God? The movements of the heavenly bodies, the succession of the seasons, the production of like effects by like causes—these have been uniform since the present course of things began. Upon this uniformity all human activity depends. The chemist mixes his materials, knowing that they will combine according to the laws of chemical affinity. The child tells his mother that he's going outside to play catch with God. When she asks him "How?" He says, "I throw the ball up and God throws it back." To the materialist these are ultimate facts, of which he has no explanation to offer; to the Christian they are so many evidences of the truth that God is faithful. Here is a visible expression of the eternal steadiness that never fails, never breaks down, never ceases. The Bible calls it the "abiding faithfulness of God."

Other things may fail you, but not God. "He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Lloyd Douglas, author of *The Robe*, told how he loved occasionally to visit a little old man who gave violin lessons. He had a studio, if it could be called that, a small room set in a long row of rooms where other music teachers taught. "I liked to drop in on him," Douglas said, "for he had a kind of homely wisdom that refreshed me. One day when I dropped in for a visit I greeted him with, 'Well, what's the good news today?' Putting down his violin and stepping over to a tuning fork suspended on a string, he struck it with a padded mallet, and

said, 'There is the good news for today. That, my friend, is A. It was A all day yesterday. It will be A all day tomorrow, next week, and for a thousand years. The soprano upstairs warbles off key, the tenor next door flats his high ones, and the piano across the hall is out of tune. Noise all around me, noise; but that, my friend is A.' "

It will steady your soul to remember that. There are some things in life that remain constant. They never change. You can depend on them. You may regulate your life by them. You can tune your soul by them and stake your soul on them. That is what the writer of Hebrews was saying about Jesus Christ. In the midst of changing political rulers, bloody persecution, and fiery revolution you may still count on "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

Now move up to the highest level, to test the faithfulness of God as Abraham did in the divine-human relationship. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" It was this certainty in the heart of Abraham that kept him steady when he was perplexed by questions he couldn't answer. He was concerned about the people of Sodom. He did not know what their fate might be, but in the end he was content to leave the results with God. He knew that the very nature of God made it impossible for Him to do anything but that which was just and right.

This is where we all must rest the case eventually, with all of these questions we carry in our minds for which there is no answer. We simply leave results to God certain that "the Judge of all the earth will do right." When all of our human affairs are summed up, God's righteousness will be seen in a clear

light. The ways of Providence in their distribution are often perplexing to us; still our hearts find refuge in the sure belief that God will do what will be seen, in the end, to be right. The end to which all things are working is right and good. It is our deep belief in this ultimate fact that consoles us and gives us courage amidst all the apparent discrepancies of Providence.

Beloved, may we be bold enough to believe the consistent testimony in Scripture of the unfailing love and good will of our God, of His ability to help us, and of His willingness—indeed eagerness—to do so. The adventure of living the Christian life has not really begun until we begin to stand on our faith legs and claim for ourselves, our homes, our health, and our world, the resources of our God.

# TO THE LIFTED-UP CHRIST

JIMMY ALLEN

Born in Little Rock, Ark. April 16, 1930.

Obedyed the gospel while a student at Harding College in 1949.

Began preaching in October, 1949.

Degrees—BA from Harding, 1952. MRE from Harding at Memphis, 1959.

Teacher in the Bible Dept. at Harding College in Searcy since fall of 1959.

Made a tour of the middle east in the spring of 1964 . Visited Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Israel, Greece, Italy, France, and England.



Married the former Marilyn McCluggage in August, 1951.

Two children: Cindy (5) and Jimmy (4).

#### Preaching:

Has done local work in Prescott, Magnolia, and Lepanto, Ark.

Held meetings in 12 states.  
Held approximately 180 to 185 meetings.

#### Responses in meetings:

1959— 9 meetings

1960—15 meetings

1961—14 meetings

1962—15 meetings

1963—13 meetings

1964—19 meetings

1959—171 baptisms—177 restorations  
 1960—215 baptisms—289 restorations  
 1961—220 baptisms—227 restorations  
 1962—161 baptisms—186 restorations  
 1963—156 baptisms—270 restorations  
 1964—533 baptisms—1077 restorations

**Best meetings:**

1957—Newport, Ark., 67 baptisms and 34 restorations  
 1959—Pocahontas, Ark., 67 baptisms and 53 restorations  
 1960—Flint, Mich. (Bristol Road church), 63 baptisms and 93 restorations  
 1961—Flint, Mich. (Bristol Road church), 57 baptisms and 75 restorations  
 1961—W. Memphis, Ark., 42 baptisms and 27 restorations  
 1956—Newport, Ark., 40 baptisms and 12 restorations  
 1964—Springdale, Ark., 107 baptisms and 75 restorations  
 1964—Dallas, Tex., 222 baptisms and 505 restorations

**Service Record:**

Quit high school to join the army. Discharged as a Staff Sergeant in November, 1948.

**Added note:**

Has cooperative meetings scheduled for Memphis, Dallas, Detroit, Seattle, El Paso, and a number of other places.  
 Will preach in Australian campaign next June.  
 Author of a book of sermons—"What is Hell Like and Other Sermons."

## INTRODUCTION

This evening I will speak to you for a few minutes on the subject: "Lift up Your Eyes To the Lifted-Up Christ." In

John 3:14-15, Jesus said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." In John 12:32-33 we have another statement from our Lord: "'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.' This He said, signifying what death He should die." When Jesus spoke of His lifting up, obviously, He made reference to the manner in which He was to die. The lifting up refers to His crucifixion upon the cross between two thieves on Calvary's height. This evening, then, in speaking to you on "Lift Up Your Eyes To the Lifted-Up Christ," really, I will discuss the death of Jesus. There are many things that can be said about our Lord's death, but in tonight's lesson, I am particularly concerned about one aspect of His death. Namely, why did Jesus die? What was the purpose of His death?

### *Importance of Christ's Death*

But, in the very outset of this discussion, I submit proof which points up the importance of the theme we are about to consider. First of all, in Revelation 13:8 the Bible says that our Lord was a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. This means, then, that the death of our Lord was in the heart and mind of God from the very foundation of the world. Secondly, His death is predicted in the Old Testament. That death was foreshadowed in all the sacrifices made during Old Testament times. Every time the blood of an animal was shed, such pictured, portrayed and typified the death of our Lord on the cross for the sins of the whole world. Furthermore, in the Old Testament, there are specific state-

ments given by the prophets concerning the fact that our Lord was to come to the world and die for our redemption. Thirdly, His death is very prominent in the New Testament. H. C. Thiessen, in his work, *Systematic Theology*, page 313, wrote, "If all the three and one-half years of His public ministry had been written out as fully as the last three days, we would have a life of Christ of some 8400 pages." This passage shows that the Lord's death and those events which immediately preceded it, had a great deal of prominence and importance from the viewpoint of the gospel writers. Had they placed the same emphasis on all of the Lord's ministry that they placed on the last three and one-half days, we would have gospels of 8400 pages in length. R. A. Torrey, in *What the Bible Teaches*, page 144, claimed that there are 175 direct references to the death of our Lord in the New Testament. There are 7959 verses in the New Testament and, if Torrey is right in what he wrote, that means one out of every 53 verses refers directly to the death of the Son of God. If you want to see something of the New Testament emphasis, read the sermons reported in the Acts. I can assure you that not one of those sermons leaves out the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Fourthly, the death of our Christ is one of the fundamental themes of the gospel. In I Corinthians 15:1-4, Paul wrote: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand. By which also you are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose

again the third day according to the scriptures." If I become deep and profound in the Bible and get away from the fundamental fact that Jesus died for my sins, my religion will be Christless and powerless. The death of Jesus runs like a silken cord through both Testaments. A man who gets away from the cross will lose his soul, regardless of his ability to argue and reason. Regardless of how much scripture he may quote, regardless of how many church services he may attend, if he gets away from this fundamental fact, he is of all men most miserable.

Fifthly, the death of the Lord is essential to our salvation. In John 3, the passage I read a moment ago, Jesus said that as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so He had to be lifted up that man might have eternal life. The death of our Lord is absolutely essential to our salvation.

Sixthly, keeping in mind the death of Christ is one of the safeguards against apostasy. If we will meditate upon and think seriously about His suffering on Golgotha, this will keep us from drifting. In II Peter 1:5-7 we read of the Christian graces. Peter said, in verse 8, "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." According to Peter, the man who drifts is the man who forgets how he was purged from his old sins. If you forget about the cross, you will get away from God. Think about the cross and you will stay in touch with God. Therefore, thinking about the cross is a marvelous safeguard against apostasy.

Seventhly, the death of our Lord is of supreme interest in heaven. According to Luke's account, Moses and Elijah appeared on the mount of transfiguration with Jesus. They spoke to Jesus about the decease which He was to accomplish in Jerusalem. In Revelation 5:8-10 we learn that the 24 elders, whose thrones surrounded the throne of God, and the four living creatures, who praised God Almighty day and night, were singing praises to the Lamb for having redeemed the world through His death. According to Revelation 5:11-12 angels, who have no need for redemption, were also praising the Lord Jesus Christ because He died on the cross that the world might be saved.

Eighthly, the death of Christ is becoming increasingly important to those of us who claim to be simply Christians because of our failure to place emphasis at this point. We are concerned about the body of Christ. We do a lot of arguing about what the body can or cannot do. We are marvelous in preaching churchanity, but we are very weak in preaching Christianity. The attitude we have today stands in marked contrast with the attitude of the brethren in the early days of the church. Their first controversies did not arise over the church and what it could do. Their first arguments arose over the nature and personality of Christ. Such indicates that they thought more about Jesus than we do. How long has it been since you have heard an argument about the nature of Christ? How many Bible classes have you attended where brethren had a difference concerning the personality of Jesus? Have you been in the church of God for thirty, forty, or fifty years? You have never heard arguments of that kind. Brethren will argue about the body of Christ, but there are very few discussions about the head over the body, the Lord Jesus Christ.

*False Concepts of Christ's Death*

There are some false concepts concerning our Lord's death. I want to deal with some of them very briefly. First, we shall consider the Accidental theory. What do I mean by accidental theory? I mean that some think our Lord's death was simply an accident. You are driving down the road, lose control of your automobile, and hit a tree. There is no profound reason for it; it just happened. Such people take the position that Christ was a man who lived in advance of His age and that He set forth progressive ideas which the people could not accept. Because of His views, they rose up and killed him. There was no real significance to it. It just happened. Extreme rationalists hold to this view. Needless to say, a man who believes the Bible cannot accept it for at least two reasons. The Old Testament predicted that our Lord was to die. In the New Testament there are similar predictions. In Matthew 16:20-23 our Lord told his disciples that He was to go to Jerusalem, be killed, and be raised again on the third day. Simon Peter began to rebuke Jesus. He said, "Be it far from thee Lord." Then, the Lord rebuked Simon. He said, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savourest not the things of God but the things of men." Jesus predicted that He was to die. In Acts 2:22-23 Peter said the death of Jesus was in harmony with God's predetermined council and foreknowledge. You may rest assured that it did not simply happen. It was no accident. It was a part of God's plan and purpose.

Secondly, there is the Martyr or Example theory. Simply stated, this is it. We look at the cross and see the Lord's noble

example. Then we learn to be true and faithful. We learn what courage and daring really are. We receive such encouragement from looking to Him that our lives are changed and reformed. This theory was advocated by an uncle and nephew who lived in Poland. Their names were the same, Socinus. This view is called Socinianism. These two men are the founders of the modern unitarian movement. There is much truth in what they taught. Jesus did die as an example. I Peter 2:21 states He suffered, "leaving us an example, that ye should follow in His steps." By looking at His great sacrifice, we are moved to live the sacrificial life. But, my friends, the Lord did more than set an example in His death. If the example is all we see, we fail to understand that He died to satisfy the nature of God. And, we fail to understand His unmartyr-like conduct in the garden. He knew He was to die the next day. He prostrated himself on mother earth and said, "Father, if it be possible let this cup depart from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thy wilt." This theory also fails to account for His unmartyr-like conduct on the cross. On the cross He said, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Compare those two statements of Jesus with the way Stephen died. Did Stephen think God had forsaken him? Have the martyrs across the years ever uttered such statements to the Father? No! Why? Because there is a fundamental difference between the death of Christ and their deaths. He didn't behave like a martyr for the simple fact that He was not simply a martyr.

Thirdly, there is a theory known as the Grotian view. This was advocated by a Dutch lawyer named Grotius. He said we have sinned by breaking the law. Therefore, we deserve to receive the punishment of law. Christ came and perfectly ful-

filled the demands of the law. He died on the cross to receive the punishment of the law. Thus, the law is satisfied and we may be saved. His view is too legalistic. Jesus did not die on the cross simply to fulfill the demands of the law, but to satisfy the justice of God. I steal your money, return it to you, and pay a fine for the stealing. The demands of the law have been satisfied, but are we any closer together? Has atonement been produced by my fulfilling the demands of the law? No! Christ did satisfy the demands of the law, but He did more. He brought God and humanity back together again.

Fourthly, there is the Arbitrary theory. I didn't read that in a book. This is a name I have applied to the view myself. Brethren, I am shocked to say that some people in the church of the Lord accept this view. The Arbitrary theory is this: God could have saved us in any one of a dozen ways, but He arbitrarily chose to save us by the cross. I heard a gospel preacher on the radio make a statement along that line. He said, "God could have saved us a number of different ways, but," he said, "He chose to save us this way. Therefore, we must accept it." My brethren, a man who doesn't know any more than that doesn't have any business in the pulpit. That is ignorance gone to seed. That sort of man doesn't know the abc's of New Testament Christianity, yet, he is supposed to stand as a representative of God. Can you imagine a spokesman for the Lord not knowing why Christ died on the cross? If God arbitrarily chose to save the world by the cross, why, in the name of common sense, didn't He do it another way? Why didn't He choose a less expensive way? Why give His own Son to be slaughtered on the cross? That makes a demon out of God. I don't want anything to do with Him, if He

could have saved us some other way and didn't do it. Such a view is not even close to Christianity. I don't care how right that man may be on baptism, he is as wrong as he can be on the very foundation of Christianity. If God could have saved Jesus, why didn't He answer His prayer to be spared? Christ said, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup depart from me, nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt." He prayed so earnestly and fervently that the sweat came from His body as it were great drops of blood. Why didn't the Father spare Him? Because it was not possible! But, you will find some brethren who actually accept this view and preach it. I can hardly register the contempt of my soul for such a view.

### *Why Did Christ Die?*

Why did Jesus die? In the first place, our Lord died to take away the law. In Colossians 2:14-17 Paul wrote:

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

In dying, Christ blotted out the handwriting of ordinances. He took away something. He nailed something to the cross. What is that something? From verse seventeen, we learn what was taken away regulated meat, drink, holydays, and the Sabbath. Obviously, that was the law. Paul specifically mentioned the Sabbath. So, the law that regulated the Sab-

bath was nailed to the cross; it was done away. According to this passage, the law was simply a shadow of the reality which was to come. When you are hungry and see a ham sandwich, do you want to eat the sandwich or the shadow? When you are attempting to cross a creek, do you want to cross on the footlog or the shadow of the footlog? If a man, who argues that we are still under the law, were to apply his reasoning to eating and crossing the creek, he would eat the sandwich's shadow and cross on the footlog's shadow. My friends, the law was the shadow, and Christ is the reality. A man, who tells us that the law of Moses is still binding, must logically conclude that Christ either did not die or that He failed to accomplish His purpose in dying. I thank God we are not under a system of law, but a system of grace. Nobody could be saved simply by law.

Secondly, our Lord died to ratify the New Covenant. At Matthew 26:28, in the institution of the Lord's Supper, He said, "This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins." The blood of the New Testament is the blood by which the New Covenant was ratified, sealed, and made binding. The Old Covenant was sealed with blood. Hebrews 9:16-20 reveals that when the Old Testament was given, Moses took Hyssop, dipped it in the blood of calves and goats, and sprinkled it on the book. The book was sealed with blood. The New Covenant, like the Old Testament, is also sealed with blood. As a matter of fact, it had to be ratified by the blood of Christ before it became effective. In Hebrews 9:16-17 Paul said, "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: other-

wise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." In Arkansas language, that means when a man makes a will, the will does not become valid and effective until after his death. Our Lord's will did not go into force until after His death. That explains how the thief on the cross was saved. Some people ask, "Was the thief on the cross baptized?" I really don't know. I think I can come closer to proving he was baptized than to proving he was not baptized. Either way, it makes no difference because the New Covenant, ratified by the blood of Christ, did not go into force until after His death. Our Lord saved the thief while He was still alive. He was saved under the Old Covenant. Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins was not then binding. That's a part of the New Covenant. The question is not, "What did the thief on the cross have to do to be saved?" The question is, "What must we do to be saved under the New Covenant?" In the New Covenant, we are told to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. My friends, if we want to receive the benefits of that blood, then we must obey the Covenant which has been sealed with the blood. For example, at Revelation 1:5 the Bible says we are washed from our sins in His own blood. But, Acts 22:16 states, "And now why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins calling on the name of the Lord." One passage affirms that sins are washed away when we are baptized, the other passage says our sins are washed away by the blood of Christ. There is no contradiction in these statements. When we obey the Covenant, we receive the benefit of the blood which was used to seal the Covenant. This is exactly what's involved. This is a harmony of the two passages. In Matthew 26:28, the passage I read a moment ago, the scripture says, "This is my blood of the New Testa-

ment which is shed for many for remission of sins." Yet, Acts 2:38 says we are to repent and be baptized for remission of sins. His blood was shed for remission of sins, but we are to repent and be baptized for remission of sins. That simply means when we obey the Covenant sealed by His precious blood, we receive the benefits of the blood and our sins are remitted. Why did Jesus die? To seal, ratify, or make binding and effective the Covenant which I hold in my hand this evening.

Thirdly, our Lord died on the cross to fulfill Old Testament predictions. Notice, I did not use the word "prophecy." I steered away from that word on purpose. The word "prophecy" does not necessarily mean to foretell. Most prophecy does not foretell. Sometimes a prophet did prophesy and foretell at the same time, but a man can prophesy without foretelling anything. To prophesy literally means to speak on behalf of another. When we use the word "prediction," there is no misunderstanding about it. Jesus died on the cross to fulfill Old Testament predictions. In Matthew 5:17-18 Jesus said:

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

In Luke 24:44:

"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me."

So, the Lord came that He might fulfill those predictions found in the Old Testament. Let's take a few as examples. In Isaiah 53:4-5 and 8 the prophet wrote:

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed . . . He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

From this we learn that the people, who lived at the time when our Lord died on the cross, thought He was receiving just punishment from God. From their viewpoint, He was being smitten and afflicted because He had sinned against the Lord. But, such is not the case.

The Bible says it is by His stripes that we are healed. That tells you of His scourging. I don't know how many stripes they put on the precious back of Christ. If He had been scourged by the Jews, that would have meant 39 stripes across the naked back as hard as a husky individual could lay it on. But, He was scourged by the Romans. Sometimes a man never survived a Roman scourging. How many stripes did He receive? I don't know, but He must have been beaten within an inch of His life for, according to tradition, He broke down under the weight of the cross. It became necessary to get Simon the Cyrene, a man who was passing, to assist Jesus in the carrying of His burden. That passage also indicates that He was to suffer a vicarious death. "He was cut off out of the land of the living" and "for the transgres-

sion of my people was He stricken." Isaiah said He was to die for others. That's what is meant by a vicarious death. That passage indicates, furthermore, that He was to experience a violent death. "He was cut off out of the land of the living." It does not say what kind of violence, but it does indicate violence. In Psalms 22:16, David, inspired of the Holy Spirit a thousand years before Jesus lived, said, "They pierced my hands and my feet." Students of the Bible understand that when a prophet uses the first person and the statement is not fulfilled in the life of the prophet, fulfillment is expected to be found in the life of Christ. David said, "They pierced my hands and my feet," but this never happened to David. Therefore, he must have referred to someone else. He must have referred to Jesus. If you look at verse one in that same chapter, you will find the enigmatic cry of Jesus, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" David told about the death of Christ a thousand years before it occurred. This is all the more marvelous when we realize that crucifixion was unknown to David. It remained for the Carthaginians to devise this way of killing a man. This occurred several hundred years later.

In the sixteenth Psalm, David predicted that Christ was to be raised from the dead. "Thou will not leave my soul in Hades, neither will thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption," wrote David. When we die, our souls go to Hades. Hades literally means unseen. The body, of course, goes to the grave. The soul of Jesus was not left in the waiting place for the dead; it was not left in Hades. His flesh did not see corruption. If the soul was not left in Hades and the flesh did not see corruption, that means there was to be a reuniting of the soul and the body. But, when the soul and body

were reunited, there was a resurrection. So, David, a thousand years before our Lord's resurrection, predicted that such would take place! Peter, in the second chapter of the Acts used this very passage to show that Jesus was raised from the grave. My friends, this is the emphasis in the New Testament. In the eighth chapter of Acts, verse 35, "Philip opened his mouth, began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus." He, from the scripture, preached Jesus. That wasn't the New Testament scripture for the New Testament had not been written. He was preaching Jesus as the fulfiller of Old Testament scripture. In Acts 17:2-3 we read:

And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.

He took his Old Testament and taught those people that Jesus was the Christ.

Fourthly, our Lord died to make possible the church. At Acts 20:28, Paul, in speaking to the Ephesian elders at Miletus, said, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and unto the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath given you to be overseers to feed the church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood." In Ephesians 5:25 Paul said, "Husband love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it." Men die for precious things. They die for love, honor, country, and family. The Bible tells us that Christ died for the church. This points up the church's importance. This tells us how Jesus feels about His church. Once in a while you meet an individual who says, "I believe a

man can be saved outside the church as well as within it." If a man can be saved outside the church of the Lord, then he can be saved outside its purchase price. I have in my hand a Bible which was bought for me by Jack Gray. Jack spent about \$14 on this New Testament. If I am going to get the value of the money he spent, I must get it from the item purchased. I must get it from this book. If I am to receive the value of that purchase price of the church, I'll get it from the item purchased, the church. Jesus purchased the church with His blood. If I am to derive benefits from His shed blood, I must get it from that institution, His church.

But, I thought one church was as good as another. My friends, one denomination is as good as another. However, we are not talking about denominationalism. We are speaking of the church of God, about which you may read in the Bible. Surely, the church of God, which was predicted, established, and has continued through the years is better than any other church. Was one house as good as another in Egypt the first time the passover feast was celebrated? God told the Hebrews to kill a male lamb about a year old and put its blood on the doorposts. That night, when God passed through the land and saw the blood, He passed over and didn't destroy. Was one house as good as another? No! Houses marked by the blood were better than those not marked by the blood. Is one woman as good as another? A man's wife is in a flaming house, he rushes into the building and is almost burned to death, but he saves her. He is in the hospital. A friend comes to visit him and says, "Joe, I don't know why you endangered your life. Why, you could have gotten old Sal who works in the local honky-tonk." What do you think that man would say? He loves his wife. One woman is not as good as

another! She is special to him. His wife is his beloved. My friends, the church is the wife of Christ. When we say one church is as good as another, we likely mean one denomination is as good as another. But, no denomination is as good as the church about which we read in the Bible.

Fifthly, Christ came to die on the cross that we might be reconciled. In Isaiah 59:1-2 the prophet said, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." That passage says we are separated from God by our sins. In Ephesians 2:14 we learn that before Christ came into the world, men were separated from one another. Men needed to be reconciled to one another and men needed to be reconciled to God. What is reconciliation? In first Corinthians 7:10-11, Paul said, "Let not the wife depart from the husband, but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband." If a wife leaves her husband and the two of them are reconciled, what takes place? They come back together again. They begin to live under the same roof once more. Reconciliation, then, is bringing back together two parties who have had dissenting views. When the Bible speaks of reconciliation, it simply means we are brought back into fellowship with God and our fellow men. But, how is it accomplished? According to Romans 5:10, we are reconciled to God through the death of His Son. Where does it occur? In Ephesians 2:12-19, Paul pointed out that before Jesus came into the world Jew and Gentile were separated from one another by the middle wall of partition. Both parties were separated from God by sin. Jesus came, died on the cross,

broke down the middle wall of partition, and reconciled both Jew and Gentile unto God in one body by the cross. Jew, Gentile, and God are reconciled to one another. Where? In the body. Ephesians 1:22-23 says, "He gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body." Since the body is the church, reconciliation of Jew, Gentile, and God occurs within the precincts of the church. Such does not occur on the outside. I once read of a husband and wife on the verge of divorce. While they were working on their plans for the divorce, their little boy became desperately ill. Incidentally, the couple had already separated. Well, they stayed with that child in the hospital night and day. As the little fellow was dying, they clasped hands over his body. They were reconciled to one another through his death. That is exactly what Jesus did on the cross. He reconciled lost humanity to God through His death, He also reconciled men to one another.

One night I attended a church service where an old Negro man was called on to lead one of the prayers. He bowed his head and said, "Father, I thank thee that in the Lord Jesus Christ the middle wall of partition has been broken down." He was saying that we can all be one in Jesus. My brethren, we are never going to settle race problems like they ought to be settled until we let Christ come into our hearts and lives. When both Negroes and whites are Christians, don't tell me they are going to fight! They won't. They are reconciled to one another. There is a unity in Christ which cannot be found elsewhere. I can tell you, without the slightest hesitation, I have a stronger feeling for a Negro Christian than for a white non-Christian! Right racial attitudes can be found in Christ. The church of the Lord is color blind.

Sixthly, our Lord died to ransom and redeem us from our sins. In Matthew 20:28 Jesus said, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." In I Peter 1:18-19 the Bible says we are redeemed not by corruptible things such as silver and gold but by incorruptible, the precious blood of Jesus Christ as a lamb without blemish and without spot. From a Biblical viewpoint, the words "ransom" and "redemption" mean almost the same. Redeem literally means to buy back. A little boy had a sailboat and lost it. One day as he and his father were walking down the street, he looked into a shop window and saw his sailboat. He turned to his daddy and said, "Dad, there's my boat." They went in and bought it. As he walked through the door on the way out, he was heard to say, "I made you and I bought you; you're mine." God created us and bought us; surely, then, we belong to Him. The word "ransom" has a little different meaning. Ransom money is paid to kidnappers for the return of a child. Hold on to that illustration. I'll try to remember to come back to it in a moment. However, Jesus, in dying on the cross, didn't pay ransom to Satan. Some people think this was a ransom which Satan demanded. If that is true, Satan is the biggest fool about which you can ever read. He had a hold on humanity, but he said, "I will give up my hold, if I can have Jesus." Then, Jesus died but Satan couldn't hold Him because He was too powerful. The devil must have been a fool not to understand this. According to Hebrews 2:14, when our Lord died on the cross He destroyed the power of Satan. He did not do Satan a favor. This will sound unusual, but Christ died to pay a ransom to the nature of God. God demanded and paid the ransom. It was demanded to satisfy Him and He paid it.

Seventhly, Christ died as a propitiation. This is one of the greatest words in the Bible. In Romans 3:25 we learn that He was a propitiation for our sins. I John 2:1-2 says, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." A group of brethren were studying Romans 3, and they came to verse 25. A brother was called on to read the verse and when he came to "propitiation" he said, "pro, pro . . . ." Since he couldn't pronounce it, another brother was asked to pronounce it. He couldn't say it correctly either. Finally, the teacher of the class said, "Well, nobody here seems to know what this word is; we'll just skip it." Don't misunderstand me, I have a problem with new words. I can look at a word in the dictionary, get the diacritical markings on it, and still can't pronounce it. I have a boy in one of my classes at school whose name is Dhanaret Yongvanichjit. Try that one on for size. I had to call the roll a number of days before I learned to pronounce his name. I said that to let you know I can sympathize with people who have difficulty in pronouncing a brand-new word. But, when those brethren skipped "propitiation," they skipped the whole theme of Romans. They skipped one of the grandest concepts in all of God's word. They skipped the concept upon which our salvation depends.

Christ died as a propitiation for our sins. What is a "propitiation?" It has two ideas. Number one, the appeasement of wrath. If a man's wife is unfaithful to him, he becomes rightly angry. He is ready to kill. God is a jealous God. He looks upon this world much like a man looks upon his wife. If the

world does not live in harmony with his word, He considers it as spiritual adultery. The sinful world is carrying on an outside affair. God is jealous for His creation. He intends that the world serve Him. When we live in sin, believe you me, God gets angry. John 3:36 indicates that the unbeliever here and now is under the wrath and anger of God. Romans 1:18 teaches the same thing. Ephesians 5:6 teaches exactly the same message. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram plotted against Moses. They said to Moses, "You have taken too much authority upon yourself." In criticizing Moses, they were criticizing God for God had given that authority to Moses. Because of what they did the earth opened up beneath those men, their families, and their possessions. They were swallowed up alive. Two hundred fifty princes who had been implicated in that plot were burned to death with fire from the presence of the Lord. The next day the people said to Moses and Aaron, "You have killed the people of the Lord." But, God is the one who had done it. They were casting a reflection on God. People began to die. Moses turned to Aaron and said, "Run inside the tabernacle, get your censer, put incense thereon, come back out, and offer the incense as an atonement to the Lord." Well, I know he ran as fast as his legs would carry him. When he came right back out the Bible says he stood between the living and the dead. Fourteen thousand, seven hundred people died while he was getting the censer and incense. When he offered the incense to the Lord as an atonement or propitiation, death stopped. That is what God demanded as an appeasement for his anger.

Fellows, do you ever have any trouble with your wives? Be honest about it. I heard about a man who said he had been married 40 years and he and his wife had never had a cross

word. Do you know how I felt about that? I thought he needed to tell another one in a hurry to prop that thing up. I just couldn't believe it. I have a good woman. Bless her heart, she is one of the finest in the country. But, I don't care how good the man is, I don't believe a man can live with my wife 40 years without having a cross word. I can understand how a woman might be able to get along with me without a cross word; but, when you turn it around, that is something else. My wife and I don't fight every day. We miss a day or so occasionally. When you and your wife have trouble, whatever you do to get back in her good graces is propitiation. See, you have been practicing this thing across the years and didn't even know it. For example, some men buy candy. I couldn't stand that; it is too expensive. Some buy flowers. If I did that, we would have flowers all over the house. I don't buy candy or flowers, but I sometimes help wash the dishes. I'll do just about anything except say, "I'm sorry." She understands I am sorry, but I don't like for her to worm it out of me. What we do to appease the wrath of a wife is a propitiation. Perhaps you and the next-door neighbors get into a fuss. You are sorry about it so you bake a cake and say, "Come on over tonight, let's watch television and eat some cake." That is a propitiation. You are trying to appease their wrath and get back into their good graces.

Propitiation also carries the idea of satisfying justice. How can a holy, just, righteous God save a sinful man? Today you hear people, who are not thinking correctly, ask, "How could a good God condemn anybody?" In the first century, the problem was, "How could a just God save anybody? How can He save an individual and maintain his justice?" Justice demands

that when the law is broken, the offender be punished. How is God going to see to it that the demands of the law are fulfilled? How is God going to be just and, at the same time, save a sinful man? There are some things God can't do. God can't lie. That doesn't mean God doesn't have the power to formulate a falsehood. He has the power to do it; but, because of his nature, He can't do it. God cannot save a man and forget justice. Why? Because his nature demands that justice be fulfilled. Because of this, God said, "I'm going to offer a substitute. I'm going to let somebody be beaten in your place; I am going to vent my wrath on Him. If you will accept Him, the justice for your sins will be fulfilled in Him. But, if you reject Him, you have to be beaten for your own sins. My friends, the reason Hell exists is so God's justice can be satisfied. Some people think all punishment is for the purpose of reformation. That is not so. When a murderer is put to death in the electric chair, it's not to reform him. It is to see that justice is done. When a man goes to Hell, it is not to reform him, but it is to see that justice is done.

Our Lord Jesus Christ went to the cross as a propitiation. That is, to satisfy the justice of God Almighty. On that cross, our Lord said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In the Garden of Gethsemane he said, "Father, if it is possible, let this cup depart from me." It didn't take Jesus but six hours to die. It takes six weeks or six months for some to die. Yet, Jesus, who died in just six hours, shrank from the sharpness of death. Why was he so fearful of death? We all have to die. He was fearful because He experienced something on the cross that He had never known before that time and He hasn't known since. He was separated from God. Ac-

According to II Thessalonians 1:7-9, Hell is a place away from God. I believe our Lord, while on the cross, underwent the pains of the damned. I believe the Hell which is due us was put on Him. I think that is what made the cross so horrible to Him. It was not simply the physical suffering, but the fact that He was away from God. God had to look the other way. God had to leave him. God made him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." God put our punishment on Christ. If we'll take Jesus as Lord, God can be just and He can also justify us. My friends, there was no other way. We couldn't be saved any other way. A Russian guerrilla named Shamel was fighting against the Czarist Regime in 1870. He had a lot of stealing in his little group. He made a law that the next person caught stealing was to receive 100 lashes across the naked back. The next person caught stealing was Shamel's mother. They put two or three stripes across her back and he could stand it no more. He ran to the man administering the whipping and said, "The law demands a hundred lashes; I'll take the rest of them." He became a substitute for her and justice was fulfilled. This is what Christ did. He became a substitute for you and me in order that the demands of God's justice might be fulfilled.

Finally, Christ died because He loved us. "Greater love hath no man than this that a man would lay down his life for his friends." "For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." My friends, I have never known a love like this. My mother didn't love me as much as God did. My friends don't love me as much as God does. I don't care nearly as much about you as God does. I wouldn't

let my little boy die on the cross for any of you or for all of you. I would rather have Jim. He means more to me than others do. But, God was willing to let His Son die on the cross for your sins and mine. He loved us. If you walk out of this building tonight not a Christian, you are rejecting the greatest love you will ever know. You are turning your back on the best friend you will ever have. If you leave here not a Christian, it is rebellion against the Jesus who died on the cross. You are spitting in His face again. You are jamming the crown of thorns down on His precious brow again. You are driving the nails into His hands and feet again. You are beating His naked back again. You are crucifying Him afresh. This is a matter between you and Jesus. We are asking you to receive Him as Savior and to accept Him as Lord. He tells you how it's done. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Will you come to the front now while we stand and sing? Let us stand together.

# TO THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF THE GOSPEL

R. N. HOGAN

R. N. Hogan was born in Tennessee in 1902. He studied with the late G. P. Bowser before beginning his preaching. For a time he worked in a plant in Detroit, but his one desire was to preach. With the help of Brother and Sister Jimmie Lovell, Brother Hogan began preaching first in cross-country tent meetings.

In 1937 Hogan visited Los Angeles and held a meeting from which the congregation at 110th and Wilmington was started. The following year he returned to Los Angeles for another meeting, and from this meeting another congregation was begun. This new congregation invited him to labor with them, and in the fall of 1938 Brother Hogan began working with what is known today as the Figueroa Church of Christ. From a small beginning, this congregation has grown to about 1,000 members and has helped establish

other congregations in the area.

On March 3, 1963, the Figueroa congregation conducted a homecoming service in which Brother and Sister Hogan were honored for their 25 years of outstanding work with them.



When I received the invitation to speak on this lectureship several months ago it was one of the most pleasant surprises of my life. After some brief reflections I realized that it would also be one of the greatest challenges of my life. I am challenged by the occasion and the seriousness of the subject which has been assigned to me.

In man's never ending conquest there is a frantic attraction by that which is new. The housewife looks for new gadgets to solve her household problems, scientists look for new drugs to cure heretofore incurable diseases and in the area of human relations there is constant searching for ways to promote better understanding and more peaceful relations between nations and individuals. This search for the "new" is good, but in this search there is the danger that we will become worshipers of the "new" and despisers of the "old." This would be tragic. Many attempts have been made to improve man in general; wars have been fought, laws have been made but these have failed to transform man into what he is fully capable of becoming. This transformation must come from within for it is here we find the source or cause. While laws may crop the plant at the earth level this root of sin that lies within will spring up again in us. I am happy to announce that there is a transforming power. I invite you to lift up your eyes to the transforming power of the gospel of Christ. This tremendous power of God, though not new, has been ignored by most. However it is available right now to every man who is willing to unleash it in his life. The great apostle, Paul, after having this great power operative in his own life could tell others about it. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," he could say, "for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). God who made the world and all things therein is all powerful and there are many manifestations of His power around us today. He shows His power in the rolling of the thunder and the flashing of the lightning. Walk out on a starry night and you too will join David the Psalmist in saying, "When I consider thy heavens, the works of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man,

that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:3-4). This is truly a great manifestation of the power of God. But none of this can, nor were they designed to transform man. God's power to save is exercised only through the gospel today. Paul knew that this gospel knew no racial nor national barriers, therefore he includes both Jew and Greek.

The gospel transforms so completely because it begins where sin begins, in the heart "from within." Jesus says, "Out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." All these come from within and defile the man (Mark 7:21-23). This is why laws cannot transform man. They have their value in that they point the way. They hold up an ideal to us and tell us to conform, but this transforming power of God starts with the sinful heart and changes it. This transformation is so complete that man is "born again."

### *God's Transforming Power in the World*

It never ceases to amaze me how even the most vile person can be transformed by the gospel of Christ. I am reminded of a lady who was a recent convert. She was full of zeal and wanted to tell everybody about the gospel so that they could become members of the church. One day she was talking to one of the town drunks and invited him to come to church. When an older sister saw this, she called her aside and gave her a stern cautioning, "You have to be careful as to whom you invite to church" she said, "we do not want people like that man

in the church." What a great mistake this older Christian made. She failed to realize that the greatest demonstration of the gospel is in the lives of most-wicked people. The church began this way. When Peter spoke to those Jews on the day of Pentecost he spoke to people who had been guilty of participating in history's worst crime, crucifying the Son of God! Peter, who only a few days earlier had been a scared, weak, cursing man who had denied the Savior, now spoke as one who exemplified this transforming power in his own life. He stood boldly and told this mob of their sins. "Ye have taken him and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death" (Acts 2:23). This lesson does not end with condemnation, but hope, for he goes on to say in verse 36, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." When they heard this, it went straight to their hearts, the place where this transformation must begin, and they began to cry, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" Peter did not panic for he knew the power at his disposal. He simply replied, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (V. 38). About 3,000 accepted this challenge and the Lord added them to His church. The gospel of Christ transformed their lives. It is hard for us to conceive that a man such as Philip the evangelist who was one of the seven chosen, who preached in Samaria and converted the eunuch as they rode along together, was a part of the mob that cried for the blood of Jesus. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, who died as Jesus died—praying for his enemies—was no doubt part of this mob too. The answer is that their lives had been touched by the transforming power of the gospel of Christ.

When Paul visited numerous cities furthering the cause of Christ on his missionary journey, he did not survey the city looking for the elite, and those most likely to make "good" church members. He merely went where the people were and preached Christ to them. In fact his most discouraging and coldest receptions were among the "upper class," or intellectuals, as was the case in Athens. Some of the people that he led to Christ had had some pretty bad reputations. Some of the Corinthian Christians had been fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, drunkards, revilers and extortioners. I frankly do not know of many sins that would not fall under one of these headings. Why were they different now? Paul answers this by saying, "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God" (I Corinthians 6:10-11). The transforming power of the gospel had been introduced into their lives. This accounted for a great change. They no longer shared the guilt of these sins.

Years ago Brother Keeble was called to a city to conduct a gospel meeting. Before his arrival a tent had been erected in the "better" part of town. When Brother Keeble arrived the brethren eagerly took him by the site knowing that he would be impressed by it. When he saw the tent he was very displeased. "It's in the wrong location," he pointed out. "Let's take it down and put it on the other side of the tracks," he said, "that's where the people are." The brethren reluctantly consented. The harvest of that meeting as a result was amazing. All because Brother Keeble realized as Paul that one's future with Christ will not be like one's past without Him.

Rome like Corinth in many respects was known for its immorality and sin, but this power of God transformed people

there too. Where the Caesars had failed, the gospel succeeded. It even penetrated the household of Caesar and reference is made to "saints in Caesar's house" though Paul had not visited Rome at the time of his epistle. Knowing the gospel had been preached there, he knew the results. He could say, "For sin shall not have dominion over you . . . But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Romans 6:14, 17-18).

Paul could make this statement to others because he had experienced this transforming power in his own life. We cannot find a more determined sinner than Paul. He had dedicated himself to the destruction of Christianity. As a proud Pharisee his whole life was bound up in the law. Exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers he profited in the Jews' religion above many of his equals. Of his transformation he says, "But when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood" (Galatians 1:15-16). Once transformed, no other apostle did more work nor wrote a greater portion of the New Testament than Paul. By the gospel a great enemy was made a devout friend; a great destroyer was made a great defender and a heart filled with hate and hostility became a sympathetic heart abounding with love. Love to the extent that it made this apostle feel a universal obligation to all mankind. A feeling expressed by the statement, "I am a debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise" and as the results of this

he adds, "So much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." (Romans 1:14-15).

The change made in this life is no exception to the rule. What a joy to know that the gospel of Christ can change a Khrushchev or a bearded Castro, these men who boast of their infidelity or disbelief in God. All we need is the gospel preacher that has courage enough to preach the gospel to them. Do we have such a man here today? Does this thought make us reply like a frightened Ananias when commanded to go to Saul, "Lord, I have heard of this man." The power is available and man is the agent. When humanity is denied this power it is because Christian men have withheld it.

*The Transforming Power of the Gospel and its Continuous Process in our Lives*

In II Corinthians 4:16 we read, "But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." There is not only joy in becoming a Christian but the daily benefits, such as prayer, hope, and fellowship with God, cause one to ascend as he grows. While we look back in our lives and see undesirable pages which were removed we can also look forward with the assurance that we will always have the fellowship of Christ and the Holy Spirit, and even should we fall again we have an advocate with the Father who intercedes for our sins. The condition of this fellowship is "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7-8).

One of the greatest evidences that the transforming power of the gospel is at work in our lives is our concern for others.

This is the basis for missionary zeal. Planning programs are good, but this is only method, and will only be successful in proportion to the dedication of the people involved in the plans. Christ was never too tired to talk to an evil woman or man. When He met the woman at the well who had had five husbands He could have offered numerous excuses for not talking to her: (1) I am too tired, (2) I am too hungry, (3) She is such a bad woman, or (4) We do not have the same background. Instead of making excuses He taught her and she led a whole city out to hear Him. He was so concerned that when His disciples returned with food, He said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of . . . My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye that there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:32-35). The thing that motivated Christ was His compassion. He was moved with compassion when He saw the hungry multitude. He was also moved with compassion toward the unlearned, "And Jesus . . . when he saw much people, was moved with compassion toward them, because, they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things" (Mark 6:34).

It is the mind of Christ that makes individuals and churches think as He thought. We, like Christ, cannot rest while thousands are without the truth. We must be concerned about the fatherless, the widows and the hungry, but our compassion should be even greater for the lost. There are other institutions that may give these unfortunate people food and clothing, but nothing but the church can give them the gospel of Christ. It is through the church that the manifold wisdom of God is made known (Ephesians 3:10). The church is the pillar

(not pillow) and ground of the truth. It supports the truth (I Timothy 3:15).

"The fields are white unto harvest." This statement is as true now as it was when Christ made it. Scientists through their creations have filled our lives with fear. Youth know more about "the bomb" than they do about the Bible. Philosophies of men are continuing to fail. Denominationalism through its multiple divisions is creating more infidels every day. People are searching for stability of life. Now as never before the church needs to lift up its eyes to the field. We need more gospel ministers like Otis Gatewood and Ira Rice who will answer this call of the missionary field. We need more educators such as Norvel Young and Don Morris to provide training for Christian workers. We need more men who will use their money like George Pepperdine to advance the cause of CHRISTIAN education. I refer to these men because I think they are fine examples of Christians who have allowed this transforming power of the gospel to continue in their lives by concern for others.

This transforming power is never more powerful to others, than when it is demonstrated to them through our lives. One of the greatest evidences that Christianity works is the way it works through our lives. While the first church in Acts was known for many outstanding characteristics, enemies watched their lives and concluded that they had been with Christ (Acts 4:13). Seeing only as men, they failed to realize that Christ was still with them. For He had promised to be with them always, even unto the end of the world (Matthew 28:20).

As preachers and church leaders, we must continually seek to improve the spiritual quality as well as the quantity in the congregations. There is still a tremendous need for just plain

down-to-earth godly living. We can never transform the world by conforming to it. When we conform we ignore the command, "Be not conformed to this present world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2). A godly life joined with a "ready answer" will almost insure a reception for that transforming power.

As I come to a close may I point out two things about this transforming power of the gospel:

(1) The gospel of Christ was never intended to satisfy the religious whims of people. There were some people in Paul's day who were not satisfied with it. He states, "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Corinthians 1:22-24). He had already pointed out that "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (V. 21). The word needs no adornment with modern philosophies or sentiments. Salvation not satisfaction is its promise.

(2) As great as this power is, it is of no value to the uncommitted life. Salvation has always been conditional. Jesus said, "If any man will come after me . . . He that believeth and is baptized . . . whosoever will, let him come . . ." to indicate that the power of the gospel in one's life is determined by the reception given it by that particular person.

I personally challenge you to unleash this great power in your life. We will have better parents, better homes, better churches and better communities. The lost will be brought to

Christ in even greater numbers. The world will take notice when they see the Lord's church on the march.

I agree with the brother who said, "We can take the world for Christ any time we are ready." Are you ready?

## TO SEE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHURCH

JOHN ALLEN CHALK

John Allen Chalk is a native of Lexington, Tennessee, having been born on January 16, 1937, to Mr. and Mrs. B. S. Chalk.

He is a graduate of Freed-Hardeman College (1956) and Tennessee Tech (1962). He has also attended the University of Dayton (Ohio), Miami University, Harding School of Religion, and was a 1963 McGarvey Fellow at Abilene Christian College. He is presently a candidate for the Master's Degree from Tennessee Tech.

Brother Chalk preached for the Northridge Church of Christ, Dayton, Ohio, from 1956 to 1960. Since February, 1960, he has worked with the Broad Street Church of Christ, Cookeville, Tennessee. The Cookeville, Tennessee, congregation has just recently occupied a \$325,000 church plant on a fourteen acre tract of land.



In addition to his local work he preaches in twelve to fourteen gospel meetings each year. During the past two years he has appeared on the lecture-ships at Freed-Hardeman College, Harding College, Oklahoma Christian College, David Lipscomb College, and Lubbock Christian College. During 1964 he wrote and appeared in a thirteen week series for the Herald of Truth television program.

Brother Chalk is a staff writer for the *Gospel Advocate* and the *Christian Chronicle* and has written articles for the *Firm Foundation* and *Power for To-*

day. He is the author of *The Praying Christ and Other Sermons* published this year by the Christian Publishing Company.

He is married to the former Sue Traugher. The Chalks have two children, Mary Elizabeth and John Allen, Jr.

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Dietrich Bonhoeffer's graphic statement throws the subject of the Church into bold relief. "Since the ascension, Christ's place on earth has been taken by His Body, the Church. The Church is the real presence of Christ."<sup>1</sup> But it is unnecessary to go outside the Biblical records to gain a profound sense of the importance of the Church. The unusual response to Peter's confession of the divinity of Christ throws penetrating light on this subject. Christ inquired, "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" and "But who say ye that I am?" When Simon made his classic reply he received the praise of the Master who also said, "And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18, see verses 13-19).

Paul's beautiful marriage analogy of *Ephesians* 5:22-32 also brings the discerning reader to an intense concern for Christ's Body. In a day when external and internal forces would weaken God's House we come to lift our eyes "to see the importance of the Church."

The current ferment ought to be appraised as we come to better understand the necessity for this study. There are in fact seven strong tendencies and thoughts currently of significance to our subject.

The first of these involves the renewed theological concern about the Church. L. Harold DeWolf in his *Present Trends in Christian Thought* cites "the rediscovery of the Church" as one of four "new agreements" in contemporary theological thought.<sup>2</sup> The "theology of the Church" came into its own without question when Karl Barth entitled his magnum opus, *Church Dogmatics*. Surveying the religious scene in 1958 *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* said, "The Church as such is being recognized in a new sense as a fundamental fact in the Christian Revelation."<sup>3</sup> One has only to read from better known contemporary thinkers to realize the accuracy of Cross's statement.

A second significant element in current concerns about our subject is the increased interest in visible unity of the Church—the ecumenical movement. The old denominational theories have almost totally vanished from the present scene. The "pie in the sky" conception of invisible unity has been defeated by theological studies of the Church and her Biblically revealed nature. One recent example of an invalid and illogical denominational theory being resurrected was an article, "The Ecumenical Movement Threatens Protestantism." Here Henry A. Buchanan and Bob W. Brown give vent to many of the legitimate questions about the ecumenical movement as it now stands but finally rest their case with this un-Biblical argument: "What we need is not more uniformity but more diversity in which the unlimited grace of God can find additional channels to reach the needs of men."<sup>4</sup>

Lesslie Newbigin offers an excellent commentary on current interest in a visibly united Church. "If we think that a 'spiritual unity' which is content with mere feeling and does not seek

visible expression in that kind of steady and enduring commitment, is an adequate expression of our unity in Christ, we deceive ourselves.”<sup>6</sup> F. L. Cross agrees with the foregoing assessment and adds, “In early times the doctrine of the visible Unity of the Church was acceptable on all sides.”<sup>6</sup> This renewed study of the Church mentioned earlier has brought about a deeper awareness of and need for the visible and united Church of Jesus Christ.

A third facet of this current ferment in religious thought bids accomplishment of great value. Sociological, individualistic, and evolutionary conceptions of the Church are definitely being rejected in wake of this new interest. Karl Ludwig Schmidt, in his excellent word study of *ekklesia* for *Kittel's Bible Key Words*, has this to say: “Over against the sociological attempts to comprehend the Church, it must be noted that for Paul, for those who followed him, and for the Fourth Evangelist, ecclesiology and Christology are identical.”<sup>7</sup>

The Church has long been viewed as just one more in a long line of social institutions that resulted from environmental forces solely. The social historian, sociologist, and theologian banded together to concoct the “origin” of the Church, obviously refusing to consider divine plan in their reconstructions. It now appears that many are not as willing to blindly accept these humanistic interpretations of the Church's beginning, but are looking to God's Word for understanding in this area.

Many thinkers have also encouraged the God-individual relationship to the exclusion of the Church. These emphases have led many to see in the Church only a religious club instead of the direct resultant of man's obedience to God through Christ.

Emil Brunner comments on this common fallacy: "Christianity since the beginning has existed not as a religion of private individuals but as the common cause of a definite community, the *ekklesia*, the communion of saints."<sup>8</sup> In the same work Brunner also says, "Individual private Christianity is a self-contradiction, like iron made of wood."<sup>9</sup>

We are also told that the Church "happened" into existence because all the social and historical forces gratuitously converged in the patterns we know as the Church. Evolutionary conceptions of her origin deny that God had anything to do with the Church's establishment. William Barclay in his word study of *ekklesia* remarks to the contrary that, "The two original words, Hebrew and Greek, put all the emphasis on the action of God."<sup>10</sup> God's power, not evolutionary mistake, accounts for the reality of the Church of Christ today!

But the current scene would not even have been roughly described without notice of the many efforts within the last few years at redefinition of the term "church." The fresh and correct insights that result from proper definition have long been missing from much of our teaching. One recent (1957) attempt at this task is the book, *Christ and His Church* by Anders Nygren in which the author talks about "the Messianic people"<sup>11</sup> and offers the following full definition. "The Church is Christ as He is present among and meets us upon earth after His resurrection."<sup>12</sup> Another excellent theological explanation of the word "church" comes from Karl Barth. "It is the commonwealth gathered, founded, and ordered by the Word of God, the 'communion of the saints.'"<sup>13</sup> Linguistically Schmidt and Barclay offer help in redefinition. Schmidt is content to say, "*Ekklesia* is in fact that group of human be-

ings which is called out of the world by God . . . .”<sup>14</sup> Barclay warns against overemphasis of the action of calling and urges that we remember God’s action in the summons to mankind.<sup>15</sup>

The Church’s mission or purpose has also been thoroughly studied within the last few years—her “raison d’etre” or actual basis for existence sharply redefined. Whereas the former lack of concern encouraged a neutral view, new interest has spurred study and conviction about what the Church ought to be doing. Brunner, for instance, says, “Mission work does not arise from any arrogance in the Christian Church, mission is its cause and its life.”<sup>16</sup> Lesslie Newbiggin’s work in India as a long-time missionary has forced him to reconsider the Church’s reason for being. He says, “In the middle of this world God has set His Church as His witness. He expects His Church to be recognizable as His family.”<sup>17</sup> But to be God’s family must obviously mean doing God’s work—fulfilling His plans for all of us. The fact that the Church has not remembered her tasks in the past opened the way for irrelevance and irresponsibility. “The relevance of the Church to the world of today depends on her understanding of her mission and message.”<sup>18</sup> We will not be about our Father’s business until we know of what His business consists!

Contemporary concerns are unmistakable. The Church’s importance takes on greater hues today than at any time since the Reformation. All of which spells glorious opportunities for the Churches of Christ to intelligently and convincingly present the truths which for so many years were distinctive and peculiar in the theological and religious world at large.

But here we need a restatement of pertinent Biblical conceptions of the Church. Within God’s Word the nature of the

Church, the relationships of Christ and the Church, along with many other vital areas are amply explained and expounded.

Regarding the Church's nature or essence the New Testament speaks of "the body of Christ." (Colossians 1:18, 24.) We are told that the Church is "the fulness of him (Christ, *jac*) that filleth all in all" (Ephesians 1:23). The Church is the "house of God" and, therefore, an area where men must be concerned about how they "behave themselves" (I Timothy 3:15). The same passage declares that the Church is "the pillar and ground of the truth." In keeping with much contemporary thought the Church as "community" comes into view (Acts 2:38, 44, 47. See other passages like Acts 4:35; 6:1-6; and Romans 12:4-8). Every scriptural description of the Church's nature overwhelms one with implications and connotations of unusual significance.

The Church "belongs" to at least three different persons or groups according to Biblical teaching. We see "the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" in both *I Thessalonians* 1:1 and *II Thessalonians* 1:1. This conception must be tempered with the awareness that God calls man through Christ into the Church, and that the Church comprises only regenerate men (I Corinthians 12:13).

More accurately the Church belongs to God. Paul sketches "the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God," telling us that "through the church the manifold wisdom of God" manifests itself "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 3:8-11).

Paul refreshes one's memory concerning Christ's ownership of the Church. He heads the Church (Ephesians 4:15; 5:23) similar to the relationship of husband to wife. He loves the Church and because of that love gave Himself for it (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25). He cares for the Church and sees that proper nourishment is always available (Ephesians 5:28-30).

Special Biblical emphasis is also given to the relationship of Christ and the Church in addition to that of ownership which we have just stressed. Not only is Christ head but He is also "saviour" of it (Ephesians 5:23). The Church in turn must realize her obligations as Christ's body honoring and submitting to Him (Ephesians 5:28-30). This helps us understand why the New Testament is so emphatic in stating that Christ and the Church are both encountered by man in baptism (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27; I Corinthians 12:13). This suggests the closeness—"one flesh"—of Christ and His Church and means that "in Christ" one secures salvation and church membership (II Corinthians 5:17; I Corinthians 12:20).

"To be 'in Christ' is the same as to be a member of the body of Christ, a branch of the vine; and it means that we are to participate in Him as a member participates in and is a part of the body, and as a branch participates in and is a part of the vine."<sup>19</sup>

And we might add that to be "in Christ" is to be "in the body of Christ" which obviously is to be "in the church" (Ephesians 1:22-23).

But what of the twentieth-century church? Where does she go from here? What are her obligations, responsibilities, and

privileges? These are the questions along with many others that are being asked. One thing must be immediately certain, never before have the opportunities of witness, discussion, and dialogue with our religious friends been greater. We do not dishonor our "fathers" but we do "dishonor" Christ when slavish historicism or stultified orthodoxy prevent discussion and dialogue with all seekers of truth!

Let it also be remembered that the Church has her total scheme presented in the New Testament. Our studies in church polity, liturgy, doctrine, missions, and every pertinent area of Christian concern must be honest, and thorough.

The "man of God" has been furnished "all good works" (II Timothy 3:16-17). We must demonstrate that great truth in even greater proportions.

We must also recognize the local congregation like "the church of God at Corinth" as "the body of Christ" (I Corinthians 1:1-2; 12-27). Some of our "projects" outside the New Testament framework of the local congregation have been the direct result of a fallacious attitude that says the Church of the immediate past failed. May we never allow the Biblically derived "work of the Church" to become the responsibility of any person or group outside the framework God has given. The Church has not failed as some would suggest. Humans **within** the Church failed, and according to the Pauline Formula this occurred because they did not attempt "through Christ" the great work given God's people (Philippians 4:13).

"To see the importance of the Church" examine Luke's records in the Acts. Everywhere the gospel was preached and

men accepted it the Church became a reality. Any time men accept Christ the Church results. There will be no true growth of the Church without the full and courageous presentation of Christ (I Corinthians 2:1-2).

"To see the importance of the Church," recall her nature, observe her task, and remember her successes under God's direction (Acts 1:8; 9:31).

"To see the importance of the Church," relive her origin (Acts 2), estimate her purchase price (Acts 20:28), study her picture as it so totally unfolds in the New Testament.

#### FOOTNOTES

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# TO THE WHITE FIELDS

By GEOFFREY H. ELLIS

Text: John 4:1-42

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Baptized: Omagh Bible School, Omagh, Ontario, 1942, by Raymond Crumbliss.

Educated: In public elementary and secondary schools in Hamilton and Toronto, Ontario.

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Family: Married Doreen Margaret Begley of Toronto in 1952.

Three Children: Elizabeth, 10; Rebecca, 8; and Mark, 6.

Service: Five years as Athletic Director of Omagh Bible School, Omagh, Ontario (North America's oldest summer Bible camp operated by members of churches of Christ).

Two years as Director of Christian Heights, a summer Bible camp at Little Valley, New York.

Five years, member of the Board of Directors of Omagh Bible School.

Associate editor of the Gospel Herald, the Canadian Gospel paper, and its Quiz Master for a number of years.

Seven years a teacher of History and Bible, Great Lakes Christian College, Beamsville, Ontario, Canada.

Presently in his fourth year as President of Great Lakes Christian College. (G.L.C.C. is in



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*INTRODUCTION: Jesus the true Evangelist*

It was noon, one December day, when the man, weary from travel, moved from the road to rest on the stone abutments of a well. It was farming country. The fields were cultivated, but they were as barren as the Panhandle plains in winter: the crops had been recently sown.

The events which quickly followed revealed that the man was the true evangelist. A woman came up to draw water. The man dismissed his fatigue and began to talk to her. Casually at first, he asked her for a drink of water. By this action, he showed his disdain for an existing class prejudice, for she was an outcast. Then, more intensely, he embarked upon a serious religious discussion with her. His unflinching optimism for people became apparent as he imparted ideas of great spiritual consequence to this one whom he knew to be a faded woman, who had made a mess of

life. Yet, he spoke simply, relevantly. She was convicted, brought to the beginnings of belief, and prompted to depart with a great excitement to seek out her neighbors.

The growing opportunity for preaching overshadowed his physical hunger: his companions, returning from the nearby village, offered him food. He dismissed it saying, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." These men evidently lacked the insights of their leader. They had lifted their eyebrows at his talking with a disreputable woman. Now they missed the evangelical fervor of his statement; they failed to see his true meaning in this cryptic statement and wondered if he had eaten already.

Then Jesus, knowing of the slowness of His disciples, aware of the urgency of His mission, and stirred possibly by the throng of people now coming out of the village to see and hear Him, said: "My food is to do the will of him who has sent me, and to finish his work. Do not say 'There are yet four months and then the harvest comes'. I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see how the fields are already white for harvest!"

The spiritual denseness of the early disciples has nothing on the slowness of present day disciples of Christ to comprehend and seize their evangelical responsibilities. Truly, the greatest need facing the church today is to leave off our preoccupation with material concerns, and to make God's work our very bread and butter. The impoverishment of our evangelical efforts clearly indicates our desperate need to take a long, clear, fresh, responsive look at this

crowded world glistening with opportunity for the gospel, and hasten to enter the ripe harvest field.

My task is to stimulate in some measure a vision, both peripheral and farsighted, of the white fields. My native land of Canada will serve to illustrate the readiness of the harvest. Thus, my thoughts today will be couched in my homeland experiences. The spiritual needs of this great Nation to the North will serve as a backdrop to the thesis that we need to bestir ourselves before our Lord's patience is exhausted.

### *The Sin of Our Downcast Eyes*

Our sin is in our downcast eyes. The lowering of the eyes to which I am referring is not that proper humility in the presence of God, but rather that empty downward staring caused by our disgrace, our discouragement, our disinterest.

We are disgraced by our almost total failure to restore the spirit of the New Testament world evangelism. We border on brotherhood wide hypocrisy—known for our caution in handling the truth, yet known for our carelessness in circulating it. One denominational church in my home city of Toronto, an energetic congregation to be sure numbering 5,000 members, supports more missionaries in foreign fields than the entire two million plus members of churches of Christ.

World-wide evangelism is one of the most pressing unresolved problems of the modern Restoration Movement. A

number of years ago I recall seeing a chart of the mission activities of leading American Protestant churches in the late 1800's. Included was the standing of the Disciples. At that time, just before the internal division culminated, this product of the Restoration Movement, constituted America's fourth largest religious body. It was truly America's only indigenous religious body of non-cultric proportions. I recall that the graph showed the Disciples at the bottom of the list competing with a liturgical, distinctly non-evangelical denomination for its lowly standing. The fact is, this problem has hounded us from the early 19th century to this day.

The missionary society, quite a normal thing among the denominations, had been introduced in the Disciples Church in the mid 19th century as an attempt to accomplish the requirements of the Great Commission. Gradually, the realization dawned on the brethren that the society as such displaced Christ's church. Quite properly, brave souls repudiated it, and stood for the truth that the church is God's missionary society. Yet the struggle seemingly exhausted the faithful brethren, for having overcome the false practice they had no strength left to enter positively into the practice of scriptural evangelism. For one-half of a century the church stagnated in its responsibility to carry the gospel to every nation.

Following World War II, a hopeful increase in mission interest became apparent in the church. (It is true that a parallel awakening was being experienced in most other religious groups at the same time.) The growing excitement was there, nevertheless. Evidently the mission concern had been too long lacking, however, and narrow spirits arose to attack point by point the attempts of the sister congregations to co-

operate together as God's great evangelistic agency. The result: chaos, division, discouragement. Today, the do-nothing party has been largely silenced, but the church again seems exhausted, and it appears that the peak in world-wide mission activity has passed.

Thus, we sit shamefacedly, aware of our history of ineffectual efforts, and we lower our eyes in our embarrassment.

Our eyes are downcast, also, because of discouragement. While local efforts have been more rewarding, past endeavors among the brethren have all too often suffered setbacks. Consider the painfully slow growth encountered by evangelists in the Northwest and the Northeast in your country, and even in Georgia and Alabama in the South. Consider the great decimation in the ranks of the saints where the percentages of New Testament Christians to the population in the U. S. 70 years ago and today show a proportionate decline.

Consider the Canadian experience. The Restoration Movement began in Ontario in the 1820's independent of its American counterpart. By the end of the century, there were as many disciples in many counties as those of leading denominations. Today, the erring brethren have all but disappeared, and the faithful who are struggling to re-establish the cause total no more than 4,000. In Toronto, scene of last fall's heroic effort—the successful city-wide Gatewood Meeting—a band of 400 New Testament Christians proclaimed the "city of God." Yet while Toronto has been the fastest growing city in the world in recent years, rapidly approaching the two million mark in population, the church there is no larger than it was 40 years ago.

Our discouragement is fed by current developments. The spectre of Communism haunts us. Its record shows a greater advance in 50 years than Christendom's in 600. In the decade of the 50's 7,000 missionaries in China were either killed, jailed, or expelled. Apparently, the Christian invasion of China of the last century has been all but obliterated.

Rising, unrestrained nationalism in Africa threatens evangelistic advances in that vast continent. In a country of 242 million people where 116 million are animists, and 89 million are Muslims, today for every convert won to Christianity, (I use the term loosely,) three are won to Islam.

In spite of long standing, all-out efforts in Japan by those of a Christian connection only six-tenths of one percent of the 92 million Japanese have responded. In Latin America, which we tend to view as chiefly Roman Catholic, only 10% of the 191 million population are practicing Roman Catholics. And only six million have any Protestant connection.

Our discouragement is increased at home by the rising flood of secularism which ushers in the age of the immoral "New Morality." Burdened with overwhelming reverses, many are saying "What is the use?"

On the other hand, for many it would be stretching the point somewhat to say that our evangelistic efforts have been hindered by the influences of disgrace and discouragement. For clearly there are many among us too disinterested to be affected by the emotions we have just considered.

The eyes of the disinterested are earth-bound, focused on self, and afflicted with a wordly interest. There is little capacity for world-wide evangelistic concern in them. Pre-occupied with pleasure and the material, they have little room for spiritual involvements.

In the September 17 issue of the Gospel Advocate, Guy N. Woods, in an article "Our Strength and our Weaknesses," stated that among brethren in the United States 40% were Sunday morning worshipers only, 75% couldn't tell from the Scriptures what one must do to be saved, 50% do not know why we do not use the instrument, 25% would not object if we did, 10% believe one church is as good as another, and 95% do not take a religious paper; and I might add, 95% do not support Christian Education.

Clearly a major indictment must be brought against us generally; a chief reason for our failure in world-wide evangelism, is a widespread apathy among us, an apathy shared by us all to some degree, for each of us share in its persistence.

Downcast eyes are sinful because they imply the opposite of Christianity which challenges us all to be positive, optimistic, courageous and outgoing.

Downcast eyes are sinful because they deny that continuing rejuvenation available in Christ and His Spirit.

Downcast eyes are sinful because they negate necessary action whereby the lost men and women of the world may be saved.

Jesus cries to us: "Lift up your eyes! To the fields white for the harvest!" Let us look up! Let us gain a vision as real, as dynamic, as sincere as South Viet Nam missionary Maurice Hall's: "Yours for the preaching of the gospel to every nation in this generation!"

### *Look Up To The White Harvest*

Jesus said, "and herein is the saying true, "One sows, and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that on which you bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and you are entered into their labours"(John 4:37-38).

Actually, we have little right to judge those of the past. They faced odds of which we know little. Indeed the harvest is ripe today because the sowers were busy yesterday. The sowing period always seems to be a barren period. Today we must both reap the harvest of past labors, and, true to our trust, we must sow today for tomorrow's reaping.

While we cannot talk encouragingly about church preparedness, we can talk enthusiastically about ripeness of the world for the gospel. We are rapidly approaching a one-world situation comparable to the single Mediterranean world of the first century. The Pax Romana has been replaced in recent times by the Pax Brittanica, and for the past two decades by the Pax Americana. If English is not a complete replacement for Koine Greek as a universal means of communication, then efficient methods of translation with the electronic aids of this age make up any deficiency. Jet travel, T.V. by Telestar, and all such ingenious aids for

transportation and communication present the world ripe for the transmission of the gospel in a way never conceived by the early apostles. The tools are here. Where are the men with the courage and imagination to make dramatic use of them?

While it may be to our shame that, unlike Paul, much of our missionary travels take us to distant lands where the gospel, a distorted gospel to be sure, has already been, this pre-conditioning might be compared to the opportunity that existed for the pure gospel in the faith of the Jews of the Dispersion. Protestantism, in a dramatic historic missionary effort, has during the last 150 years reached into nearly every land with its doctrines.

In 1815, Protestantism was entirely regional, a phenomenon of the British Isles, and the northwest corner of Europe, plus a half dozen small communities scattered over the British Empire. (America was prevaillingly Protestant at that time, but less than 10% of its diminutive population claimed any church affiliation.) By 1914, Protestants had carried their faith to almost every country of the world. The 19th century became the century of the "Protestant Awakening."

Today, we may well find the work of correcting the damage to pure Christianity by Protestant errors an onerous task. Yet in our present condition, who are we to cast stones? Our task, in part, is now to reap the harvest of these earlier labors by expounding "the way of God more perfectly" to the many around the world whose faith is half formed.

Yet beyond the sphere of Protestantism's influence, and the Roman and Greek Catholic's as well for that matter, stand three-quarters of the world's population. To this great host of two billion, one hundred and fifty million people, Jesus says: Lift up your eyes and look and see that the fields are white unto harvest. How we can entertain a complacency in the face of this responsibility is one of the great contradictions of our Christian faith today! While Pharisees among us devour the church with their hateful self-preoccupation, and while the rest of us at home strike out languidly against the shadow of a denominationalism of bygone days, the world in bulk is slowly sliding down the skids of sin into the abyss of eternal torment. Jesus cries: Lift up your eyes and look—look and be chilled! Look and be dismayed! Look and be challenged! But look and see the world ripe for the message of God's redeeming love.

Canada is an example of the great opportunity facing the Lord's church in the United States of America today. I describe it to you hoping that your vision may be lifted a little, and that by association, you will recognize that all other nations everywhere hold equal opportunity.

Canada is a nation of 20 million people living in a country that is second in size only to China. Located within its national boundaries are unlimited stores of natural wealth from the iron fields of Ungava in Labrador to the gold, copper, nickel, silver, and uranium of Ontario, to the potash of Saskatchewan, to the oil of Alberta, and the aluminum of British Columbia. Her great woodlands provide the bulk of the pulp for your mammoth printing presses. Great waterways pro-

vide abundant hydro-electric power. Her limitless prairies constitute one of the world's largest breadbaskets. So, impressed with her future, American businessmen have invested millions of dollars in her growth and today with this capital, control 60% of Canada's major industries.

Enjoying an identical heritage with the United States of America, the Canadian culture is almost one with that of the United States. The amiable relations between these two countries (at least since the United States lost the War of 1812!) have made possible a great intercourse between their peoples. Hosting each other's tourists provides each with a major industry. Canadians see most of the United States T. V. programs and read many of its national magazines.

This identity in culture, language, economy, living standards, and this accessibility over the world's longest undefended border establishes Canada as the most readily available area for mission efforts by American evangelists and evangelistic churches in the United States in the world.

No longer is it possible for you to look on the whiteness of the Canadian fields as simply a condition caused by snow. Rather its whiteness, comparable to its unending fields of ripened wheat on the western prairies glistening white in the sun, is recognized by enlightened Americans today as a condition of readiness for the gospel—a land peopled by a responsible, educated, democratic, stable citizenry, living in a land of plenty — a people needing the gospel; a land whose wealth is needed for the gospel. To secure Canada for Christ

will be to establish, after the United States, a second aggressive base for able world evangelism.

As a Canadian, I do not plead for you to do what Canadian brethren should do for themselves, but rather I plead for those advances so urgently needed that are possible only with the full weight of the American church behind them.

In Canada there are approximately 4,000 brethren scattered over this vast land to some 100 small struggling congregations. You will recognize that this averages 40 members per church. As I indicated earlier, the church had beginnings in Ontario. From here it spread into the Western provinces. Other beginnings took place in the Maritime provinces in the East, and these largely failed, so that today there are less than one half dozen churches in the considerable territory lying east of Ontario.

The statistics of the situation are interesting! For every American New Testament Christian there are approximately 75 Americans to reach. For every Canadian brother there are 5,000 Canadians to reach. There are only eight untaught Canadians for each American member of the church in the United States. The challenge of Canada is the challenge of an entire nation reachable for the gospel!

The church in Canada is small, but it is currently vigorous. The number of congregations has almost doubled in the last two decades.

In a trip last June into the Western provinces I witnessed firsthand the evidence supporting a statement I had

heard: that almost every Western congregation was building a new building or expanding its existing facilities.

The will to work is evident in the Canadian church. A comparison will prove useful here. Take the combined memberships, to be on the safe side, of the College, Highland, and Hillcrest churches, and you will have the size of the Canadian church. Imagine that these brethren support forty gospel preachers full time, ten more with some assistance, six missionaries in foreign fields, 75 church buildings, encourage 25 outpost meetings weekly, establish two new churches each year, sponsor 100 one and two week gospel meetings each year, carry on at least 50 V. B. S.'s each summer, and individually maintain two Christian high schools and Freshman Colleges with a combined enrollment of over 200 students and with campuses with assets totaling over \$500, 000, and manage several Bible camps in addition, and you will have a picture of the energy of the Canadian church.

I am happy to say that a considerable recognition of the Canadian opportunity already exists in the United States. Within my memory preachers from the United States have assisted effectively the progress of the gospel in my homeland. I was baptized by an American, Brother Raymond Crumbliss, who is known to many of you. This past summer brethren from both sides of the border co-operated in extensive campaigns in Canada: Target Canada was a movement of twelve families to the northwestern Ontario twin cities of Port Arthur and Fort Williams; the project was under the supervision of the Hillcrest church and the supporting campaign sponsored by the Taylor Blvd. church in Louisville. Other campaigns were held in Edmonton, Alberta; in Sim-

coe County, Manitoulin Island, and Toronto in Ontario. A ten month campaign is now in progress in greater Winnipeg. "Operation Okanagan" goes into effect this coming year. A similar move to the Maritimes is planned for next year. American congregations are assisting in supporting evangelists, building buildings, and working in the field on vacations. Relations between the brethren of these two nations have been universally warm and congenial, proving their transcending common citizenship in the kingdom of God.

### *Where are the Labourers?*

Matthew records Jesus as saying, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38).

To look to the white fields implies that we must mature our understanding with regard to effective evangelism. We need to take a sharp look at ourselves, at our presuppositions and at our current approaches to the practice of preaching the gospel.

Where are the laborers? No comment is necessary here to establish the fact of the paucity of workers. This is a chronic stumbling block.

Many have supplied reasons and solutions to our preacher shortage. Some have wistfully suggested that the congregations double up, thus releasing 50% of the evangelists for the fields. The same condition that keeps evangelists out of

the fields now would continue after this radical, and I dare say impossible move—lack of faith, lack of love. The lack of preachers is due to the failure of the church to inspire, direct, and train its young men to become preachers. If a congregation of one thousand members cannot produce several new evangelists each year, then doubling the size of the congregation is not going to help.

There is one congregation in Western Canada numbering not many more than a hundred who, more by necessity than by conviction, practiced a mutual ministry. From this church in recent years has come in middle age a dozen men determined to preach the gospel full time. Several have gone to the mission fields.

There is a congregation in Eastern Canada not numbering many more than a hundred who in not many more than a dozen years has inspired a dozen young men to go forth to evangelize.

The preacher shortage is symptomatic of spiritual sleeping sickness in the church; not the result of the failure of the Christian colleges, or of there being "too many little churches."

There would be more young men to aspire for the ministry if they could see signs of spiritual courage and dedication in their parents, and their Bible school teachers; if they could see their local evangelists "giving it all up" for the hardships of the mission field; if they could see their elders providing effective, dynamic, controlled leadership—and thus know that it would be a privilege to work under their

direction. There would be more young men who desire to preach if the church as a whole evidenced a more sincere concern for the souls of the lost, and a greater appreciation for the joys of the spiritual life. In this regard we need to lift up our eyes.

Where are the laborers? In the fields, there is not a missionary who could not use 50 more workers immediately. This is true in Canada. But this is not the only problem. The traffic in missionaries is far too heavy. Modern missionaries are often too peripatetic to be productive. The coming and going of workers is a major hindrance. "Support" is chief culprit here. In lifting our eyes we need to be affronted with the scandalous behavior in the church which often reduces evangelists to the role of the beggar, and elderships to the position of guardians of the flock from the depredations of the begging wolves. Surely, a better method exists for the securing, sending, and supporting of the would-be missionary than presently persists.

Another chief culprit is the impermanence of the missionary. A two year term is just not long enough, unless it be in an equatorial region where the climate has a say. If a Texan needs five years to get adjusted to the Northeast, and longer in Canada, how much more will settling - in time be necessary where the language and the culture are totally new? Needed are more missionaries willing to leave "Ur of the Chaldees" for a lifetime. In Ontario two young men, one from Ohio and one from Alabama, are taking out Canadian citizenship papers. They plan to preach the rest of the days the Lord gives them in their chosen field. In this regard we need to lift up our eyes.

*Conclusion: Pray the Lord of the Harvest*

Gracious Jesus not only directs us to lift up our eyes to the white fields, but gives us the uplift as well. His patience with His slow learners touches us with His gentleness. His forgiveness for His failing disciples warms us with His great love. The magnitude of His concern revealed in His cross stirs us to comprehend. The urgency of His action in the text impels us to action.

Several months ago Time Magazine summarized the missionary activity of Christendom in a feature story. Included were color photographs of various evidences of faith and work around the world. One picture was almost completely white. It showed kneeling in the snow, Eskimos before a Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes. The shrine 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle was placed on a mound of stones that these people had dragged by dog sled from a distance of 40 miles. This picture told me: (1) others have long been willing to go even to unpromising areas where I have not yet gone, (2) primitive natives are responding with conviction even to an altered gospel, (3) truly the fields are white unto the harvest.

Lord, help us to lift up our eyes and send us as laborers into your harvest.

# TO LOST FRONTIERS

## WESLEY REAGAN

Wesley Reagan was born March 27, 1931 in El Paso, Texas. He was reared in Tucumcari, New Mexico where he graduated from high school in 1949. He received a B.A. degree from Abilene Christian College in 1953 and a B.D. from United College in Winnipeg, Canada in 1964.

On graduating from A.C.C. he preached for two and a half years at Knox City, Texas. He has spent the ten years since then working with new works in Lander, Wyoming and Winnipeg, Canada. The Windsor Park congregation in Winnipeg where he now preaches features an unusual plan to build a self-supporting Canadian congregation in five years. The present rate of growth makes it appear that the work will be self-supporting on schedule before the end of 1965.



Mary Alice Miller of Temple, Texas, became Mrs. Reagan in 1953. This marriage has been blessed with four children: Randy (10), Debbie (8), Brad (5), and Ward (3).

Plans have been made for the Reagans to move to work with the Northside congregation in Dallas when the Winnipeg work becomes self-supporting later this year. Northside has supplied most of the Reagans' support while they have been in mission areas.

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Jesus described His own mission in these words, "For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was

lost" (Luke 19:10). Those who follow Him are committed to the same task, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15).

In this matter of seeking and saving the lost, and being responsible for the whole creation, it is easy for blind spots to occur. It is easy to allow the scope of our vision to become too narrow and to become accustomed to overlooking certain parts of the creation. We have met today to try to floodlight some of the blind spots and push back the blinders that restrict our vision. What are lost frontiers? They are areas of blindness, thoughtlessness, and neglect. How are they created? Where are they? What can we do about them?

### *Frontiers Created by Human Need*

First, notice that there are frontiers created by human need. Jesus knew how easy it is to be interested in those who can be of value to us, and to overlook those whose welfare does not affect our welfare. Therefore He gave a specific warning about the claim that human need has on our attention.

When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbors; lest haply they also bid thee again, and a recompense

be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; because they have not wherewith to recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed in the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:12ff).

In Matthew 25:31-46 Jesus also mentions the hungry, the lonely, the sick, and the prisoners.

There was a time when the church was made up largely of poor people and it worshiped in the poor section of town. It has now moved into a more fashionable neighborhood and has become more prosperous. It is easy to forget the poor. Of course, they are still invited to our services but, in too many cases, we do not really know the poor any more.

A man recently called me and said, "I have some furniture to give to someone who needs it. Do you know anyone?" I didn't. "I'll call the Salvation Army," he said. Here was a Christian man who did not know any poor who needed furniture. He called a gospel preacher who did not know any. Yet he knew somebody who did know the poor. The Salvation Army distributes mountains of clothing, food, and furniture while our storerooms stack high with unused materials. We usually wait for someone to come by the church building and ask for his needs. I'm afraid we do not have enough friends among the poor.

Where our congregations are strong the bankers know us. They know we build fine buildings, assume big mortgages, and have a good payment record. The printer, the newspaper man, and the radio station operator know us. They know we

do quite a bit of advertising. The civic clubs and the schools know us. They know we have some good after dinner and commencement speakers. BUT THE POOR DON'T KNOW US. The people in the slums don't know us. Those in the charity wards of hospitals seldom see us.

I feel certain that Jesus would know and be known by the poor. He would work among the depressed, the unemployed, the uneducated, the alcoholic, those in prison, the sick, and the hungry.

Some might object, "This is social, not spiritual work." Do these people have no spiritual needs? Does the gospel have nothing to say to them? What did Jesus mean when He said, "I was sick . . . hungry . . . naked . . . in prison and ye did not minister to me?" Are we, as a brotherhood, seeing but passing by on the other side? Has the rush of religious and secular duties deafened us to the cry of human needs?

Is Christianity a religion of doctrine only? Or is it a religion of service, of giving, of doing? Preaching without doing is what James was talking about when he spoke of faith without works. It is dead. It is the corpse of Christianity. John said, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth" (I John 3:18). The necessity of truth in doctrine is unchallengeable. Is the necessity of compassion, love, and mercy any less certain?

When Jesus wanted His identity validated to John the Baptist, He sent word, I'm working with the blind, the lame, the lepers, the deaf, and preaching the gospel to the poor. If our work were to be evaluated by the amount we have worked with the blind, lame, deaf, and poor, how would we stand?

Will you go home and begin some kind of work among the poor? With the deaf? With the blind? In a nursing home? In a hospital? In a residence for the elderly? In a prison?

May God grant that we will be known less as the church that argues religion, and more as the church that practices it. Let us be known for strong convictions and a firm doctrinal stand, but also for tenderheartedness, compassion, and concern for the needs of men. We are presently regarded by many as a rather self-righteous group. We will be as long as we pass by the ditch of human need on the other side. If we get down into the ditch and get our hands dirty and spend our money helping people this picture will change.

### *Frontiers Created by Racial and National Barriers*

Secondly, there are frontiers created by racial and national barriers. The sad truth is that a man's chances of hearing the gospel are pretty slim unless he is a middleclass Southern Anglo. Some estimate we have two hundred fifty missionaries outside the United States. That is about one for every twelve million people if they are evenly distributed. They are not evenly distributed. Ironically, some of the most densely populated sections of the world have the fewest workers.

In our own country a man's spiritual opportunities are likely to be greatly limited if he happens to be born into a racial minority or a geographic area Christians have neglected. We have been told that we cannot go to Russia with the gospel.

Thank God for some who do not believe it and are trying. In the meantime, who is preaching to the million native born Russians in the United States? There are half a million Mexican-born residents in the U. S. and hundreds of thousands more of Mexican descent although U. S. born. They are made no less in the image of God than we, but their chance of learning the gospel is far less.

Who is preaching to the 350,000 American Indians? More than one-third of them are in Arizona and Oklahoma where we have strong churches. Yet the little Indian baby will grow up with the odds heavily stacked against his learning and obeying the gospel.

Who is working among the quarter-million Japanese and Chinese residents of this country? What is being done among the million and a half Italians? Perhaps slightly more work has been done among our fifteen million Negroes, but even then they depend for their hope on the crumbs that fall from our tables.

We serve Him who said, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matthew 10:42). Are there not little black ones too? And little red and yellow and brown ones? Are there not little ones who speak German and Russian and French? Are there no little ones in the countries where we've never been?

Our Lord has also said, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me," and "See that ye despise not one of these little ones" (Matthew 18:5, 10). He warned that it is better to have a millstone about one's neck and be

cast into the sea than to cause a little one to stumble (Luke 17:2).

"Jesus loves the little children; All the children of the world." It does seem that those who wear His name would do more to see that His beloved little ones—regardless of skin color, or language, or geographic location—would hear His gospel.

### *Frontiers Created by Religion*

Thirdly, look at the frontiers created by religion. There are at least two frontiers created by religious lines. One is among religious outcasts and the other is among religious people. Both are neglected.

Notice first the fact that there is a frontier among religious outcasts. These are people whose lives lack religious respectability. One of the first accusations made against Jesus was that He associated with sinners. At Matthew's feast He ate with multitudes of them. His defense was simple, "They that are in health have no need of a physician; but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance" (Luke 5:31f).

Jesus was always an embarrassment to those who were greatly concerned about religious respectability. He talked to the Samaritan woman who was living with her fifth husband. He dealt kindly with the woman taken in adultery. He allowed a sinful woman from the streets to anoint His feet. He com-

mended the prayer of the publican as preferable to that of the respectable Pharisee. He went home with Zacchaeus, the chief publican. Our Lord saw Himself, not as a trophy collector who sought whole specimens, but as a doctor who searched for the spiritually sick.

There is a great and badly overlooked work to be done among those who are flagrant sinners. Let us work with those who have given themselves to drunkenness, immorality, and dishonesty. We often assume that they would have no interest in the gospel. They may have more awareness of what Christianity is all about, and more sense of real need for a Savior than our more respectable neighbors.

You recall the story in Luke 7 of Jesus being bidden to eat with Simon, the Pharisee. Jesus had been attracting large crowds and was the center of all sorts of rumors. Simon must have felt, "If I can get him in my house I'll be able to find out what kind of a man he really is." As Jesus was eating there was a commotion at the door. A woman of the streets, a prostitute, rushed in. She went to Jesus to anoint Him, but, bursting into tears, she washed His feet with the tears. Then she humiliated herself by letting down her hair to dry the Lord's feet. She kissed His feet and then anointed them with ointment. This is not the same story as that in which a woman anointed His head with costly nard. The word for ointment here is one that was commonly used to speak of an inexpensive salve that would be found in almost any household.

Simon smugly watched all this taking place. He was no longer disturbed about Jesus. He decided that Jesus offered nothing to worry about if He did not even know what kind of a woman this was. About this time Jesus said, Simon, I'd like to

have a word with you. Simon answered, You just go right ahead.

Then Jesus told the simplest little story you have ever heard. A certain man had two debtors. One owed him a lot and the other only a little. When they were not able to pay he forgave them both. Which, Simon, do you suppose would love him the most? Simon answered, Why, I suppose the one he forgave the most would love him the most.

Then Jesus gave one of the most withering denunciations of self-righteousness of His entire ministry. He said, Simon, when I came into your house you did not even treat Me with common courtesy. You gave Me no water for My feet, but this woman has wetted My feet with her tears. You provided Me no towel, but she has dried them with her hair. My head with oil you did not anoint, but she has anointed My feet with ointment. Then, if you will allow a rough paraphrase to try to get the feeling of the statement, Jesus said, This woman has more knowledge of forgiveness in her little finger than you will ever have in your head. Jesus here taught that the one who is forgiven much loves much. The self-righteous person who sees little need for forgiveness will have little appreciation for it.

When we seek prospective Christians, we usually look among those who are already living good lives. Nothing is wrong with this unless this is the only place we look. This would be like a doctor who would accept only patients who are almost well. The greater the sickness the greater the need for a doctor. Likewise the more rampant the sin, the greater the need for a Savior. If we have any faith in the power of the gospel, let us bring that power to bear on the lives of flagrant sinners. Let's see some dramatic conversions which will inspire the brotherhood and turn whole cities upside down for Christ.

The second frontier created by religion is among religious people. After His temptations,

Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee . . . And he taught in their synagogues . . . And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and he entered, as his custom was, into the synagogue, and stood up to read (Luke 4:14-16).

Jesus went first to the religious people of His time. I think it is significant that He sought CONVERSATION WITH religious people whereas we usually seek ISOLATION FROM them.

With whom can we converse? Let me mention a few of the many opportunities before us. There are indications of a widespread disenchantment within liberalism. Those who are discontented should be receptive to the restoration appeal. There is also a rich opportunity among conservative Christian Church preachers and people. Many of them have deep, sincere, and well-founded convictions. They have been shaken by the tide of liberalism that has swept through their own people. The ones who now remain conservative may have more real appreciation of the need to respect the Word than they have ever had before.

A real opportunity exists, I believe, among those involved in the Protestant Ecumenical Movement. Of course we cannot meet at the conference table to negotiate the gospel, but why can we not converse with others toward a mutual understanding of the gospel? Why can we not at least present our convictions and seek to understand theirs? Honest differences

can sometimes be resolved by frank conversations. Mistrust, misunderstanding and misrepresentation can be minimized. These breed in silence and multiply in ignorance.

Even denominations are discussing their differences. We must not cry, "Unity, Unity," and refuse to discuss with others the basis for unity. The day may come when the clear strong voice of a modern Luther will determine the course of the entire religious world. Nothing is as certain as our silence to keep that voice from being the plea for non-sectarian Christianity.

Among the rank and file of religious people there is a great frontier. Many liberal positions are just now filtering down to the man in the pew. Many will find these unacceptable. Thousands of others know enough of the Scriptures to recognize a restoration movement if it is brought to their attention. Not many of these people have the insight and initiative to start a restoration effort, but they would follow one. Nearly a billion other people have some kind of a faith in some kind of a Christ. **WE CANNOT IGNORE THOSE WHO HAVE MADE A RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT.**

#### *Frontiers Created by Attainment*

Fourthly, consider the frontiers created by attainment. I fear that if a man is very rich, or very well educated, or socially very prominent, his chances of being taught the gospel are small. It is true that he may be more independent and more difficult to approach. It is not necessarily true that he has no sense of spiritual need. The very qualities which have distinguished him in other areas might enable him to be sensitively perceptive and appreciative of what the gospel offers.

Look at the records of Jesus and Paul. You will see an appeal to a *rich young ruler* (Luke 18:18-27); to Zacchaeus, the *chief publican* who was *rich* (Luke 19:1f); to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews (John 3:1); to those gathered at the Areopagus in Athens who must include some of the outstanding *intellectuals* of the day (Acts 17:16-22); to the Sanhedrin Court (Acts 23:1); to *governors* (Acts 24:10; Acts 25:8); and to a *king* (Acts 26:1).

We brand our cause as second-rate if we do not put it before the political, intellectual, and financial leaders of the world. They will not all accept it, but neither do all of any other category accept it. There is both good and bad soil among the rich as well as among the poor; among the educated as well as among the illiterate; and among the powerful as well as among the weak.

But is there an opportunity to present the gospel at these levels? I believe so. In the first place, we have converted a few and reared a number of others in the church who are prominent themselves. They can talk to the more influential on their own level. They can go through doors that are closed to most of us. If you have excelled academically, if you have achieved a measure of financial success, or if you are in a position of great influence, may I suggest a challenge for you. Will you talk to your colleagues about Christ? Be neither self-righteous nor apologetic. Ask their consideration of simple, unpretentious faith. In some cases you will be very gratified at the response you get. In others you will be disappointed. Remember, though, that you are working with world-movers. If you convert one, his influence may result in the conversion of a thousand.

In the second place, we can talk to those on the way up. There has been some great work done on college campuses but it is only a drop in the bucket compared to what must be done. Much of it has been from the standpoint of protecting our own young people from the dangers of materialism and secularism. What are we doing to convert the most promising young people of our time? Are we entirely negative in our thinking about working with university students? Do we plan merely to salvage a remnant or to convert the world? What are we doing in schools of medicine, law, architecture? Are we going to let these men get all their training without once hearing a well-stated case for Christianity? Then are we going to continue to wonder why the gospel seems to have little appeal among professional people?

In 1960 there were 58,000 foreign students in the U.S. Most will go back to their own people, their own language, and their own culture, but they will go back as leaders. They will be people with intellect and training. There is probably not a man among us who could exert as much influence for Christ in their countries as many of these could if they were genuinely converted. Think what it would mean to a new work in Australia, Europe, Asia, or Africa to have a respected doctor or architect as a devoted Christian.

In the third place, we may be entering a period of special opportunity among intellectuals. It may be that there is now being ushered in a period of intellectual humility. We have been in a period in which men learned some answers and many experienced a smugness. However, there is evidence of a breakthrough into a new dimension of thinking about the universe, about man, and about God. Some who thought they had all the answers are realizing they did not know all the

questions. We may be on the threshold of scientific concepts that will not only tolerate but will demand faith. The faith that floods this vacuum, however, must be able to withstand vigorous scrutiny. Only an intelligent and mature expression of Christianity can win respect.

May God raise up some men who can preach effectively to the rich, the powerful, and the educated.

### *Frontiers Created by Population Density*

Fifthly, great frontiers are created by population density. It is true that Jesus went to individuals, but it is also true that He went to multitudes, and multitudes came to Him. Once He spent the whole night in prayer and then spoke to a great multitude of disciples and a great number of people from Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon. (Luke 6: 12-19). Another time "many thousands of the multitude were gathered together, insomuch that they trod upon one another" (Luke 12:1). One time the press of the crowd was so great Jesus got into a boat and spoke to the multitude on the beach (Matthew 13:2).

Jesus thought in terms of reaching the whole populace of a city or area with His message. He rebuked Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum as cities for being unresponsive. He expected His work to have an impact on the city as a whole, not merely on a few scattered individuals.

We think little in terms of preaching the gospel to society as a whole. We therefore have little impact on society as a

whole. What are we saying to the public on the most pressing moral and spiritual needs of our time? What are we doing to combat evil in society? Where is the John the Baptist among us who will rise up and condemn Herod's adultery? Except in our own pulpits and among our own people, what are we saying about materialism, morality, and the relevance of the Christian faith?

There are a few notable exceptions to this indictment. The Herald of Truth, The Gospel Press, World Radio, Campaigns for Christ, Exodus Bay Shore, and the World's Fair project are some examples. There are others but not nearly enough. For the most part we do not preach to the world. We preach to the church and a few guests.

I expect we see as high a percentage of conversions among our contacts as anyone. However, it is one thing to convert ten per cent of your contacts if you are in contact with ten, and quite another thing if you are in contact with a million. We have not been teaching the millions.

We have read and heard much about the growth of the church. Its membership is estimated to be two and a quarter million members. We have read that it is the ninth largest religious group in the U.S. and that it has the fastest per capita growth rate of any religious organization in this country. We have heard that the church's mission outreach is now being felt in one hundred or more countries. For these facts we thank God. I do not want to minimize any of the great work that has been done. We have much cause to rejoice, but this is not the whole picture.

The church has grown but the world population has grown faster. The truth is that the churches of Christ are a less

significant factor as compared to the world population than they were twenty-five years ago! There are more people today who haven't been taught the gospel than there were before the Restoration Movement even began. With every passing day there are more Christians, but also more non-Christians because there are so many more people. We are not yet doing enough to evangelize the increase of the world's population, much less make gains on the present world population. It is estimated that the population will double in the next forty years. This means that unless we teach three billion additional people within forty years we will be in a worse situation than we are now.

In emphasizing the need for mass communication of the gospel, let me strongly affirm that I am not minimizing the need for personal work. Much of our recent growth is a direct result of personal evangelism. I am saying that the simple arithmetic of a multiplying population means we have to do much more public work. It would be nice if every man could wear a tailor-made suit. However, a suit off the rack is better than no suit at all. It would be good if we could talk personally to every one of the world's billions. However, it is far better to teach them by radio, television, etc. than not to teach them at all.

Even according to our most optimistic estimates, fewer than one-tenth of one per cent of the world's population are members of the church. This means fewer than one out of every thousand are members. If anyone is impressed with how big the church is getting he must be thinking of a very restricted area. The world as a whole has not even noticed we are here yet.

I have been told that half the world's population would not even recognize the name of Jesus Christ. Jud Whitefield, Stanley Shipp, Joe Talbot, and others came back from the Orient with almost incredible stories. I well remember one slide of Melvin Harbison in Hong Kong with a group of Chinese children. I was told that Melvin was asking the children in Chinese if they had ever heard of Jesus Christ. Their faces were as blank and unresponsive as yours would be if I asked you if you had ever heard of my next door neighbor in Canada.

We have to do something for the great population centers of the world besides send devoted, but usually empty-handed, men to these areas to become lonely, frustrated, and disillusioned. Avon Malone, when he was working in the Chicago area, said the constant awareness of being in the midst of a great untaught population center made a man feel that he was trying to sweep back the ocean with a broom.

It alarms me to look at a list of the world's twenty-five largest cities and realize that we are not effectively teaching the populace in a single one of them! In greater New York City the situation has improved in the past few years. I have not had the opportunity to visit that work, but reports from Manhattan, the World's Fair, and Bay Shore indicate that brethren are trying to do something more in proportion to the size of the city.

At Bay Shore, Dwain Evans and others saw that we would have to have a very dynamic program or we would never be noticed. They are only in their second year and Dwain writes,

Last Sunday we had 386 in attendance for worship . . . . In our first year of work here we maintained an average of 50 cottage classes a week going as high as 76 in session at one time . . . . Thus far we have not moved into our program of mass teaching, which will call for large teaching ads in *Newsday*, the seventh largest newspaper in the U.S. This is the most influential daily on Long Island. Our hindrance has been lack of finances . . . . If the Lord wills, we hope to have 300 missionaries in the field by the year 2000. If it is His will we will send three this fall. We are also carrying on a foster care program in the homes of the members. The first two children have already been placed.

I don't know how anything could sound better than this, but I don't hear this kind of a sound very often. Besides, Bay Shore and other greater New York City congregations are working in a population center of fifteen million people. As valiant as are their efforts, they are scarcely touching the hem of the garment of need there.

If the situation is bad in New York, what about other major cities of the world? A magazine article several months ago said Tokyo is the most populous city in the world. What are we doing there? God bless the workers in London, but they are too few and have too little backing to attract much attention there. As we go down the list, you single out the ones that have an effective program to preach to the populace: Shanghai, Moscow, Mexico City, Peiping, Buenos Aires, Chicago, Berlin, Leningrad. There is no use going further. There are names we have never heard of in our mission reports.

Great movements of the world have caught the attention of the masses. Christianity is no exception. "Ye are the salt of the earth . . . Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:13f).

Multitudes thronged, crowded, pushed, walked, and went hungry to hear Jesus preach. We are not doing much preaching that provokes that urgent a response from the hearts of men.

Someone may object, "We live in a different age." True. Yet men still grapple with pride, selfishness, lust, and hate. They hunger for help. They go to hear Billy Graham preach by the tens of thousands. What age does he live in? "But," someone says, "He preaches a more popular doctrine." That may pacify our conscience, but it doesn't answer the question. He attracts great crowds because he is getting through to the people. He is touching their hearts. He is talking about their real problems. We have men who preach as well but we are not touching as responsive a chord on as big a scale.

One thing we need to do is develop more powerful public preachers. We have organizers, fund raisers, promoters, printers, public relations experts, and executive secretaries. We are lamentably short of capable, studious, prayerful, powerful, and fearless preachers. I'm thankful for all our personal work experts, but I'd also like to see a few multitude experts. We need men who can apply eternal truths to the modern scene so accurately and vividly that thousands will flock to hear them. We need preaching that will turn cities upside down. We need preaching that will be quoted in the news columns of the papers, not because it is fanatical, bizarre, or sensational, but because it is pertinent and incisive.

The church has attracted the world's attention and curiosity. The world marvels at the church's growth, but it has not on a broad scale been stunned by the church's message. Let's use radio, television, newspapers, tracts, campaigns, fairs, and ev-

ery other conceivable medium to get the gospel to the world at large.

### *Conclusion*

We have mentioned five types of frontiers which need more attention: (1) the frontiers created by human need, (2) the frontiers created by racial and national barriers, (3) the frontiers created by religion, (4) the frontiers created by educational, financial, or social achievement, and (5) the frontiers created by population density.

There are others. Over every hill there is a new horizon. We are like a two year old that awakens and looks over the edge of his crib to find that there is a whole world out there that he hasn't explored yet. If he knew how big it was he might not have the courage to try. But he doesn't, so he begins and who knows how much of it he might explore in the next seventy years or so? And likewise, if we knew how big our task is, we might be afraid to begin. But we don't, and who can know what the Lord's people with the Lord's help can accomplish in this generation?

## TO THE SHEEP WHO HAVE NO SHEPHERD

ADAIR P. CHAPMAN, JR.

Adair P. Chapman, Jr., is a native of Berlin, Georgia. He is married to the former Nancy Mullaney, of Searcy, Arkansas. They have two children, Larry, 12, and Jan, 17.

Following his graduation from Harding College at Searcy, Arkansas, he became Superintendent of the Knobel, Arkansas, Public School System.

He served congregations in Kansas City, Kansas, and Atlanta, Georgia, before moving to Dallas, Texas, in 1950 to become minister of the Highland Park congregation. Following five years at Highland Park he was minister of the Procter Street congregation in Port Arthur, Texas, for three years. Since 1957 he has served the Garland Road (formerly Pearl & Bryan) congregation in Dallas, Tex.



He holds several meetings each year, and has done radio and television work. His father, two brothers and a brother-in-law are also ministers.

He has appeared on numerous lecture programs, and has frequently addressed civic, business and educational groups.

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These are glorious days in which to live. The church of our Lord is moving forward. From every corner of the world reports are being received of thrilling accomplishments. We are no longer

afraid to dream big dreams, make big plans and do big things. The churches of this decade are working together. The greatest effort since apostolic days is being made to preach the gospel at home and abroad. Thousands are being baptized each year, and total membership of churches of Christ in the United States is estimated to be in excess of 2,250,000.

Unfortunately, there is a dark cloud against the background of our rapid numerical growth.

### *The Problem*

To what avail is our effort to teach and baptize if we lose those who are baptized? The rate at which we are losing the baptized has reached alarming proportions. Why do we sustain such high losses? What can be done to correct the problem, and how can we best go about bringing the lost back into the fold? These are questions that present a tremendous challenge to every faithful member of the church today.

Jesus once saw a great multitude and had compassion on them "because they were as sheep not having a shepherd" (Mark 6:34). Many thousands have strayed from the fold and now wander aimlessly without the guidance of the Good Shepherd who said, "I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:15).

Our cities and great metropolitan areas are teeming with thousands who have become lost to the church. These are the sheep who have no shepherd.

In 1963 a religious survey was conducted in Dallas County, Texas. It was found that there are more than 44,000 members of the church in the county, but only about 26,000 persons are carried on our membership rolls. The number of unfaithful members currently listed in church directories is a matter of

conjecture, but the conclusion from the survey was that there are over 18,000 members of the church in Dallas County who have fallen by the wayside.

M. Norvel Young estimates that 250,000 members of the church who live on the West Coast have become lost to the cause of Christ. Burton Coffman estimates that there are over 50,000 unfaithful members of the church in New York City.

It is safe to suggest that hundreds of thousands who were at one time scripturally baptized are now no longer active, and are scattered from one end of our nation to the other. Many still consider themselves members of the church, but seldom, if ever, attend services anywhere. They avoid identifying themselves with a local congregation. They make no contribution to the church and assume no responsibility. They are the religious gypsies who camp just on the outskirts of the kingdom of God.

I have often talked with members of the church who lived in the city for years, but had never identified themselves with a local congregation. When asked about placing membership, they would proudly reply that their membership was back in some little congregation in Arkansas or East Texas where they grew up. They seemed to feel that a transfer of membership would be a mark of disloyalty to home ties. Such individuals are unaware of being members of a great brotherhood.

Our brethren do not own a church building anywhere in the nation that would accommodate the crowd if all who have strayed away were to come back to the Lord. Seeking the lost and entreating them to return to the Savior is our opportunity and responsibility. We are our brother's keeper.

*The Cost*

We are appalled when we sit down to count the cost of the terrible losses we are experiencing. Here is a reservoir of lost power, wasted talent, latent spirituality and unbelievable financial resources that could be utilized in taking the world for Christ.

Recently I visited in the home of a couple who moved to Dallas several years ago. They failed to identify themselves with a local congregation in the city, although they had been faithful Christians in their home community. During the years they were out of the church two small sons grew to maturity. Like the Prodigal Son, the parents came to themselves. They have returned to the church, but the sons are not interested.

In homes where there has been no room for Christ, where no prayers have been spoken, and where the Bible has been neglected, and the church forgotten, the greatest price of all is paid by the children.

"The lambs will follow the sheep, you know.  
Wherever the sheep may stray.  
If the sheep go wrong, it will not be long  
Till the lambs are as wrong as they.

"And so for the sheep we earnestly plead  
For the sake of the lambs today.  
If the sheep are lost, what an awful cost  
The lambs will have to pay!"

Everybody loses when a Christian falls by the wayside. The local congregation loses a member, the members lose a brother or sister in Christ, the community loses a Christian's influence, and the backslider loses his soul if he is not restored.

### *Some Causes*

My family and I enjoy horseback riding. The horses we ride are kept on a small acreage near Lake Dallas, about fifty miles from our home. Late one night as we came to a stop in our driveway, my eleven-year-old son, Larry, quietly asked, "Daddy, did we shut the gate?" No one could remember fastening the gate. Even though we were tired and the hour was late, we immediately turned around and made the long return trip to make certain the gate had not been left open. The trip proved unnecessary, but driving fifty miles was preferable to trying to round up loose horses.

In many instances members of the church stray from the fold because those who are responsible for their oversight have neglected to shut the gate.

One of the principal causes of delinquency among members of the church is the lack of willingness on the part of the shepherds of the flock to fulfill their solemn responsibilities. Peter said, "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed, feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage,

but being ensamples to the flock" (I Peter 5:1-2). Paul said to the elders at Ephesus, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

The eldership is not merely a position to be filled, or an honor to be enjoyed, but a work to be done. It is a solemn, sometimes thankless and sleepless business. Elders make a serious mistake when they become so involved in the material affairs of the church that they have no time to attend to the spiritual oversight of the flock. Their primary responsibility is to watch over souls and help men and women, boys and girls along the road to heaven. They must answer for the souls under their care (Hebrews 13:17).

My heart reaches out in sympathy to the good and sincere men who are bearing the burdens of the eldership in today's world. Maintaining oversight of a congregation is extremely difficult, especially in our cities where we have shifted from a simple, agricultural, rural society to a highly industrialized, urban one in which we sometimes do not even know our neighbors.

Family life has changed, and both parents often work. More leisure time poses a problem that detracts from the program of the local congregation as its members often spend weekends upon the lakes and highways. Immature and irresponsible members frequently move without leaving a forwarding address, and will change membership from one congregation to another without notifying anyone of the change.

The story is told of a family that was moving to the West. As they passed the church house, one of the children waved

and said, "Goodbye, God, we're going to California!" The fact that one in every five Americans now moves annually doesn't make the work of the elders any easier.

The general moral decline of our nation, and the secular influences about us are making it very hard to live for Christ and to maintain high standards of spirituality. God has blessed America as no other nation has ever been blessed, but there are disturbing signs that morally and spiritually we are weakening. The pathway of history is littered with the bones of fallen empires, and most of them decayed from within before they were overwhelmed by their enemies.

A bold and unconscionable attempt is being made to remove every suggestion of God from the national scene. Contrary to our strong religious heritage, a militant anti-God, anti-Bible movement is abroad in the land. Freedom of religion is apparently construed to mean freedom from religion. It has even been proposed that the words, "In God We Trust," be removed from our coins. The American Civil Liberties Union filed a suit in 1963 to have the phrase "Under God" removed from the Pledge of Allegiance. It is suggested that belief in God is old-fashioned and out-of-date in these enlightened times. One sophisticated news analyst is reported to have brazenly advocated that we "kick God out of America!"

Strong materialistic inroads are being made into the mainstream of Christian life and thought. People are going to church in record numbers, but church membership is now failing to keep pace with the population growth. Three out of every four marriages will end in divorce unless the present trend is reversed, and the ugly spectrum of broken homes hangs over

almost every congregation. Juvenile delinquency in our cities has reached alarming proportions, and continues to rise. As far back as 1957, Carl Hanson, Chief of the Dallas Police Department, reported that ten percent of the city's school children between the ages of 13 and 16 were arrested at some time during the year. J. Edgar Hoover reports that crime is increasing five times faster than the population. Boys and girls from church homes are increasingly involved in trouble.

There is a widespread breakdown of authority and discipline in the home. Many parents are failing to set the proper example for their children. Two little boys visited the zoo and were looking at the wild animals. One little fellow asked, "I wonder what makes those cats so wild?" "I don't know," replied his friend. "I guess maybe their mommy and daddy were wild cats!"

The upsurge of narcotics addiction, alcoholism, sexual immorality and dishonesty in high and low places are all marks of a free-wheeling, fast-dealing society that has its foot on the gas and is rushing helter-skelter along the road to oblivion.

The church is in the world, and in too many instances the world has come into the church. As men love the world more, they love the Lord less. Mental illness has increased thirty percent in the last ten years, and we have our share of it. After spending many years as a minister in a large city and counseling with hundreds of disturbed men and women, I am convinced that many emotional conflicts arise as a result of our inability to walk simultaneously in two directions. There are thousands who are too religious to go all the way with the world, and yet they are too worldly to go all the way with Christ. Jesus said, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24).

There is a disturbing lack of religious life in the average Christian home. Parents do not read the Bible or pray with their children, but the average American family spends 33.2 hours a week watching television. When television came in the front door, the old family custom of having everybody sit down at the table and eat a leisurely meal together went out the back door. We are drowning our youngsters in violence, and daily exposing them to vice and immorality of every imaginable kind under the guise of family entertainment.

The average Christian family will probably spend around \$20.00 each year for the newspaper, and at least that much more for comic books and magazines. The majority of our homes do not take a religious paper, and in many homes there isn't even one religious book, and then we wonder why we have so many weak and wandering Christians!

These are only a few of the problems that contribute to the enormous task of watching over the Christian flock. May God give us strong and determined leaders who have come to the kingdom for just such a time as this!

### *Possible Solutions*

The Great Commission consists of a two-fold responsibility. We are to baptize those who are taught, and teach those who are baptized (Matthew 28:19-20). Our purpose is not to immerse and forget, but to baptize and teach. A class designed to instruct and activate young Christians should be included in every Bible school curriculum. The reason some are lost to the church after conversion is suggested by the words of a little girl who had fallen out of bed. She explained her fall by

saying, "I went to sleep too close to where I got in!"

Recent surveys in some of our colleges and congregations present striking evidence that large numbers of our members do not know what they believe. Some Bible teachers are unable to intelligently tell others what they must do to be saved. In many Christian homes the Bible is covered with dust. Boys and girls are growing up knowing more about comic strip characters than they know about Bible characters. We are producing a generation of Biblical illiterates. The church is never over one generation from apostasy, and each rising generation must be taught again the truths that were learned by the preceding generation. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). When we give more attention to our teaching, we shall close the gate through which thousands are lost each year. "It is written in the prophets . . . they shall all be taught of God" (John 6:45).

A party of engineers became lost in a forest in Africa. Their supply of food was exhausted. They found some berries which seemed to satisfy the appetite. They ate the berries for several days, but became weaker and weaker. One after another, the men began to die. When help finally came, only one man was left to tell the story of what had happened. The berries were analyzed and were found to be absolutely worthless as food. The engineers literally starved to death.

Many members of the church are dying of spiritual malnutrition. They are not getting the food they need for spiritual growth and development. A steady diet of first principles and negative ideas will dwarf the growth of an individual or congregation. If spiritual horizons are to be enlarged, there must be a strong spiritual emphasis in our pulpits and classrooms.

Our preaching and teaching must be Christ-centered. In too many instances we have taught the facts, but not the Christ.

We must not ignore the problems our people face in daily living, and their quest for solutions based upon God's Word. We must let people know that God has a message that is relevant. Our failure to present the relevancy of the gospel has caused many bright young people and disillusioned older people to be lost to the church. They have turned to other sources in a feeble attempt to satisfy the deep spiritual hunger in their hearts, and to find an answer to their problems.

In positive and optimistic tones, let us declare the love of God to hungry hearts. Living for Christ is the happiest life, and the only life. Let those who preach and teach tell the people that God is on their side, and that He loves them, wants to save them, and is a "very present help in trouble" (Psalms 46:1). These are troubled times in which we live, and this is the message Christians need to hear. This is the emphasis that builds faith, changes attitudes, and draws baptized believers into a closer walk with the Lord. Those who might otherwise fall by the wayside are led to exclaim in the words of Peter, "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

Congregations should feel a sense of urgency in reaching out to reclaim the lost. An old woman, upon hearing the grandfather clock in the hall strike thirteen, awakened her sleeping husband to say in great alarm, "Wake up, Pa, it's later than it's ever been before!"

Members must be kept busy. Idleness contributes to mischief and dissatisfaction in the flock of God, and adds to mounting

spiritual and numerical losses. Work stimulates interest, and gives members a sense of being participants rather than spectators. Show me a congregation where the members, preacher and elders are in a perpetual squabble, and it will be a congregation where somebody is loafing on the job.

The church has three great jobs to do. It is charged with the work of spreading the gospel and supporting the truth (Mark 16:15-16; I Timothy 3:15). It is to do the work of edification. This simply means that members are to be strengthened and built up in the faith (Romans 14:19; Colossians 2:6-7; I Corinthians 14:12). Benevolence is another responsibility of the church (Acts 11:27-30; Galatians 6:10; James 1:27). When a church turns its back on even one of these areas it loses the right to call itself the church of Christ.

These three areas of work suggest many facets of service. No discerning, knowledgeable Christian would ever say, "There isn't anything for me to do."

Some members of the church are lost through boredom. When I was a boy on the farm in South Georgia I was often tired, but I was never bored. My father taught his boys to work. He worked, and we worked. He was wise enough to know that boys who did a hard day's work were not likely to have the desire or energy to get into devilment when night came. There must be a wide-awake, energetic leadership in the church today. Let me challenge you who are leaders in the church in your community to make plans that will involve the members. Keep them busy. Lead the flock. Set the example, and they will love you and follow you to the ends of the earth!

Jesus once related three touching little stories about a lost sheep, a lost coin, and a lost boy (Luke 15). The shepherd went out and found the wandering sheep and put it on his shoulders and returned it to the fold. The woman who lost the coin searched until she found it. The boy who foolishly left home repented and came back. The conclusion of the three parables is expressed in the language of Jesus, "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:10).

Many congregations come around the Lord's table Sunday after Sunday without making any effort to contact absent brothers and sisters in Christ. Imagine, if you can, a situation like this. I go into a community for a meeting and am invited into a home for a meal. I have visited in the home before. We sit down at the table. I look around and say, "I seem to remember a little boy. Didn't you have a little boy in your family when I was here the last time?" The husband thinks for a moment, and says, "Yes, I believe we did. I think his name was Johnny. I wonder what ever happened to him. Wife, have you seen Johnny lately?" She says, "No, now that you mention it, I haven't. I believe it has been several months since he was here." This would be amusing if it were not a tragic analogy of what often happens in the family of God.

In many flocks, by the time someone discovers the lost sheep and finally goes out to find it, it is too late to be of help. The poor, wandering sheep has fallen over a cliff, frozen to death in the snow, or been devoured by wolves. In this, as in certain other areas, we have too often been too late with too little.

The story of the Prodigal Son has been called the world's most beautiful story, but if Jesus had found the church mem-

bers of that day trying to lead the lost to God, He could have made it even more beautiful. He could have made the elder brother the hero of the story.

The elder brother might have said, "Mother, I heard you crying last night after you went to bed. I have noticed you always keep a light burning in your window. And, Dad, several times I have seen you climb to the top of the hill, shade your eyes with your hand and look off into the distance. When we come around the table for a meal, there are long periods of silence. Sometimes I notice tears in your eyes. We don't laugh and talk any more. I know what is wrong. Nothing has been right since my brother went away, but you can stop worrying right now. I'm going to go out and find him and bring him home."

We imagine the parents at first remonstrated, but finally consented, and the elder brother left on his mission. Several days later they looked down the road and saw two boys coming home, one very weak, wearing tattered clothes and leaning on the shoulder of the other.

I think that is the way Jesus would have liked to tell the story if it had not been necessary for Him to rebuke the church leaders of that day and of every day. You and I haven't done much better than the elder brother in the matter of seeking the lost and restoring the fallen. We have failed to go into that far country to find our lost brother and bring him home (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20).

Where is the far country? I once thought it was a place on the other side of the tracks of respectability, and frequent-

ed only by the known sinner, the outcast, and the lowest element of the community. I was wrong. The far country may be the home next door where discouragement or the cares of the world have caused feet of clay to turn from the pathway of duty. It is anywhere a man tries to live without God!

With love and deep concern for the lost, let us go out and find them and bring them back.

Solomon said, "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city" (Proverbs 18:19). It is hard to build a fire under a mound of cold ashes. This is why many of us never attempt it. We forget that in many instances a spark of life remains, and under the influence of love it can be made to burn brightly.

Generally speaking, the wandering ones will not come to the church. The church must go to them. In order to do this, we must know who they are and where they live. Religious surveys will help. Some communities offer a greeting service that makes the names of all newcomers, along with their religious preferences, available to subscribers. Members can make a list of all known delinquents in the area and visit them. Cottage meetings may be arranged with them. They may be invited to church services or social functions. They may be put on the mailing list for the church bulletin or for Christian publications especially designed to deepen spirituality. Funerals, weddings and illnesses often open doors and provide opportunities for reaching unfaithful Christians.

At the Garland Road church in Dallas where I serve as minister, we recently prepared an attractive brochure that

tells the story of the congregation and its work. Across the front of this pictorial presentation is the question, "LOOKING FOR A CHURCH HOME?" A young family stands in front of the building. They appear interested. The welcoming sign says, "Church of Christ." They seem to be saying, "Perhaps this is just the place we have been looking for!" The brochure is presented to those who move into the area, and has been very helpful in our work with non-members and unfaithful members in the community.

A friendly, warmhearted church contributes to the stability and faithfulness of its membership. In some congregations the lines of communication are down, and members of the church are out of touch with one another. The Hebrew writer said, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works . . ." (Hebrews 10:24). How can we obey this admonition if we do not know one another?

A minister announced that he was going to speak on the subject, "Will We Know One Another in Heaven?" A brother replied, "That is a very interesting question, but I have been a member of this congregation for six months, and I still don't know anyone here!"

Every church should have a strong visitation program. All newcomers and converts should be visited and welcomed. They should be enrolled in a Bible class and given other opportunities to make friends through social gatherings. Members of the early church not only worshiped together, but they worked together and ate together. Christian friends in the church will relieve members of the necessity of going outside the church to make the wrong kind of friends.

A young man who had been a member of the church only a short time moved across the city from his home congregation. He was asked why he continued to make the long trip back rather than place membership with a congregation that was nearer. He replied, "I go back because they love me." What person in his right mind wants to leave a place where he is known and loved?

We who are parents would like the assurance that our children will remain faithful to the church. In this connection we must consider the value of sending them to a Christian school. We are losing far too many of our young people. Christian education is a strong deterrent to such losses.

Less than ten percent of our own children are attending Christian colleges. About ninety-five percent of those who do attend such schools remain faithful and grow up to be strong and active workers for the Lord. About seventy percent of those who do not attend Christian schools are lost to the church before they receive their degrees. Another twenty percent are little more than nominal Christians. These may be cold and meaningless statistics today, but if in a few years from now your child or mine has been one of the fatalities, it will be a different story. No one can guarantee that your child will always be faithful to the church if he goes to a Christian school, but his chances are much better if he does!

It costs something to be a Christian, but it costs infinitely more not to be a Christian. It costs something to send a child to a Christian college, but it may cost a great deal more if you don't

An aged Christian mother was approaching the end of the way. She was well along in her nineties. Her husband who had

taken life's journey with her sat by her side holding her hand. Her children had already lived out life's span, and had gone on home. For several hours she had been in a coma. Suddenly, she revived, and opened her eyes. Her face reflected concern, and there was a faraway look in her eyes. In her mind she had traveled back to the days when she was a young mother, and her little ones had gone out to play in the fields and woods.

"It is dark," she whispered. "Yes, dear, it is dark," the old man replied. "Is it night?" she wanted to know. "Oh, yes, it is midnight," her husband answered. Then her face quickly reflected concern, and there was an expression of anxiety in her eyes as she asked, "Are all the children in?"

This is a haunting question for every parent and for every member of God's family. I am frightened when I consider its implications for us all in the day of judgment.

"Are all the children in?"

### *The Challenge*

The problem of reaching the sheep who have no shepherd is great, but not insurmountable. In our elderships and pulpits we need men of faith, vision and courage to lead the way. In our pews we need dedicated men and women who love the Lord and are willing to follow.

Opportunities for the church in the years immediately before us stagger the imagination. The population explosion imposes added responsibility upon those entrusted with lead-

ing the church across the threshold of the space age. Today there are almost 200,000,000 people living in the United States. Fifty years ago there were only 99,000,000, but thirty-five years from now our population is expected to reach 330,000,000! By 1970 the population of Texas is expected to exceed 12,000,000 for a gain of about twenty-five percent over the population of 1960. The biggest boom in this country is the boom in people. This demands more preachers, elders, deacons, teachers, and dedicated workers in every area of Christian activity. Failure to meet this demand will mean that millions will die without ever hearing the gospel. Hundreds of thousands will be baptized, but lacking the proper care, they will stray away, becoming the sheep who have no shepherd.

Our horizons are unlimited. God doesn't limit us. We limit ourselves by the weakness of our faith and the narrowness of our vision. Let us get on with the job that needs to be done. We can be anything we want to be, and do anything we want to do for the glory of God!

Let each Christian remember Edward Everett Hale's immortal lines:

"I am only one, but I am one.  
I can't do everything, but I can do something.  
And what I can do, that I ought to do.  
And what I ought to do, by the grace of God I shall do!"

# TO SEE HUMAN SUFFERING

ROBERT L. JOHNSON

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Johnson joined the Bible Faculty at Abilene Christian College in 1953. While on leave of absence from 1955-57 he completed work for and received the Ph.D. degree from New York



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We may deny God but not the fact of suffering. We may evade many obligations in life but the day comes to all of us when we experience suffering. It may be physical pain, mental distress, or both. There is no single argument that has been used so often to challenge the faith of man as the argument dealing with human suffering. No one thing has made more skeptics than this, and no one thing puts a more severe tax upon both our reason and our faith. Bereavement is probably the deepest initiation into the mysteries of human life that men will ever experience. Men of faith often find themselves spiritually bankrupt when they experience deep sorrow and bereavement.

Suffering is a mystery because it seems to conflict with certain basic ideas we have about God and our world. We believe that a good God maintains the order of nature, and yet we see in that same order a provision for suffering, pain, and death. We say that man is in a peculiar sense the offspring of God, made in His image, the object of His special care, and yet this same man is often smitten by nature. Man is so constituted physically that he is liable to suffering, so constituted mentally that he is liable to err, and so constituted morally that he is liable to sin.

It is our assumption that God is an infinite personal Being who created the universe and who sustains it with His pow-

er. We believe that this Being is good and wise. If God were evil then there would be no problem in explaining pain. If God were clumsy or awkward then pain might merely be an accident in a badly managed world. We believe that God is all-powerful and has the ability to achieve His purposes. But in view of these assumptions it has been observed by W. R. Sorley that the ancient dilemma of Epicurus is still with us. "If God wishes to prevent evil but cannot, then he is impotent; if he could but will not, he is malevolent; if he has both the power and the will, whence then is evil?"<sup>1</sup>

If God is not all-powerful then there are other powers in the world equal to or superior to Him. We reject this position because we believe there is no power as great or superior to that of God. If God is all-powerful and does not will to remove the evil then we find it hard to believe that God is good or worthy of our love and praise. The problem of suffering was a great mystery in the days of Job. It remains a mystery today because there is no purely intellectual solution to the problem which is adequate to give the comfort and strength needed by the one who suffers. If our faith can overcome this then there is no obstacle that cannot be surmounted.

### *Non-Christian Answers to the Problem*

*The Answer of Buddha.* Suffering is so widespread and intense that some observers believe that the world is an intolerable place in which to live. The teachings of Gautama Buddha more than five hundred years before Christ stand as the classic example of pessimism. Buddha taught that "Birth is suffering, decay is suffering; illness is suffering. Presence

of objects we hate is suffering; separation from objects we love is suffering; not to obtain what we desire is suffering. Briefly, the fivefold clinging to existence is suffering.”<sup>2</sup> Buddha taught that the source of suffering is *thirst*, the desire which attaches the soul to worldly objects and leads to *becoming* or an infinite series of new existences with the monotonous repetition of birth, pain, and despair. Desire must cease and then the thread of life will be snapped and suffering will cease to be. In other words one must emancipate himself from the will to live and have.

*The Answer of the Stoics.* Another answer to the problem of suffering is that of the Stoics. Their teachings date from about 300 B.C. They knew that pain was real and often very acute, but they held it was one of those *indifferent* things which a wise and strong man would not allow to disturb him in any way. Seneca, a leading Stoic who tutored Nero once wrote: “Let great souls comply with God’s wishes, and suffer unhesitatingly whatever fate the law of the universe ordains. . . .”<sup>3</sup> He said:

What then is the part of a good man? To offer himself to Fate . . . One unchangeable course bears along the affairs of men and gods alike. Although the great creator and ruler of the universe himself wrote the decrees of Fate, yet he follows them. He obeys forever, he decreed but once.<sup>4</sup>

Seneca did not necessarily believe that natural calamities were directed personally against men. He stated:

“Those, therefore, are mad and ignorant of truth who lay to the gods’ charge the cruelty of the sea, excessive rains, and the stubbornness of winter, whereas all the while none of the phenomena which harm or help us are planned personally for us. For it is not because of us that the universe brings back winter and summer; these have their own laws, by which the divine plan operates.”<sup>5</sup>

Seneca sometimes tried to defend the view set forth by Socrates in Plato's *Apology*. ". . . know of a certainty, that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death." Seneca put it into these words:

But why, you ask, does God sometimes allow evil to befall good men? Assuredly he does not. Evil of every sort he keeps far from them—sin and crime, evil counsel and schemes for greed, blind lust and avarice . . . . The good man himself he protects and delivers; does anyone require of God that he should also guard the good man's luggage?<sup>6</sup>

But in another place Seneca says: "In like manner God hardens, reviews, and disciplines those whom he approves, whom he loves."<sup>7</sup> Marcus Aurelius, a Stoic and Roman emperor of the second century A.D. states the typical Stoic position: "Whatever befalls thee was set in train for thee from everlasting and the interplication of causes was from eternity weaving into one fabric thy existence and the coincidence of this event."<sup>8</sup> Epictetus expressed the Stoic idealism in another way: "to have God as our maker, and father, and guardian,—shall this not suffice to deliver us from griefs and fears?"<sup>9</sup>

We see that for the most part the Stoics did not try to explain evil and suffering except to say that they were appointed by an irresistible fate. The wise man would not permit such things to disturb his inner peace. Here was an attitude of almost complete detachment towards pain and evil. The wise man would even benefit through his encounter with suffering, for each victory he gained would give him additional

strength for the next experience. The Stoics taught that pain and suffering in themselves have nothing to do with man's inner life. Marcus Aurelius once wrote: "So welcome whatever happens, should it even be somewhat distasteful, because it contributes to the health of the Universe and the well-faring and well-doing of Zeus himself. For he had not brought this on a man, unless it has brought welfare to the whole."<sup>10</sup> Seneca expressed the same thought in similar words:

It is to this law that our souls must adjust themselves, this they should follow, this they should obey. Whatever happens assume that it was bound to happen, and do not be willing to rail at Nature. That which you cannot reform, it is best to endure, and to attend uncomplainingly upon the God under whose guidance everything progresses; for it is a bad soldier who grumbles when following the commander.<sup>11</sup>

Seneca then quotes from Cleanthes, another Stoic, lines which support the same view:

'Lead me, O Master of the lofty heavens,  
My Father, whithersoever thou shalt wish,  
I shall not falter, but obey with speed.  
And though I would not, I shall go and suffer,  
In Sin and sorrow what I might have done  
In noble virtue. Aye, the willing soul  
Fate leads, but the unwilling drags along.'<sup>12</sup>

There are other lines from Cleanthes which say almost the same thing. "Lead me, O Zeus, and thou, O Destiny, to the end that ye have ordained for me. I will follow without reluctance. Were I a fool and refused, I should nevertheless have to follow."<sup>13</sup> There seems to be no question that this

attitude of the Stoics toward suffering and evil has had its influence upon Christianity. The emphatic position of Calvin upon predestination reveals a basic agreement with the Stoics on this one point. We shall touch on the point of the will of God later in our study.

*Dualism.* Dualism is perhaps one of the simplest answers if not the oldest that has been set forth to account for suffering. One of the best examples of dualism is Zoroastrianism which dates perhaps as early as 600 B.C. This religion set forth noble ethical standards for men and had an exalted view of God whom they called Ahura Mazda. The Zoroastrians sought to save the goodness of God by setting over against him the evil Angra Mainyu or Ahriman, who was responsible for all the evil in the world. We too, recognize Satan as an adversary of God but we do not attribute to him equality of rank. In dualism, with good and evil ranked as equal forces, faith in a good God would be endangered as the ultimate victory of good would be uncertain. Even though one does attribute evil to the influence of malign and hateful spirits this view only pushes the problem further back. One still has to account for "the devil and his angels." And the Biblical references at this point are not very explicit.

*Illusion or Absolute Idealism.* There are some who would deny the reality of evil altogether. This is the answer given by Christian Science which is basically idealistic. Only good, in this view, is real, only God, only Spirit. Evil is merely the delusion of man. But for most people this is a very unsatisfactory answer. H. F. Rall has stated: "The idea of evil, cast out of the door, comes in through all the windows . . . Only the name is changed."<sup>14</sup> One is still faced with how the delu-

sion or the *appearance of evil* is to be explained. Without doubt the illusion of pain is about as unpleasant as real pain. As W. E. Hocking has said: "Nothing can be gained by calling evil illusory; for an illusion of evil is an evil illusion."

*The Answer of Taoism.* Taoism is an ancient Chinese philosophy probably dating back to the sixth century B.C. The word Tao, spelled T-A-O, is supposed to be indefinable but there are several words often used to describe it. It is often referred to as the *way*, the *road*, the *path*, or the source of harmony behind all things. In one Chinese translation of the Gospel of John, the first verse of the first chapter is translated: "In the beginning was the *Tao*, and the *Tao* was with God, and the *Tao* was God." Early Taoism might almost be considered a kind of Chinese Stoicism, because basically, one resigns himself to the *Tao* or the harmony behind all things. The Taoist would probably not acknowledge hurt or suffering because he would reason that being absorbed in the *Tao* he could not be hurt because he recognized no hurt. And if one cannot be hurt he is impregnable and he is therefore more powerful than all of those who would hurt him. Thus the Taoist wise man is imbued with the power of the *Tao*, the universe itself, and is accordingly the most powerful of all creatures. But as we said, this is another kind of Stoicism where one merely takes whatever comes with indifference, whether good or bad, recognizing that it is all a part of the *Tao* which is intent on producing harmony in all things.

### *The Doctrine of A Finite God*

In trying to account for the fact of suffering and evil in the world there are some who have taken the position that

God must be lacking in either goodness or power. Among those who attribute finitude to the will or the power of God are Edgar S. Brightman, his successor at Boston University, Peter Bertocci, and W. P. Montague. In general these men would hold that God's will is pure and good, but it is finite. As mind, God is infinite, extending throughout the universe, but as will, God is finite. These men believe they see an irresolvable conflict between God's power and God's goodness so they choose to sacrifice God's power. John Stuart Mill in the last century was first among the moderns to set forth the idea of a finite God. In his work entitled *Three Essays On Religion*, he makes the following indictments against what he finds in nature:

"...nearly all the things for which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another, are nature's everyday performances. Killing . . . Nature does once to every being that lives . . . Nature impales men . . . burns them to death . . . starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold . . . and has hundreds of other hideous deaths in reserve . . . All this, Nature does with . . . disregard both of mercy and of justice . . . Next to taking life is taking the means by which we live; and Nature does this too on the largest scale and with the most callous indifference. A single hurricane destroys the hopes of a season; a flight of locusts, or an inundation, desolates a district . . . The waves of the sea . . . seize and appropriate the wealth of the rich and the little all of the poor . . . Everything in short, which the worst men commit either against life or property is perpetrated on a larger scale by natural agents."

We find a summary of Mill's views concerning the finitude of God in the following lines from the same work:

If the maker of the world can (do) all that he will, he wills misery, and there is no escape from the conclusion . . .

Not even on the most distorted and contracted theory of good which was ever framed by religious or philosophical fanaticism, can the government of Nature be made to resemble the work of a being at once good and omnipotent. The only admissible theory of Creation is that the Principle of Good cannot at once and altogether subdue the powers of evil, either physical or moral . . .

As formidable as these arguments seem to be most of us are convinced along with other scholars (Ferre, Trueblood) that if we admit any limitation to the complete perfection of God the idea of perfection would fall apart. It is quite possible that the inequities of the created world can be understood without accepting such a drastic position. We do not question the "natural" evils in the world but if we are to live in a world of order, of law, a world that can be studied by science because it is orderly, then there must be fixed laws that govern and maintain the regularity of our world. If God were continually suspending the laws of gravitation, or reducing the temperature of fire so that it would not burn, or changing the property of water so that no one would ever drown, ours would not be a cosmos but a chaos. There is suffering in the world produced by the forces of nature but this is the price we pay for living in an orderly world.

In a very interesting volume by Leslie Weatherhead entitled *The Will of God*, the author suggests that the will of God can be looked at from three standpoints, i.e., the Intentional Will of God, the Circumstantial Will of God, and the Ultimate Will of God. God does not intend, wish, or will that any should perish but that "all might come to repentance." He does not foreordain the precise way in which anybody should die but if a man chooses to violate certain laws

that God has set in motion then God's laws would operate impartially. This would be the circumstantial will of God, and this would be the answer that I would suggest to Mill with respect to the Natural evil that is in the world. In the attack which is made by Mill he seems to assign volition to Nature in accusing Nature of bringing suffering and disaster upon men.

### *The Doctrine of Suffering in the Old Testament*

God promised His people that if they obeyed His commandments He would send the early rains and the late rains that they might have grain and wine and oil, that they might eat and be full. (Deuteronomy 11:13ff.) If they obeyed His ordinances He would bless the people and cause them to multiply and they would enjoy the increase of cattle and of their flocks. He would even protect them from the sicknesses and diseases which they had known in Egypt (Deuteronomy 7:12ff). The righteous man would prosper but the wicked would be driven away like chaff before the wind (Psalm 1). That is why we find the old patriarch Job completely baffled as he reflects upon the calamities that have befallen him. He had been upright in conduct and character but still he was called upon to suffer. His friends of course believed that he was suffering as a consequence of wrongdoing and they urged him to confess his guilt. In other words they believed that suffering was based upon the principle of retribution, i.e., prosperity was the reward of one's piety and suffering was the evidence of one's sin. The book of Job of course provides no satisfactory answer as to why a righteous man should suf-

fer. Job never fully understood but he did learn that he must accept suffering with a childlike faith. Many of the Jews were still holding to these conceptions during the time of Jesus' ministry. They brought to Him a man born blind and asked the question: "Who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" Jesus explained that his blindness was not due to sin. Other Jews apparently thought that the tower of Siloam had fallen and caused the death of certain Jews because their sins were greater than those of other men. But Jesus denied that the victims were any more sinful than others. This view of many of the Jews that pain and suffering follow as payment or retribution for wrongdoing has a close parallel in the ancient doctrine of Karma found among the Hindus, Buddhists, and others of India. Karma is the law of works or deeds. And suffering as well as position in life is explained as the consequence of man's deeds. This law is constant and unalterable and carries over from one existence to another. We would not deny that suffering may come as a result of one's wrong doing but the difficulty with this solution to the problem of suffering arises when we often see the good and the innocent suffer without apparent cause or as the result of the irresponsible action of another party. The writer of Ecclesiastes, trying desperately to find some meaning in life expressed his disappointment: "What profit hath a man of all his labor which he taketh under the sun? . . . I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, . . . and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit." Though he found no explanation for his sadness he was convinced that the path of wisdom was in doing the will of God. We find merit in the Old Testament views of suffering but we find no satisfying solution.

*Freedom as a Prerequisite for Moral Good and Evil*

In a brief but excellent study entitled *The Mystery of Pain*, Leslie Weatherhead makes the observation that "God Himself in planning the universe was met with real alternatives. He could give men free will, for instance, or not give it to them. He couldn't do both. You say, 'That is obvious.' But is it not equally obvious that He cannot give us the advantages which accrue from both? Yet we often claim both." (Page 4.) As H. F. Rall has brought out, in a world where good is to be achieved there must be freedom. James A. Pike supports this view in stating that ethics presupposes responsibility and responsibility presupposes freedom.<sup>15</sup> If any action is to be called a moral action the condition of freedom must be present. Where an individual is forcibly restrained in his actions there is no virtue in the fact that he is not killing, stealing, or committing adultery. He couldn't if he wanted to. Rall states that there can be no life of reason and affection, nor of moral and religious attainment, except as there are free spirits that can see and reflect and choose.<sup>16</sup> If we are to attribute any value to such terms as courage, endurance, patience, sympathy, and many other virtues, then we must recognize that suffering, or the capacity for it must be one of the necessary conditions. H. Wheeler Robinson has well stated: "Character depends on volition, and volition must face risks and encounter suffering in order to have any real value for character-building."<sup>17</sup>

If God is a God of reason then we would expect that His creation would be orderly as an expression of that reason. If God is a God of moral character then this must be a dependable world. For man to be a moral creature he must have the

freedom to feel and to *sense* his world. Sensitiveness is a basic condition of life. We cannot ignore suffering but we must remember that the basic fact in suffering is not pain but sensitivity. How much life would there be without sensitivity, and how much sensitivity would there be without the possibility of pain? We experience physical pain and interpret this as a warning signal. The pain helps the physician to identify the real enemy. Pain does not necessarily produce good but it may sometimes direct us to greater truth and a deeper appreciation of life.

### *Christian Approaches to the Problem of Suffering*

Evil and suffering are problems for the believer but good is also a problem for the unbeliever. We must assume the position that the *problem of evil* and the *problem of the good* must be taken together, and Theism alone provides a solution to the *problem of the good*. Nicholas Berdyaev has written: "It is through tragedy that man finds his way to Christianity in which tragedy is finally resolved."

In a fine work published in 1906 by George A. Gordon, dealing with the subject of suffering, there are many observations of the author with which we agree. He suggests that when we first begin to consider it, the order of this world is for all honest and serious persons a supreme disappointment. Without hypocrisy and in all sad sincerity we are sure that if we had made this world, we would have made it differently. If we had made this world we would have put no winter in the sky, no storms on the seas, no volcanoes on our islands and continents. We would not have brought in death to reign

over the empire of life. If we had made the human race we would have put into it no physical defect, no mental eccentricity, no bias of will toward evil.

Gordon suggests that probably at the beginning we would have been disappointed with our Master Jesus Christ. He hasn't removed our diseases nor healed our sicknesses. And He doesn't remove our weaknesses all at once. Because this is not our Master's method with us, He leaves us where He found us, in the world of toil, misunderstanding, contradiction, sorrow, and death. He leaves us here, and works upon us slowly. Sickness is still sickness, temptation is still temptation and loss is still loss. What advantage then has the wise man over the fool? What gain is there in Christian discipleship? What does Christ do for those who love Him? It is clear that He does not change their world, nor does He change them all at once. But as the author states, there comes a time when noble men are ready to confess that perhaps God knew better than they how to make the world. There comes a time when serious disciples of Jesus are willing to admit that their Master knows His work better than they. The Apostle Paul had come to this decision. He had been tormented with some strange experience. There was a thorn in his flesh. It was cutting and tearing into his body every moment. That this thorn might be removed, Paul poured out his soul in prayer. Was it three times? One writer suggests that this might mean time, and time, and time again. This was an intense, a passionate, and persistent cry to God for relief from terrible pain. It was a cry for a changed environment. And that prayer represents the great burden of the world's prayer in all ages. Ninety-nine out of every hundred prayers that have been offered since the history of man have had reference to environment.

We pray to be delivered from extreme poverty, from unpleasant tasks, from the presence of people who are hostile and unsympathetic. We pray that we may not fail in our task, or that our loved ones may be spared from sickness or that the shadow of death may be turned back. In other words we pray for a heavenly environment.<sup>18</sup>

Paul's prayer was not answered as he had petitioned, but something better came than that for which he prayed—strength to endure, victorious manhood, the joy of the Lord, the sense of a triumphant God working in the very heart of his human weaknesses and sufferings. Thus it was that the world as God made it became for Paul the best of all possible worlds. This world as it is, as God made it, is *man's* supreme opportunity. It is his opportunity for heroism and for the highest type of manhood. It is quite clear that this world was not made for cowards. It is the worst possible world for the faint-hearted. It calls for endurance, self-denial, devotion, and courageous service. As Gordon says,<sup>19</sup> in the kind of world we would have made, a paradise for cowards, we would find no patriarch walking with God, going out "not knowing whither he went," nor trusting in the Infinite. In the kind of world we would have made there would be no one enduring, as "seeing him who is invisible." In our paradise for cowards there would be no characters named Job, there would be no Gethsemane and no Calvary. In the world that we would have made there would be mostly luxury, ease, and idleness. There would be no heroes, no martyrs, and no reformers. If we had made this world we would have made tragedy impossible, but strangely enough that would have been a loss to the human race. For often the greatest achievements of men have come at the time of

tragedy. Men have found strength, courage, love, and inward victory through the great experience of suffering.

The world as it is has somehow brought from the human heart the great psalms. It has somehow brought great light into the human mind. It has somehow given us great character. The world as it is has given us Jesus Christ and every worth-while disciple that has followed in His steps. This world as it is is *God's* opportunity.<sup>20</sup> Gordon suggests to us again that when Paul began life he had many things in him that needed to be taken out of him. He was a proud man. He had a certain sense of superiority to other men. And that is always a weakness because it usually means isolation from many of the noble lives in the world. It means limitation and even incapacity for certain great experiences and a reduced capacity for growth. Pride is a stain upon the best character, and this was one of Paul's weaknesses. But in this world as it is, God took Paul and so worked in him and upon him that Paul found great joy in identifying himself with common men. Paul's heart became open to the rule of Christ. This was a great thing that happened to Paul and this was a good world in which so great a thing was done. Paul gave up his pride and self-sufficiency and came to know that his sufficiency was of God. Paul still had weaknesses, pains, limitations, and his thorn in the flesh. Those things remained, destroying all hope of self-sufficiency but they helped to prepare Paul for God's sufficiency.<sup>21</sup> We have to learn what Paul did, that the world, as it is, without God, is too much for us. But the world as it is, with all of its sorrow and pain—with God, is not too much for us because His grace is sufficient for us.

In a book written by George Macdonald there is a certain woman who has suddenly met sorrow. And she cries out

bitterly—"I wish I had never been made!" But her friend quietly replied, "My dear, you're not made yet. You are only being made and this the Maker's process."

In the Christian faith we have the extraordinary claim that among those involved in the suffering that comes from evil is God Himself. This claim is made because God is viewed as a Father. The sorrow which Jesus felt when others were sorrowing, and the suffering He endured because of sin, somehow reflect in a human life the sorrow and suffering of God. Here is perhaps the greatest Christian contribution to the problem of evil; the idea of vicarious and redemptive suffering. Because God is a Father the sufferings of the children are His sufferings also. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself."

I have been greatly helped in looking at this problem of suffering by the observations of James S. Stewart published about twenty-five years ago.<sup>22</sup> Stewart says that it takes a world with trouble in it to make possible some of the finest qualities of life. We read in the Book of James: "Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness" (James 1:2). Many years ago the German writer Lessing said that if God came to him, offering in His right hand the whole of truth, and in His left the search for truth and all the toil and suffering and mistakes of the search, he would choose the left and say, "Lord, give me that." We are saying that there is moral discipline to be learned in suffering, but we are not saying that suffering therefore becomes a good and that one should not complain because he has had too much. Jesus did not look upon suffering as a good in itself. In fact He went

about trying to reduce the amount of pain in the world. He never saw anyone in pain or suffering without trying to relieve that suffering if the conditions were present for His doing so. His action was a judgment upon pain as an evil to be removed even at the cost of His own suffering.

The writer of Hebrews tells us, speaking of Jesus: "Though he was a Son, yet, he learned obedience by the things which he suffered."<sup>23</sup> Usually those who suffer most are not the great skeptics of the world. Often those who have suffered the greatest affliction have been the strongest believers down through the ages. We turn back to the book of Hebrews and examine the long list of the faithful and we read: "Some were tortured . . . Others suffered mocking and scourging . . . chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were killed with the sword . . . destitute, afflicted, ill treated . . ."<sup>24</sup> Why do those who suffer most frequently become steadfast in faith? Because they allow suffering not to take from their lives but to add to their total experience. They take what appears to be an ugly implement and transform it into a beautiful weapon for the good fight of faith. As James Stewart has said: "No sorrow will have been wasted, if you come through it with a little more of the light of the Lord visible in your face and shining in your soul."<sup>25</sup>

Someone has said that trouble might be considered a trust. Jesus seemed to look upon it that way. We take our suffering and our trouble almost as a curse and we resent it. Jesus used every bit of suffering and every bit of trouble that was given to Him and He turned His troubles into the most impressive spiritual force in human history. They handed Jesus

a cross as a disgrace but He took it as an opportunity saying: "I, if I be lifted up . . . will draw all men unto me."<sup>26</sup> If we were to list all the experiences that have taught us the most and brought the greatest enrichment and growth to our lives, we would list many of the gifts of love and home, but we would also include a long record of the difficulties and disappointments and sorrows that have given new depth and insight to our spirits.

How strange it is that Jesus said: "*Blessed* are the poor in spirit . . . *Blessed* are they that mourn . . . *Blessed* are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake . . . *Blessed* are ye when men shall reproach you and persecute you. *Rejoice* and be *exceeding glad*."

The great hymn writer, George Matheson, was engaged to a girl but when she learned he was going blind she gave him up. And then Matheson wrote "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go." He had found a love surpassing human love. What is the second stanza? "O Light that followest all my way, I yield my flickering torch to Thee,"—written by a man going blind. And the third—"O Joy that seekest me through pain . . ." written by a man whose heart had been broken. And then again—"O Cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to hide from Thee . . ." he was beginning to bear his cross but he knew he wasn't in it alone. The Apostle Paul frequently exclaims in his letters "Thanks be to God . . .," and yet he was a man whose body had received at least three-hundred and ninety-five lashes from the scourge. That was Paul's conviction too; he wasn't in this thing alone. That is really the point, isn't it? We come to learn that in spite of all of our fumbling human attempts to answer the problem of

evil and suffering, here at last is *God's* answer. We find that the Christian answer to the mystery of suffering is not an explanation, but rather a reinforcing *presence*. Christ stands beside us through the darkness. It is not just that God knows and sympathizes with us in our troubles as any close friend might do.<sup>27</sup> He is closer than the closest friend. Paul tells us that God's Spirit dwells in us, and somehow our sufferings are His sufferings and our sorrows His sorrow. Can we possibly imagine what God's burden of suffering must be with the pains of the world in His heart! The Twenty-Third Psalm becomes more meaningful—"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for *thou art with me.*" God is in it with us. As we read in Isaiah 53: "With his stripes we are healed."

But we are also in it with God. Paul wrote in Philippians 1:29: "For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake." There was victory at the cross for Jesus and our own cross may also be turned into victory. God, through Jesus Christ has taken into His hands suffering in its most shameful form and has turned that trouble into a great triumph. And if we believe this has happened, then why can't God do the same thing with our suffering and sorrow which is on a much smaller scale?

We reach the limitations of our human reasoning as we search for an answer to the suffering in the world. Instead of finding an explanation we find a *presence*. We find that God is in it with us. So we see in Isaiah 63: "In all their affliction he was afflicted." He suffers in all of our suffering. He is the chief sufferer in the world, and through His suffering in

His Son He has provided our redemption. Jesus tried to impress upon us the meaning of God's concern. He said that God even knows when a sparrow falls to the ground, and then He said: "You are worth more than many sparrows." Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:6 that there is "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and *in* you all." He is in this with us.

*Conclusion.* The meaning of suffering is not found in the Buddhist answer that there is suffering in the world, and to cease suffering we must get out of the world. The meaning is not found with the Stoics, as noble as some of their teachings were, because ultimately one would have to ascribe all evil to God. The answer is not found in Dualism nor in the idea that suffering is not real. The answer is not found in the doctrine of a finite God. The Old Testament provides only a partial answer. If there is an answer to the problem we find more meaning in the New Testament record than anywhere else. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." God was in His Son bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows. We come to know, as Paul says, that even now "He is not far away from any one of us." God would not permit the ultimate triumph of evil on Calvary but He turned it into the greatest victory the world has known. I believe that God is still saying to us through His Son—"I'm in this with you." "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

We remember the words of Paul, "Who shall separate us" and Paul had a right to speak; he had been put to the test and had known some of the great tragedies of life; "Who shall separate us . . ."—suffering, physical pain, heartbreak, and mental agony? "Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or

famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword? . . . No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord." Here is the answer—the *inseparability* of man from the Eternal Lover of mankind. This is the way we find peace in spite of suffering; the peace that passes understanding.

Many years ago Samuel McComb worded this prayer. I feel it is appropriate as a conclusion to our lesson:

"When we call Thee Father, the mysteries of existence are not so terrible, our burdens weigh less heavily upon us, our sorrows are touched with joy. Thy Son has brought the comfort that we need, the comfort of knowing that in all our afflictions Thou art afflicted, that in Thy grief our lesser griefs are all contained. Let the light which shines in His face, shine into our hearts, to give us the knowledge of Thy glory, to scatter the darkness of fear, of wrong, of remorse, of foreboding, and to constrain our lives to finer issues of peace and power and spiritual service. This prayer we offer in Christ's name."

#### FOOTNOTES

1. W. R. Sorley, *The Elements of Pain and Conflict in Human Life*, p. 48.
2. John B. Noss, *Man's Religions*, 3rd Edition, p. 186.
3. Seneca, *Epistles* II, p. 83, LXXI, 16.
4. Seneca, *Moral Essays* I, p. 39, V, 8.
5. Seneca, *Moral Essays* I, p. 223, IV, II, xxvii, 1-2.

6. Seneca, *Moral Essays* I, pp. 41, 43, VI, 1.
7. Seneca, *Moral Essays* I, p. 29, IV, 7.
8. Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations or Communings*, p. 263, I, 5.
9. Epictetus, (Loeb Series) Vol. I, p. 65, Bk. I, ix, 7.
10. Marcus Aurelius, (Loeb Series) p. 107, V, 8.
11. Seneca, *Epistles* III, pp. 227, 229, CVII, 9, 10.
12. Seneca, *ibid.*, p. 229.
13. F. C. Grant, *Hellenistic Religions*, p. 152.
14. H. F. Rall, *Christianity*, p. 316.
15. James A. Pike, *Doing the Truth*, p. 15.
16. H. F. Rall, *ibid.*, p. 328.
17. H. Wheeler Robinson, *Suffering, Human and Divine*, p. 43.
18. George A. Gordon, *Through Man to God*, pp. 270-275.
19. George A. Gordon, *ibid.*, pp. 277-278.
20. George A. Gordon, *ibid.*, p. 278.
21. Gordon, *ibid.*
22. James S. Stewart, *The Strong Name*.
23. Hebrews 5:8.
24. Hebrews 11:35-38.
25. Stewart, *ibid.*, p. 155.
26. John 12:32.
27. Stewart, *ibid.*, p. 165.

## TO SEE THE NEED OF LOVING AS HE LOVED

C. W. BRADLEY

C. W. Bradley was born at Trenton, Tennessee, January 14, 1922. When he was five years of age he moved with his parents to Centerville, Tennessee, where he graduated from high school in the spring of 1940. In the fall of that year, he enrolled in David Lipscomb College. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Harding College in 1944.

For almost two years, Bradley worked with the church in Syracuse, N. Y., during which time he also did some graduate study at the University of Syracuse. In December of 1945, he was married to Roberta Brandon of Nashville and they moved to Rockingham, N. C. to work with a little group of Christians. For eighteen years they continued in the Carolinas, living five years in Rockingham, seven in Statesville, and six in Winston-Salem. During

those years, they saw the Lord's church grow from around 25 to 150 congregations. Bradley held meetings throughout the two states. He now holds the longest unbroken record for service in the Carolinas.



Ten years ago, Bradley helped start Carolina Bible Camp which presently serves over 400 young people each year. He has been for several years on the Board of Directors of Blue Ridge Assembly and also serves on the Board of Directors of the Educational Foundation of the TranSouth Life Insurance Company.

A year ago, C. W. Bradley, his wife and their three

children moved to Memphis, Tennessee where he serves the Whitehaven congregation. He is also doing graduate work in the Harding Graduate School. Since coming to Memphis, he has helped begin a branch of Harding Academy in the Whitehaven section of the city.

Why do you want to live tomorrow? Is it not because you love someone and someone loves you? Would life without love be worth living?

Love is the most popular theme in the world. It is the most dynamic force known to man. The greatest challenge facing God's people today is that of lifting up our eyes and seeing the need of loving as Christ loved.

Some have said, "Nobody knows what love is." But how can we love if we never know what it means? Here is a simple definition which makes sense to me: "Love is a genuine concern for the good of another. It is an attitude of active, persistent good will."

### *Need of Loving*

Love is the great and first commandment, and it is also the second commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:37). "This do, and thou shalt live" (Luke 10:28). Jesus is saying, "Before you can do anything else, you must love." It is the first principle of Christianity; it is the very heart of true religion. Man's hope for eternal life is based on his love for God and man.

The love theme runs through the whole Bible; it is the central theme of the Bible. Let us notice just a few of the New Testament passages:

"Above all things be fervent in your love among yourselves" (I Peter 4:8).

"And above all things put on love" (Colossians 3:14).

"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (I John 4:8).

"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing . . . . But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love" (I Corinthians 13:1-3, 13).

Without love, all else is of no value. No matter what I have claimed to believe, no matter what doctrines I have supported, no matter what position I have taken on "Brotherhood" issues, no matter how earnestly I have contended for the truth, if I have failed in love, I have failed in everything. Without love our religion amounts to nothing.

Without love, all of our efforts in work and worship, be they ever so zealous, are to no profit. All outward expres-

sions of obedience are absolutely valueless unless they spring from a heart filled with love and devotion. To the church in Ephesus, the Saviour wrote, "I know thy works, and thy toil and patience, and that thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them that call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false; and thou hast patience and didst bear for my name's sake, and hast not grown weary." Sounds like a wonderful church doesn't it? But was it? Christ continued, "But I have this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love. Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent . . ." (Revelation 2:2-5).

The silver-tongued orator who is loveless is just a big noise. Oratory may command the admiration of men, but only love can win the approval of God. Without love, I am not fitted for the presence of God. For it simply means that I have never been near enough to the heart of Jesus to feel His transforming power. It means that I am lost. Thus we have no greater need than that of learning to love.

### *Loving As Christ Loved*

Christians are not only commanded to love, but to love as Christ loved us. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34). God's will had always been for men to love one another, but here a new depth of love is added, "That ye love one another; even as I have loved you."

Christianity may be defined as the reproduction of the teaching and life of Christ in our own lives. This is the supreme purpose of Christianity. The important thing is not what is happening to us, but rather what is happening in us.

“Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus”  
(Philippians 2:5).

... Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

“My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you” (Galatians 4:19).

“But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory” (II Corinthians 3:18).

Consider Him, let Christ thy pattern be,  
And know that He hath apprehended thee  
To share His very life, His power divine,  
And in the likeness of thy Lord to shine . . . .  
And thus transformed, illuminated thou shalt be,  
And Christ's own image shall be seen in thee.

Cannot all of Christ's attributes be summarized with the word “love”? It could well be said that men did not know what love was until they saw it in Christ. His whole life was a constant demonstration of love. At the cross, His love reached its climax. Here we see, “Love divine, all love excelling.” Paul prayed that the Ephesians might “Know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge” (Ephesians 3:19). May our earnest prayer be that we, too, may come to know the love of Christ, and love as He loved.

If we are to love as He loved, if His love is to be our pattern, then we must examine the nature of this love.

His was a love for those who did not love Him, a love for those who did not deserve His love, a love for those who were unlovable. "God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). It was a love that included all men of all races. "For God so loved the world . . ." (John 3:16).

His was a love that gave the best He had, a love that sacrificed His very life. It is impossible to think of Christ without thinking of giving and sacrificing. Speaking of Christ, Paul wrote, "Who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:6-8).

His was a love that forgave. When Peter denied Him, Jesus still loved him and forgave him. When the mob cried, "Crucify him, crucify him," Christ still loved them, and while dying on the cross, He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

His was a love that served. He was always serving the needs of others. Truly His was a love that cared and shared, a love that overflowed into the lives of those about Him. "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).

His was a love that obeyed. His Father's will was His delight. He came down from heaven to do His Father's will" (John 6:38). Even when approaching the cross, He prayed,

"My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26: 39).

Perhaps the nature of Christ's love can be best summarized by substituting the word, "Christ" for the word, "love" in I Corinthians 13:4-8, "Christ suffereth long, and is kind, Christ envieth not; Christ vaunteth not himself, is not puffed up, doth not behave himself unseemly, seeketh not his own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, Christ never faileth."

### *If We Loved as Christ Loved*

That we are to love as Christ loved is not a difficult idea to accept in theory. In fact, all who claim to believe in Christ unite in saying that this is a great and beautiful principle taught by our Saviour. But it is exceedingly difficult to accept it in practice, as it is in conflict with much of our human behaviour. Love is much easier to preach than to practice. We have committed many of the love passages to memory; let us commit them to our lives. In our minds we all admit the importance of love; in our lives let us admit it.

If we loved as Christ loved, we would be motivated to strive more diligently to bring about a spirit of unity among us. Is there a stranger paradox in the land than a divided brotherhood pleading to a divided religious world for unity? When brethren, including many outstanding preachers, say

and write harsh and bitter things against one another, should we be amazed because our religious neighbors don't get much excited about our plea for unity? Have we forgotten the identifying mark given by our Lord by which all men may recognize His disciples? "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13: 35).

Zeal and sincerity are no substitute for love. I may not always know who is on the right side of every issue, but I do know that whoever loses love for brethren is on the wrong side of God. The love that we show toward our brethren is the precise measure of our love for Christ. If we do not love our brethren, we do not love God. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, cannot love God whom he hath not seen" (I John 4:20).

If we loved as Christ loved, there would be a much greater spirit of unity within local congregations. We need not wonder why some congregations fail to grow. It is not so much what we teach that turns people from us, but rather what we teach as it is related to how we act. It is said that the German philosopher, Nietzsche, who came to hate Christianity, once seriously considered becoming a Christian. While he was studying, he went to live among some people who claimed to be Christians. When he came away he said, "Those Christians will have to look a lot more redeemed before I can believe it." Through the eyes of those around us, I wonder just how redeemed we look? A congregation that loves can conquer any problem that may arise, but if a congregation ever loses love, its life is gone. It doesn't take long

for those who visit with us to decide if love exists. One young boy who was converted to Christ passed by a number of congregations, and walked all the way across town to worship with a little group of whom he said, "Them people love each other."

If we loved as Christ loved, we would put forth greater effort to understand those affiliated with denominational bodies. We believe that we have a message that they need, but may we learn that they will never receive it unless it is presented in love. Often we fail to reach them because of our bitter and sarcastic attitudes. Harshness repels; love attracts.

If we loved as Christ loved, we could not help but put forth greater efforts to take the gospel to all the world. Through the love of God, you and I have come to know the only power that can save the lost. Jesus has charged us to share this good news with others, but the world remains unconverted. Christ loved the world and died for it; we must love the world and take the living message of Christ to it. See Him looking down upon the city of Jerusalem in love, weeping over the lost! How He yearned to save them! Have we done much weeping over the lost? May God help us to catch the spirit of Christ.

If we loved as Christ loved, God's people would have sufficient money with which to carry on the work of the Lord. We can give without loving, but we can't love without giving. We give to those we love, and relatively speaking, we give as much as we love. Paul told the Corinthians that their giving was a proof of their love (II Corinthians 8:8). God

loved and gave His Son; if we love, we will give our lives. If we have given our lives, we'll have no difficulty in giving our possessions.

If we loved as Christ loved, we would find great joy in works of benevolence. It is possible for brethren to become so busy debating issues in connection with how to help the poor and the needy, the widows and the orphans, that they have no time left to help them. It is possible for a preacher to feel that he has done his duty toward helping those in need when he has simply decided on which side of an issue he stands. I may not always be sure of the best way to do something, but I am very sure that to do nothing is wrong. "But whosoever hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue, but in deed and truth" (I John 3:17-18). I read of a woman who went to New York on her vacation. One day while walking down a street, she saw a little ragged boy looking into a bakery. She took him inside and bought him some food; she then took him and bought him some new clothes. While walking out of the store, the little fellow looked up and said, "Are you the wife of God?" Isn't that what Christians are?

If we loved as Christ loved, our worship assemblies would be periods of warmth and devotion. We would never find worship uninteresting. Once a young lady purchased a book and began reading it. In disgust, she threw it aside saying, "This is the most uninteresting book I've ever seen." A few months later, she fell in love with a young man and became engaged to him. He was a writer, and one night casually

mentioned the name of the first book he wrote. To the girl's amazement, it was the very book she had cast aside. When she got home, she rushed to the attic and found the book and began reading again. In the early hours of the morning as she read the last page, she said, "This is the most interesting book I've ever read." What happened? Why the big change in attitude toward this book? The answer is simple. She was now in love with its author. When we become truly in love with the author of the Bible, we'll think it the most interesting book we've ever read, and we'll thrill to hear it preached.

If we loved as Christ loved, we would be much less conformed to this world and much more transformed through the renewing of our minds. We would love the things of this world much less, and would set our affections much more upon the things above. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15).

### *Learning to Love as Christ Loved*

Though we know that we are to love as Christ loved, we also know that most of us must confess that we have never learned to love like this. How can we learn to love more? A command to love will never produce love. Certain spiritual laws must be followed.

We can learn to love more by giving God's Word a greater place in our lives. Study it prayerfully and diligently. Study it daily and meditate upon God's great love for us. "We love, because he first loved us" (I John 4:19).

We can learn to love more by meditating upon our Saviour's sacrifice for us. Think of Him as He existed in heaven before coming to earth. See Him giving up all this. Why? Because He loved us. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich" (II Corinthians 8:9). See Him in the Garden as He prayed in great agony that He might not have to endure the cross, but still bowing in complete submission to the will of His Father. See Him stumble and fall on the way to Calvary. See the blood spurt from His hands and feet as the nails are driven through. As the cross is lifted up by the soldiers and dropped into the hole prepared for it, can you imagine that you hear the rip of His flesh? Now look as those who passed by rail on Him and hear Him tenderly plead for their forgiveness. Hear Him cry in anguish and grief, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Finally, see His head drop in death. For me, He did this. Can I think upon His death and not be moved to love more?

We can learn to love our brethren more if we will strive to know them better, and do more for them. We learn to love those whom we serve. My brother's Saviour is my Saviour too. If I find it difficult to appreciate some of his characteristics, perhaps it will help me to realize that he finds it difficult to appreciate some of mine. And I am sure that the Lord has to love much to accept either of us.

We can learn to love our enemies more if we will seek to understand why they act as they do. Surely we can have pity for them, and pity is a form of love. We can pray for them and this will work wonders in our own hearts. Knowing that

Christ wants us to love our enemies can help us to put forth greater effort. Knowing that Christ has a genuine concern for our good, and that He wants us to be genuinely concerned for the good of all can help us love our enemies more.

God doesn't want us to build memorials to Him, but He wants our love—all of it—the love of our life. Nothing else will do. It is better not to live than not to love. It is more correct to say if we don't love, we don't live, for our Lord has taught, "He that loveth not abideth in death" (I John 3:14).

The night has a thousand eyes,  
And the day but one,  
Yet the light of the bright world dies  
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,  
And the heart has one,  
Yet the light of a whole life dies  
When its love is done.

Francis W. Bourdillon

## TO THE CHRISTIAN'S EMOTIONAL NEEDS

PAUL EASLEY

Paul Easley was born in Texarkana, Arkansas, and attended schools there. Upon finishing school, he worked for Gulf Oil Company as office manager and served as part-time associate minister for the Walnut Street Church of Christ in Texarkana. He owned and operated a private business from 1945 until 1953 at which time he moved to Houston, Texas, as associate minister for the Central Church of Christ. In 1955 Central sponsored the opening of Southwest Church of Christ for which Paul Easley was minister. In 1959 he went back to Central as the minister. He stayed there until January, 1964, at which time he became the minister of Brentwood Church of Christ in Austin, Texas. While in Houston, he attended the University of Houston.



Sometime ago, I read a sermon in which the author told of a certain brilliant Scottish minister who was possessed of more pride than compassion. One day he stopped to get his shoes shined. He was in a hurry, and when he thought it was time for the job to be done, he looked down to find that his shoes were in worse condition than at the beginning. He spoke sharply to the bootblack. When the little lad apologized, the minister discovered that the reason the task was being done so badly was that the boy could not hold back his

tears. The boy then explained that he was shining shoes only to buy some flowers for his mother's funeral. At that the minister was so filled with penitence that he furnished and conducted the funeral. Not only so, but this was his testimony: "Since then I have felt like one walking over a battlefield after the battle, trying to care for the wounded and the dying."

As I read this last statement, I could not help thinking what a blessing it would be if every Christian could come to share in some measure the new outlook gained by that minister as a result of his encounter with that little boot-black. It reminded me of a statement made by Matthew concerning the attitude of our Lord as He looked out over the multitudes of His day: "When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" Matthew 9:36.

Today, the measure in which we can lift up our eyes to the emotional needs of those about us; and whatever figure of speech we may prefer to use to describe them, whether we see them as sheep, frightened, scattered, harried, torn by the wolf, without a Shepherd; or as casualties on the battlefield, wounded, bleeding, dying; the measure in which we catch such a vision of humanity's great need is the measure in which we are beginning to share the Christlike spirit and to become partakers of the divine nature.

Paul said, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). In this Paul did not mean that we are to bear one another's burdens and fulfil a law that Christ gave, but fulfil the law of life that made

Christ what He was. Paul knew that it is only as this law is so fulfilled in us that it produces compassion for others that we can hope to find salvation for ourselves. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2).

In our day, in a special way, we are becoming aware of so-called emotional problems. We are told that half the hospital beds in America are occupied by mental patients, that one out of every ten persons will undergo psychiatric treatment during their lifetime, that half the population of the United States can be classified as neurotic and a third need psychotherapy.

This means that many of these people are attending the very congregation where you worship. As a matter of fact, many such people come to churches seeking help. Sad to say, in many cases, we have been completely unaware of their presence and of their need. Many times by our attitude, our lack of compassion, our selfish lack of concern, and even by our teaching which has been cold and hard, leaving no margin for error, we have failed these people and have caused them to turn away from God, disappointed, disillusioned, and in many cases disgusted.

Actually, we are told that many emotional problems today are not only related to but are produced by religion. This is a serious indictment against religion, and challenges Christianity at the very core of its basic claims.

Christianity claims to be able to produce good mental health. When those exposed to the teaching of it fail to

find good mental health, this means one of two things, either Christianity's claims are false, or what they have been taught is not Christianity. Let us notice Christianity's claim. Paul said, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17). What is good mental health? It is doing right, finding peace and joy. Again, Paul said, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Timothy 1:7). I doubt if a better description of good mental health could be given than that.

Now, if either because of a wrong message or a wrong method our teaching fails to produce these results in the lives of those who come seeking help, we need to reevaluate both. We need to "try the spirits whether they are of God" (I John 4:1). James said, "Be not many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation" (James 3:1). If we assume the role of teacher either in pulpit or classroom, in counseling chamber or casual conversation, and the end result of that teaching is that the lives of honest seekers are characterized by anxiety instead of peace, dejection instead of joy, weakness instead of power, bitterness instead of love, doubts instead of confidence, fear instead of trust and thus they are driven to unrighteousness instead of righteousness, then we may find ourselves among those who receive the greater condemnation.

Therefore, the challenge of our present study is that we lift up our eyes to the emotional needs of those around

us in order that we may not only see, but in seeing understand, and in understanding be able to "bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ," so that "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus may make us free from the law of sin and death."

In presenting this challenge, we shall proceed along two lines. First, we shall consider the problem. Second, we shall attempt to discover the solution to that problem.

## I

To get a true picture of the problem of human emotional needs, it is necessary that we come to some understanding of human personality. To understand human personality, we must go to the Bible.

Before looking at the Bible concept of human personality, let us consider a popular concept which, while presenting partial truth, falls just short of presenting the whole truth. In our day the term "psycho-somatic" has been popularized. We hear about "psycho-somatic medicine." As you know "psycho" refers to the mind, while "soma" refers to the body. Therefore, "psycho-somatic treatment" is the treatment of the mind and the body.

The Freudian theory of human personality, you remember, says that within the body is the "Id" or basic drives of sex and hunger, clamoring for satisfaction. Then, on the outside of the person, there are forces that tend to restrict the body from full gratification. These

forces Freud calls the "super-ego," and they consist of society, religion, and any other force of environment. Out of the conflict between the "Id" and the "Super-Ego," the person settles for a compromise, and the result is the "Ego" or the actual self. According to Freud, it is the restriction of the "Id" by the "Super-Ego" that causes mental illness. Therefore, according to his theory, the more nearly the "Ego" can be a full expression of the "Id," having discounted and canceled the demands of the "Super-Ego," the happier the person will be.

Although there is much in the Freudian theory that agrees with the Bible, there are one or two basic differences; and it is at the points of difference that Christian responsibility is found.

According to the Bible, man, instead of being a two-dimensional creature, "Psycho-somatic," mind and body, is a three-dimensional creature. In addition to mind and body, man has a spirit. Paul points this out in I Thessalonians 5:23 "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here the term for "soul" is "psyche" from which we get "psycho"; the word for "body" is "soma"; and the word for "spirit" is "pneuma." Therefore, man, instead of being merely "psycho-somatic" is actually "pneuma-psycho-somatic."

In fact, according to the Bible, the deepest fact in human personality is not the body, nor the mind, but the spirit. Therefore, deeper than Freud's "Id" or demands of

the body is man's need for God. At the beginning of both the Old and the New Covenants, both Moses and Jesus said, "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Deuteronomy 8:3 and Luke 4:4). Freud places man's need for God in the realm of the "Super-Ego," that is, imposed by society and not real. The Bible teaches that man's need for God is more basic than his need for physical bread. The prophet said, "Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not" (Isaiah 55:2). Jesus said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any eat of this bread, he shall live forever" (John 6:51). Then again, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Then John added in parentheses, "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:37-39).

Man's need for God has been demonstrated clinically in that Jung, Freud's most ardent disciple, said that of all the patients that he had treated who had reached the age of maturity, not one single one had recovered who had not had his religious faith restored.

In the light of these facts, we see that man's emotional needs are complex in nature. Since man is three-dimensional, his difficulty may arise in any one of the three dimensions. When it does, it will affect the other two. For example, a person's symptom may be one of deep depression. The apparent manifestation is mental, but the basic prob-

lem may be physical. He may be suffering from low metabolism, or other chemical imbalance. Another person may be maladjusted mentally and the symptoms be physical such as headaches or backaches. (Needless to say, all headaches and backaches are not indicative of mental disorder.) Finally, a person may be well-balanced mentally, and strong physically, and yet have a deep spiritual problem. Paul said, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:22-24). At that point in Paul's life, although he had the desire to do good, he lacked the spiritual strength to carry out his desires. Later he said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). His prayer for the Ephesians was that they might be strengthened in the inner man with might by Christ's Spirit (Ephesians 3:16).

Some day we may learn that most of the problems that we term "mental" are either "physical" that is "organic," or "spiritual." Perhaps this is why half the hospital beds remain filled with "mental?" patients that cannot seem to find help.

The prophet said, "Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" (Jeremiah 8:22). The prophet answered this question in the next chapter, as he says, "They will deceive every one his neighbour, and will

not speak the truth; they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity . . . through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 9:5-6). In other words, the root of all their sickness was their failure to know God. Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

There is another matter that needs to be mentioned just here, and that is one that has to do with temperament. The reason I take it separately is that I am not sure whether temperament is physical, mental, or spiritual. Actually, all three are so closely related in temperament that I think the archaic definition of temper which says that it means "to combine or blend in due proportions" may best describe temperament.

William H. Sheldon of Columbia University has written several books in the field of constitutional psychology that deal at length with this facet of human life. Although many other psychologists disagree with Mr. Sheldon's conclusions, much of the information he gives is the result of clinical studies made over a number of years. Mr. Sheldon describes three different types of temperament that are identifiable and can be detected. By temperament the constitutionalist means "the persisting disposition and mode of response of individuals to problems, conflict and stress." The technical names of Sheldon's three basic temperament types are "viscerotonia, somatotonia, cerebrotonia." According to his theory, if an individual happened to be a pure type of viscerotonia he would be an extrovert in affections, emotions and feelings. He would like peo-

ple, make friends easily, express his emotions without inhibition. A pure example of pure somatonia would be an extrovert in drive and energy, he would love a fight, or an opportunity to show off his strength. The third type, a person of pure cerebrotonia would be an introvert both of affection and energy. He would be quiet, withdrawn, would prefer to eat alone rather than with other people. (He couldn't stand fellowship dinners.) Mr. Sheldon points out that although most people are a combination of all three types, the degree in which one type is dominant in the personality will determine the way in which this person reacts to life's experiences.

Certainly, Mr. Sheldon's theory is by no means contradictory to the teaching of the Bible. In fact Paul labors the point that all people are not alike, nor should they seek to be. Instead, they should discover their individuality, thank God for it and dedicate it in His service. "The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you" (I Corinthians 12:21). In other words, everybody cannot paint great masterpieces of art; everybody cannot compose great music; everybody cannot do visitation work; nor must they in order to be successful in life.

God is a God of variety. Just as there are brown eyes and blue eyes, blonds and brunettes, tall and short, dark and light, so there are different traits in personality and temperament. There are different talents and abilities. In fact, it is only as a man comes to understand that he is different from all other people; that God has made him for a specific purpose, has equipped him to do a certain job, and will if he will "ask, seek, and knock," lead him to the

fulfilment of his purpose; that he really comes to have the sense of well-being that he is capable of having.

Just here, let me mention another fact about constitutionality that is one of the most important points in our lesson. I referred to it a moment ago as a spiritual malady. Yet, the physical and mental are so closely related, and the symptoms so affect all three dimensions of man that it may be classified as temperament. This has to do with man's tendencies toward sin.

Whenever any man reaches such a state of maturity that he begins to think seriously about life, and especially when he makes an effort at living a high, noble, worthwhile life, he suddenly awakens to the fact that within his own nature, there are certain forces from which he cannot wrest himself free. He realizes that there lies within the confines of his own individuality, in what realm he can hardly tell, whether physical, mental or spiritual, tendencies that propel him, and inclinations that draw him along certain lines of life.

Now, as we have indicated, not all of these tendencies are evil. There are tendencies toward art, and music, and science, and poetry.

But in addition to this type of thing, and even more constantly than this, man awakens to find that there is that within him, which is there without his consent, without his creating, and it is an evil thing. He awakens to find that a certain desire in his life, which in itself is pure and natural, but in him it has become distorted and out of shape. He

finds this desire making demands, and crying for satisfaction to an irresistible degree. In other words, a man awakens to find that lust, passion, greed, evil are in him. Therefore, that particular man looks out upon life, heavily handicapped from the first.

Now, the weakness in one man is not the same as that in another. One man awakens to find that he is an alcoholic, another finds he is cursed with an inordinate lust. For example, one man said to a minister who attempted to talk to him about his problem of drink, "If you were to put a glass of wine there, and tell me of a certainty upon the oath of God, that if I drink it I will be shot; I would drink it, I could not resist it."

Now, you and I may know nothing of this kind of extreme desire, but it is real, and we need to face these facts, because it is only as we do so that we have any hope of receiving and giving the kind of help that is needed.

I do not mean to say by this that a person is born to be an alcoholic or to have inordinate affections and there is nothing he can do about it. But I am saying that he is born with that potentiality, and some with stronger tendencies than others. They did not choose to be like that, but suddenly, under certain conditions of life, they find an evil tendency within them that had been dormant. Somehow it was aroused, became active and mastered them. This is what Paul meant when he said, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another

law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

If you disagree with me when I say a man is born with these tendencies, I do not care to argue the case. Paul said, "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners" (Romans 5:19). I take this to mean that man has inherited the tendency to sin. If you prefer to say environment is responsible, I won't argue. Call it what you may, heredity, environment, I care not. The main thing is to recognize it.

And ask yourself: is there a solution for such a person. Thank God there is. There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole; there is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.

## II

This leads us to the final section of our lesson, the one which is above all else of supreme importance. That has to do with the solution offered by Christianity.

The only principle that will finally bring the solution to the great human emotional problem is the Christ principle. Paul said, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." In other words, the principle that made Christ what He was is the principle that will make men what they ought

to be. What was that principle? It was the principle of human flesh indwelt by Divine Spirit. Christ was the first-born among many brethren. Notice Paul's solution. Read Romans 8:6-13

The Christian solution to man's problem has to do with mental health, dealing with the mind. It was Kant who described the mind as being composed of intellect, emotion, will. Those who have mental problems lack wisdom for intellect, love for the emotion, and strength for the will. There is only one force adequate to deal with that need. That force is not at the mental level, but at the spiritual level. The mental is affected by the spiritual. Paul deals with this in the Ephesian letter. Notice his remarks. Read Ephesians 3:14-21.

In writing to Timothy, Paul said, "God hath not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind." Power for the will, love for the emotion, soundness for the intellect. These are the goals of Christianity; they can be reached only as the indwelling Spirit becomes a reality in the lives of men.

The only person capable of giving this kind of help is the one who has received it. Therefore, in closing, let me restate my opening challenge. Let us lift up our eyes to the emotional needs of those around us in order that we may not only see, but in seeing understand, and in understanding be able to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ," so that "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus may make us free from the law of sin and death."

## TO TODAY'S INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGES

ABRAHAM J. MALHERBE

Abraham J. Malherbe was born in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa on May 15, 1930. He has preached for churches in Brookline and Lexington, Massachusetts. Married to the former Phyllis Melton of Port Arthur, Texas, they have three children. He is currently Associate Professor of Bible at Abilene Christian College.

Malherbe is co-founder and frequent contributor to the *Restoration Quarterly*, a journal devoted to Christian scholarship. In cooperation with Everett Ferguson, a colleague at Abilene Christian College, he is currently involved in two projects of a scholarly nature. They have been invited to prepare a translation, with notes, of Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses*, a fourth century document in Greek, hitherto not translated into English. The translation will be published in the *Ancient Christian Writers* series. It will be completed in 1965. Malherbe and Ferguson are also working on a book on the Biblical doctrine of the Church.



Malherbe received the B.A. degree from Abilene Christian College, and the S.T.B. and Th.D. degrees from Harvard University. He studied in Utrecht, Holland, for an academic year in 1960-61. His special field of interest is New Testament Language and Literature, with an emphasis on the Greek background. He is a member of the Society of Biblical Literature and of the American Academy of Religion at whose regional meeting last year he read a paper on "Paul and the Cynics."

"Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ" (Colossians 1:28).

With these words the Apostle Paul summed up his ministry, and if we are to fulfill our ministry in our own day, they must also be our words. These words, like those of the Great Commission, announce to us that all men are the object of the gospel, and they hold out the challenge to us to take the gospel to every man and to make the message of Jesus relevant to every man. During this lecture we want to draw attention to only one aspect of man that provides a challenge to us who attempt to serve as messengers of Christ. We must talk about the intellectual challenges of our own day, and we must see that the gospel is relevant to men and women who live the life of the mind.

This lecture is not concerned with anti-intellectualism. That is a negative aspect of the problem that we would rather leave aside on this occasion. Perhaps the greatest problem that we face in discussing this subject is to get by the unpleasant associations that all too frequently accompany the use of the word "intellectual." All too frequently we hear this word used as though it signified in its very nature a person who is opposed to common sense, who is unrealistic and out of touch with the practical affairs of life, who should be suspected of any and all improprieties, who is over-emotional and, as one author put it, is "an anemic bleeding heart." That is certainly not what we mean when we use the word intellectual. That kind of labeling is not only unrealistic in itself, but the attitude which it

frequently expresses is also un-Christian. Let us here just say that by an "intellectual" we mean a person who lives the life of the mind and one to whom that life is important because it is a natural part of himself. We are thus not talking about pseudo-intellectuals.

### *Our Concern With the Subject*

We are concerned with this subject because it does provide a very special challenge to us today. We must emphasize that we are not saying that this is the only, or even the major challenge that confronts the church today. We are saying that it is a challenge that has not often enough been recognized as a challenge. I personally believe it is a challenge which is more real and more pressing today as it relates to the Lord's people than it has ever been in the history of the church.

We must realize that those intellectuals who are outside Christ are as much the objects of God's love as you and I are. Jesus Christ came to call them just as He came to call you and me. And as God calls men through the preaching of the gospel, and as He does that through you and me, it means that you and I must have a concern for them. Surely the Great Commission includes them. Surely we must become all things to them just as we become all things to everybody else. We say that they will not respond to the gospel. How do we know that? Have we been persistent in our efforts to learn about this particular challenge? Or do we really exhibit a touch of Calvinism—do we believe that they have been predestined to be lost, and that it is therefore not necessary for us to be con-

cerned with them? Surely this is taking a little too much upon ourselves.

From a more pragmatic standpoint, if not a more Christian one, we must be concerned with the intellectual because when his every thought has been made captive to obey Christ he can be of immense service to the Lord. The skills, the training, the native ability of these people are surely to be used in the service of the Master. It does not make sense, from a purely practical standpoint, always to be opposed to a person like this. Whether we like it or not, we use the talents of the non-Christian intellectual, but we use them surreptitiously, or we have to appropriate only part of what they do and think, because their direction and their standards are not those given by Christ. How much more will they be able to contribute once they have experienced the metamorphosis of the mind about which Paul talks?

But we must not deceive ourselves by thinking that the only intellectuals are those outside of Christ. The challenge about which we are speaking is a challenge within the church today as much as it is without. Although not every educated person is an intellectual or even every intellectual a formally educated person, we cannot deny that as the general educational level in the church has risen, there are more and more people in the church to whom the subject about which we are talking is very real. And these people, very frequently members of the younger generation, are groping for answers as they seek to make the gospel real to their lives. They are groping, because as a people we have not given enough thought to the matter to have come up with at least some answers. All too frequently we have even refused to take the questions seriously. And

while we do that, there is the loss of the full lives that could be lived in Jesus Christ. Let us not be too sure that we have all the answers and that that will suffice. The answers that we have may not be to the questions that are being asked.

### *Uneasiness and Fear*

Once we are convinced that the intellectual life can be a valid part of a Christian's life we will be on the way to overcoming the uneasiness and fear that we now feel about it. And valid it is. Jesus Christ is relevant to me as a total human being. Paul says that the peace of God that passes all understanding will keep our hearts *and* our minds in Christ Jesus. He also said that whatever is honorable or lovely, gracious, excellent or worthy of praise are the things Christians should think upon. We cannot doubt that the life of the mind can be Christian. As a Christian it is my conviction that man finds fulfillment in all respects, and this includes his intellectual being, in Jesus Christ and life in Him. I believe that the knowledge of Christ is so profound that it demands the most intense application of all my mental facilities, just as it demands the most intense application in my life. A twelve-year old can understand the gospel on a certain level. But to limit the gospel to that level is to misunderstand it woefully.

To gain some perspective, let us realize that the intellectual challenge is just one of many that face us. And let us realize that as there are dangers to fear in all challenges of life, there are dangers to fear in connection with the intellectual life. Because dangers are present in these other enterprises, we do not abandon them in fear or regard them with suspicion or down-

right distrust. Frequently one hears a Christian attacking science. And we know that very much attention has been given in the last century to the problem of the relation between religion and science. We are all familiar with some of those problems, but that does not mean that we abandon that enterprise or place it off limits to the Christian. No, we believe that God is the creator of the universe, and that He allows man to subdue it. We maintain a Christian perspective, we realize what the problems are, and then we proceed. The same is true in our business dealings. We are all aware of the great danger of allowing materialism to govern us in our motivation and our practice. We should be aware of the mistake of making success a virtue in itself. But an awareness of these dangers does not result in our withdrawing from the business world. Rather, we know that we are not to set our hopes on uncertain riches but on God. We know we are to be equally rich in good deeds, and so we act in keeping with God's purpose. In our preaching of the gospel itself, we are aware of the dangers inherent, and we know of their tremendous proportions, because they are related to this most important of all enterprises. We know of the temptation to let our preaching and our success contribute to our own stature, rather than to allow God to speak His Word through us. We know that the holy can very easily become profane. But these dangers do not cause us to abandon our pulpits and to fear or suspect those who continue to proclaim the Word.

In all of these areas of activity we realize the presence of certain dangers, but we also realize that Christ and His message is relevant to the businessman and the scientist and the preacher, and we live accordingly. Let us do the same in the

case of the intellectual, in whatever sphere of activity he may find himself.

*The Intellectual or the Devoted?*

Perhaps the major reason why the intellectual life is viewed with suspicion and distrust is because it is regarded by many as being an alternative to devotion. The prevalence of this view that devotedness and the intellectual life are mutually exclusive shows that we do not really understand the nature of this life, and that we have certainly not thought the matter through. Is it not more reasonable that the more devoted one is to Christ, and the more one conforms his own life to Him, the more Christ challenges the whole man, his mind included, and demands as well as stimulates growth and development?

It is particularly unfortunate that this attitude which regards the devoted life and the intellectual life as alternatives is sometimes expressed in connection with Christian education. We sometimes hear someone saying that he would rather see our Christian colleges be second-rate, academically, than lose their devotion to the Lord. Let us be very sure of one thing, that we can never be very devoted to the Lord and His cause if we are satisfied with anything less than the best. Let us be devoted enough to want to excel. If we do not want to excel, we place ourselves in the rather odd position that affirms that mediocrity makes us feel safer. Surely the cause to which we have dedicated our lives deserves better.

Our Christian colleges exist for the purpose of developing young people intellectually, spiritually, and socially to live the

Christian life. Too frequently it seems as though we think our purpose is to protect or guard them from life. We cannot isolate them forever, and we cannot do justice to them if we do not acquaint them with the challenges of life. If we do not do justice to those challenges, we are not doing justice to our students. And if we are mediocre in our treatment of the problems of life, we are deceiving ourselves if we think that we are successful in performing our task.

What I am appealing for is not a sterile, dry, irrelevant, academic braintrust that paralyzes all involved. What I do appeal for is a devotion to the Lord so deep, and a love for His Word so powerful, and an awareness of man's need of God so moving that Christian education will become an enterprise so creative, so dynamic and therefore so demanding that it will call for the very best that is within us. Only when we have reached that level of devotion shall we fulfill our real purpose, and shall we overcome some of the problems we now face. Only then shall we move from our defensive posture and assume one that will enable us to serve the Lord more successfully. Only then shall we attract Christian faculty and students of superior ability who do not now think of a Christian college as a live choice. And only then shall we come to understand ourselves better.

### *Today's Intellectual Challenges*

Let us be more concrete and consider some of the intellectual challenges that face us today. Let us consider these as challenges, not only in the sense that they must be opposed or met, but let us also evaluate them with a view to using and incor-

porating into our thinking whatever is fitting. Let us distinguish false presuppositions from methods and results that are useful. We do this in science and medicine. We use and accept the results of the investigation of these disciplines without accepting the presuppositions and the world view that informed the investigations. We do the same thing in the study of history, literature and language. And we can do the same thing in the study of religion.

### *Science*

This is certainly not my field, and as will be obvious, I speak as a layman. But even in writing done by practicing scientists on a level low enough for me to understand, it is obvious that there is considerably less dogmatism among scientists today than there was a few decades ago. However, I believe that in our optimism we sometimes overstate the actual situation. We think we see a crack in the wall and we rush to enlarge it. The scientist who opposes the Christian will vehemently deny that there is a crack. If there is such a breach, let us be firm in our discussion of it, but let us proceed wisely.

This slackening of scientific dogmatism makes it more possible for the Christian to enter into a meaningful discussion with the scientist. But in so doing the Christian must always realize that his approach to science is governed by a world view that says "by faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God" (Hebrews 11:3). Too often we engage in the dialogue by disqualifying the scientist from

making a pronouncement about God. We tell him that that would be a philosophical statement, and that as a scientist he is not qualified to make it. Then we, who we imply can make such a statement because talking about God is precisely our function, proceed as though we had never heard of Hebrews 11:3 and the faith upon which we accept God's relationship to the creation, and we talk knowingly about the second law of thermodynamics or some such law which is to prove the existence of God. I am not much of a philosopher either, but this does not quite seem like good method. It certainly is not cricket, old man.

A challenge that is very real in our discussion with science is that we continue to maintain communication. The above approach will certainly not contribute to meaningful exchange, because it proceeds from a wrong religious basis, and continues with a wrong method. But we have a further problem, namely the rapid separation of science from the non-scientific areas of life. C. P. Snow, with great perception, has analyzed this situation and coined a phrase to describe this phenomenon, calling it "the two cultures," the scientific and the non-scientific. The challenge that faces us as Christians is to be aware of the development within the scientific disciplines which has resulted in a lessening of dogmatism. But we must also be aware that that rapid development which has brought about this relatively more favorable condition is creating a problem with regard to communication. At the very least, we must be true to the basic Christian understanding of God and His relationship to His creation, and develop a method of approach in keeping with it, and one that will contribute to successful communication.

*Philosophy and Theology*

We can discuss these two together, since for a long time now philosophy has greatly influenced theology. Nevertheless, we shall mention only a few developments that have a direct relevance to theology, and especially to Biblical theology.

The outstanding development in the past forty years has been the rise of existentialism. This took place especially in Germany between the two world wars. For the sensitive German who had just lived through the first war, and who saw the rise of Hitler's power and the storm clouds of war rising on the horizon, history had no future. He therefore turned inward and denied that history could in any way be of significant value.

The importance of this development is found especially in its influence on Rudolf Bultmann, the great German scholar, who in turn has exerted more influence on New Testament studies than any other man in modern times. Bultmann affirmed that the New Testament was to be interpreted existentially, and developed a theology in keeping with this view that spread beyond the borders of Germany and which is very much alive in this country—and even in Texas. This same atmosphere was greatly conducive to the growth of neo-orthodoxy, especially in this country.

But, things have changed. People got over the great scare of the second world war, and then of the atom and hydrogen bombs. They learned to live with terror until it ceased to have such a great power over them. The post-war prosperity rekindled optimism and faith in the course of human events.

Many could now look at history with a much more positive outlook, and so we find that Bultmann's emphasis is now on the way out, and that the idea that history was the arena in which God revealed Himself to man is gaining in ascendancy.

This history of salvation school, as it is called, is represented by Oscar Cullmann, the Swiss Protestant, and by the so-called Baltimore school of Old Testament studies, represented mainly by G. E. Wright and F. M. Cross of Harvard, the proteges of W. F. Albright, the founder of the Baltimore school. This approach is much more Biblical than that of Bultmann. It states that God is a God who acts in history and that that is how man comes to know Him. It emphasizes therefore the value of history, since history is the stuff of which revelation is made.

We can rejoice in this approach, because it is more Biblical in character than any other has been for a century. The basic thrust of this view is not too different from what Robert Milligan works out in his truly great *The Scheme of Redemption*. This is not to say that Milligan was a nineteenth century Cullmann. It is to say, however, that the climate is very favorable to our basic theological thrust. More than any other religious people we believe that the New Testament history is highly important. We have emphasized that there is a once-for-all character in it, and that it was recognized by the writers of the New Testament. And we have said that that history which is recorded in the New Testament is relevant to all men of all time. If there was ever a thorough Biblically oriented history of salvation school, we are it.

The challenge that faces us is: What are we going to do with it? Are we going to sit with our message in our pockets,

or are we going to present it to a situation that is particularly favorably disposed to its basic idea? Are we going to be diffident and hold back, or are we going to present that message in terms that people will understand, just as Paul in Athens presented his message in terms designed to be understood?

### *The Doctrine of the Church*

There is also a renewed interest in the doctrine of the church, both in Catholic and Protestant circles. The ecumenical movement has finally succeeded in making it obvious to everybody that most Protestants do not have a very high appreciation of the doctrine of the church. Traditionally Protestantism has been largely concerned with the themes of Justification, Sanctification, Election, Redemption, but has not seen that what is said about the church in the New Testament contributes to a very large extent to the structure of New Testament thought. In the early years of the ecumenical movement, when Protestants were forced to look at the New Testament teaching on the church, they were not encouraged by what they saw. The phenomenon they saw there was so obviously radically different from what exists today, that it looked impossible to unite on the basis of what the ideal New Testament church seemed to be. They also thought that the "coming great church" should be uniform, and the New Testament churches had different features.

In the years since the early days of the ecumenical movement, when the New Testament church was first related to the movement, certain developments have taken place. Some mergers between different Protestant bodies have taken place, and observers have learned some things to guide them in their

future developments. They have come to see that the so-called "coming great church" will never be a homogenized organization that will be the same in all respects in every place on earth. And, what is further, they now do not think that if this were possible that it would be desirable. They accept the fact that the ecumenical church will have different faces. As strange as this may appear to you and me, it is precisely the view that the ecumenical church must be characterized by unity and not uniformity, that is now encouraging Protestants to return to the New Testament picture of the church for inspiration. Since they believe that the New Testament church has this character, they no longer feel embarrassed by it. In broad terms, then, the result is that today there is a more favorable climate in which to discuss what the New Testament says about the nature of the church.

Time does not allow me to discuss even briefly the significance of the Ecumenical Council for the Catholic self-appraisal today. Allow me just to state that I believe that the present mood in Catholicism is having influence even outside Catholic circles and is contributing to the more favorable climate about which I have spoken.

Against this background it is not difficult to see that we have a wonderful opportunity to present our plea under circumstances that are quite favorable to it. The plea of the Restoration Movement has traditionally placed a great emphasis on the doctrine of the church. If there is any statement characteristic of us as a religious people it is that we want to restore the New Testament church. Except for the Catholics, we have a stronger doctrine of the church than any other religious group.

Unfortunately, today one can sense a desire among some of our brethren to de-emphasize the importance of the church and to lay more stress on the individual's relationship as an individual to God. The fallacy in thinking here is that one considers the recognition of the church and the personal relationship with God in Christ as alternatives. We face a challenge at this point in our conception of the nature of the church. We need to study the nature of the church and her relationship to Christ with greater intensity. Without appearing to know all the answers, or to be giving a programmatic, allow me to point out some aspects of New Testament teaching with regard to the church which I think will be profitable for us ourselves and which will, at the same time, help us to present our appeal more effectively.

We must come to a clear understanding that the teaching about the church gives structure to so very much of New Testament thought. Without it one really has only an amorphous, theological mass. Let us realize the centrality and the importance of the church and let us never allow it to slip. The church is, after all, the historical response to God's revelation.

We must also emphasize the finality of the New Testament ideal of the church. Jesus was the fulfilment of God's revelation. In Him it was complete and final. He ushered in the last days, and the institution that was called into existence as He was preached is the institution of the last days. There is no further historical manifestation of God's people. Perhaps more than we have realized, this view can be articulated in a very sophisticated manner today. That is certainly not any more reason to believe it (or to reject it), but is surely something to be

thankful for as we survey the challenges that we face in preaching Christ.

We must also realize that these two aspects of the New Testament church, her centrality and finality, and characteristics of the church only because of her relationship to Christ. It is to miss the whole thrust of the New Testament teaching on the church completely to think that the church and Christ are two totally separate experiences, and that the one is to receive precedence over the other. The church is in the center of New Testament teaching only because it is the historical manifestation of Christ. It has its centrality because both the church and its centrality belong to Christ. Likewise with the church's finality. The revelation in Christ is final and complete, and therefore, since the church is Christ's body, the church is final as she grows in the Lord.

Let us, in our own thinking, ground the church in the greatness of Jesus Christ. Let that relationship with Him, with His greatness and truth come to characterize us as His people. Surely then we can be equal to the challenge that confronts us in our own day.

### *Biblical Studies*

The study of the Bible, and in particular of the New Testament has gone through different phases in the last century, each of which emphasized different aspects of the New Testament. With the discovery of history, as one might almost put it, in the nineteenth century the Bible came to be viewed as a product of history, and also became the victim of nine-

teenth century historicism. Then Albert Schweitzer made us aware of the eschatological element, that the New Testament teaches that Jesus came to usher in the last days. Soon afterwards, the social emphasis found expression in the so-called Social Gospel. Bultmann then tried to convince us that we should make the gospel relevant by interpreting it existentially.

We can learn from all this, even if we do not want to accept it all. The most obvious lesson is that to place emphasis on one aspect to the exclusion of all others may be successful in creating a certain school, or a particular theological viewpoint, but it will not result in a proper perspective. But these emphases of the past can certainly help to make us aware that these are aspects of Christianity, and should encourage us to keep them in a correct perspective in our own thinking. This is always a challenge.

But to be more concrete, let us turn to the results of Biblical scholarship that we can appropriate. The last century has produced discoveries, tools, and research related to Biblical study as no other period in the history of Christianity has produced. This is the stuff of which serious, intensive Biblical study is made, and we have hardly used it at all in coming to a better understanding of God's Word and in preaching that Word. Time does not allow me even to mention the manuscripts of the Bible that have been discovered in the last century which provided us with so much new material. We cannot even talk about the very fine editions of the Bible that we now have in the original languages, or of the concordances and lexicons that have been compiled or are now being compiled. We know so much more of the Greek language, of the customs of New

Testament times, of the religious and philosophical world of those days. There are so many more detailed studies of special subjects than ever before. There is this whole exciting world of tools and material just waiting for us.

You may wonder what this has to do with the intellectual challenges of the day. Perhaps because the study of the New Testament is my field of special interest I may be prejudiced, but since the subject of the New Testament is the will and revelation of God, it seems to me that the study of the New Testament demands the very best of mind and heart. The challenge is an intellectual one, but the response is not to be a sterile intellectual exercise if it is to be successful or meaningful. The response to this challenge must be grounded in, and must continue to grow in the conviction that Jesus is the Christ and that in Him are to be found the unsearchable riches of God.

### *The Restoration Movement and the Challenge*

You and I have a tradition of which we can be proud in this regard, even if we cannot be too proud of what we ourselves are doing. What is outstanding and unique in our approach to Biblical studies is in keeping with the very best in modern scholarship. Nevertheless, an esteemed friend can rightly refer to us as the non-writing wing of the Restoration Movement. The early leaders of the Movement were men of solid Biblical learning and they were men of great intellect. We see a broadness *and* a depth in their approach that is, unfortunate-

ly, totally lacking in our own day. Campbell, in his *Christian System*, begins where one should begin in Biblical study, by considering what method one should follow in studying the Bible. The method that he outlines there is in agreement with modern historical Biblical study. Milligan, in his *Scheme of Redemption* develops the idea contained in Campbell's book, that of a Christian system, and attempts to present Christianity systematically so that the faith could be seen in its wholeness. McGarvey's thrust seems to have been that of the dedicated churchman, to make all of this relevant to the church of his own day.

Despite these great accomplishments, we must remember that these men lived in an age when people were just beginning to see that the Scriptures are not to be studied as though they were commentaries on the ecclesiastical councils of the past. They did not have the advantages that we have. Yet they were the men who through their books gave direction to the Restoration Movement. They discovered and formulated ideas that still govern our thinking today. They were relevant to their own day and used the scholarship of their own day, yet they did so with a thrust and a direction all their own, a thrust and direction based on a reverent yet informed understanding of the New Testament.

These men were great men, and they should be respected and appreciated. But we should not make the mistake of thinking that we honor them by thinking that they have completed the task. Many times they were great in spite of the circumstances under which they lived and worked. Their greatness lies in the fact that they accepted the challenges of their own day, and we can honor them best by following them and ac-

cepting the challenges of our own day. I can just imagine how Campbell or Milligan or McGarvey must have yearned for the tools and information that we have today. And I can also imagine how they must be turning in their graves with frustration as they observe us in our slackness—or perhaps they are sorrowing. They had caught a vision and had clarified it, defined it and presented it to the world as best they could. But those who came after them did not quite catch the same vision; we are satisfied with seeing it more and more dimly through their eyes.

In concluding this lecture, let me use one example with which to illustrate the relevance of what we have been talking about to our history, and so to the life of the church. If I were to mention one book that has exerted more influence on the thinking of members of the church than any other, it would have to be J. W. McGarvey's *Commentary on Acts*. Let us look at the history of this book and let us learn some lessons from its history.

The first edition of the commentary was published in the fall of 1862. That same fall there appeared in Germany the first part of Grimm's Greek lexicon. The lexicon was completed in 1868 and was then translated by Thayer in 1886. McGarvey therefore did not have even Thayer's old lexicon. He was thus doing his work before the first modern New Testament Greek lexicon was available even in Germany, which is always ahead in Biblical research.

Things continued to happen rather fast in the next thirty years and McGarvey finally decided that he just had to bring out a new edition of his book. Why should he want to do a

thing like this? Should he not have been satisfied with a piece of work that had done good service for thirty years, just as you and I have been satisfied with his second edition for seventy-two years? Listen to what McGarvey himself says in the preface to his second edition. He tells us that he had become aware of the intellectual challenges that had taken shape and were coming to this country. "These questions must of necessity be discussed in a commentary on Acts that shall be suited to the wants of present day students." In these words he is really saying that in order to be relevant, one must at least be current.

McGarvey also was aware of the advantages that the thirty years had brought. This is obvious when one studies the main sources and the tools that he used for the two editions. Whereas he depended on popular works like the commentaries of Barnes and others for his first edition, the second edition is much more solid. There he reflects a knowledge of the methods and the problems of the age. Listen to what he says about the extensive literature that had not been in existence when he first wrote: "... the life-long labors of Tischendorf and Tregelles on the Greek text have been completed, as well as those of Westcott and Hort which were then but fairly begun, and we now have for the first time since the early centuries of our era a corrected text in which to read these valuable writings."

When we study this preface carefully, we see that there are certain things that are McGarvey's great concern. First, what is the best text of a particular passage? Second, what does the text mean? And to find this out he used all the tools he could find. Third, what does the text mean for his own day? This last point meant to him that he had to read the writings of F.

C. Baur of the Tuebingen school, and of Renan and Zeller and Wellhausen.

Are we prepared to accept the challenges of our own day at least as well as McGarvey did those of his own day? Shall we do so, not merely because McGarvey did so, but because it is right that we do so, and because we can see the relevance and value of it? If we are prepared to do so we shall have to have the same thoroughness that characterized him. We must be concerned with the text, first of all. In the *Christian Standard* of October 9th, 1897, McGarvey could only write that the earliest Biblical manuscripts were the Vaticanus and the Sinaiticus dating from the fourth century. Now we have texts of the New Testament from as early as the second century and of the Old Testament from even earlier.

What about the tools that we use? Do we still use the tools that he used? The British say that it takes three generations to make a gentleman. When I look at some preachers' libraries I get the idea that too many think it takes a century to make a Biblical study respectable. The value of the new tools and special studies that we have for Bible study is so obvious that it seems almost ludicrous to have to regard them and their use as a challenge for us today.

### *The Relevance for Us*

But the purpose of all of this is to bring Jesus Christ more truthfully and meaningfully and more effectively to modern man. What takes place in the study must find its way to the pew, and if it is to have any value, it must ultimately be expressed in life. That means, if we are good stewards of the Word, that we will attempt to understand man in this age.

It means that we cannot perpetually be concerned with the Tuebingen school or with Wellhausen, as McGarvey had to be in his day. It is not Baur or Wellhausen or Renan or Kuehn who dominate our age. But it *is* Bultmann and Cullmann and Kaesemann and Jeremias and Bornkamm who do.

Does this seem far-fetched to you? Do these foreign names sound so strange to you that you think you can afford to disregard them? Then let me challenge you to do a little investigation.

Listen carefully to the radio program of a prominent denominational preacher here in Abilene. He frequently makes reference to Sartre and Camus, even if he does not know how to pronounce their names. Do you want to do some reading on what is being discussed these days concerning baptism? You will find that the contemporary discussion was started by Karl Barth of Basel, Switzerland, that he was vehemently opposed by Oscar Cullmann of the same city. The discussion spilled over into Germany where Joachim Jeremias of Goettingen got into the act, only to be opposed by Kurt Aland of Muenster. Does this seem far away? Go and look at the books on sale in the bookstores of almost any good college or seminary in this country, and you will find their books translated into English and eagerly discussed by young preachers. And we cannot justify our lack of application any more by replying that it is just the same old issues and approaches warmed over, because this is just not so. Some of the old arguments and problems do appear again, but the cutting edge today is thought to lie in new considerations.

Do you want to do some good, solid study of the life and teaching of Jesus? If you want a modern work you may be

pointed to the two recent books by Ethelbert Stauffer of Erlangen, Germany, but most probably you will end up with Gunther Bornkamm's book *Jesus of Nazareth*, and that means that you will no longer be a stranger to the discussion of the historical Jesus and the Christ of faith, and soon the names of Robinson, Kaesemann, Fuchs and Ebeling will become as familiar as that of Edersheim.

Or perhaps you want to do some special study on Paul and want something more recent than the books by Farrar (1880) or Conybeare and Howson (1869). Well, you will probably find before too long that you are referred to the books by W. D. Davies of Union Theological Seminary in New York, or of H. J. Schoeps of Erlangen or of Johannes Munck of Aarhus, Denmark.

All these books that were originally written in foreign languages have been translated and are avidly read by students and preachers of all groups. We can go on and on. Perhaps you do not read these books, and if you did, you may not get much of value out of them. But the point is that they are read, and are read extensively, and they are forming the religious thought and climate of our own day. Somebody needs to be reading them to gain from them whatever contributions they make and understand the influence they are having on the world to which we preach the Word. We cannot all be J. W. McGarveys, but we can all realize the importance of that kind of enterprise in which he made such a great contribution to the Lord's church. For many of us the recognition of the importance of this task, and learning to appreciate it and to support it form the greatest challenges that we face today. May God give us a great clarity of vision as we lift our eyes to this challenge.

## TO SEE OUR RESOURCES

PHILLIP MORRISON

Phillip E. Morrison was born in Old Hickory, Tennessee, June 18, 1933. He graduated from David Lipscomb College (*cum laude*) in 1955, was awarded a McGarvey Fellowship at Abilene Christian College in 1963, and is now in graduate school at the University of Miami. He is a member of the *Phi Alpha Theta* honorary history fraternity.

His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Morrison, still live in Old Hickory, where his father is an elder. His wife, Mary Margaret, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Discher, of Wheeling, West Virginia. She is also a graduate of David Lipscomb College. They have four children—Richard Neal, 8; Phyllis Bryn, 6; James Edward, 4; and Janet Lynn, 3.

Morrison is on the editorial staff of *Power for Today*, and contributes to other brotherhood publications. He serves as Secretary-Treasurer for Florida Christian Estates. He has been minister of the Central Church of Christ in Miami, Florida since 1960. Other congregations he has served include the Plaza Church of Christ, Sumter, South Carolina, 1955-1958; and Northwest Church of Christ, Detroit, Michigan, 1958-1960. While in Sumter he conducted weekly radio and television programs from Sumter and Columbia.



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Our Lord has given us the greatest and most important job ever assigned to man: that of carrying the gospel to every nation and

every creature (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19). While men seem destined to reach the moon, and to accomplish other seemingly impossible tasks, the church of our Lord continues to fail in its God-given mission. The reasons for our failures, past and present, may not be immediately apparent; but one thing is certain—we are not failing because the job is impossibly difficult. The church in the first century did the very thing that the church in every other century has failed to do. They carried the gospel message into all the known world (Colossians 1:23). We in the twentieth century have far greater abilities and resources with which to equal this astounding feat. We also have a desperate need—the need for our eyes to be opened, in order that we may see our resources.

Just as there is, we are told, real danger that many natural resources may be depleted, there is the far more serious danger of our spiritual resources being depleted. The difference is that, while natural resources are depleted by use, spiritual resources are destroyed by lack of use. While there is no known way to replace our natural resources, our spiritual resources become more abundant when we see and use what we have, for God heaps even greater blessings upon us.

Jesus had few earthly resources, but He had an unequalled wealth of spiritual ones. Five loaves and two fishes hardly seem the solution to the problem of a hungry multitude, but to Jesus this meager lunch was sufficient.<sup>1</sup> We cannot imitate Jesus' miracle, but we can and must follow His example in seeing and using our resources. It is true in this century, as in a distant one, that "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18).

Our failure to see our resources is sometimes accounted for by our vision being clouded with earthly considerations.

Spiritual resources are not always visible through physical eyes; they are seen rather through the eye of faith. How many worthy goals and ambitions have been frustrated or destroyed because someone could not "see his way clear"? When we approach the Lord's work with a demand to "see our way clear," we are walking by sight. Yet the Bible teaches us to "walk by faith, not by sight" (II Corinthians 5:7).

While the eye of faith may help us to see our resources, and the possibilities that are within us, we need no more than physical sight to see what a great challenge awaits us. We may not have had visions like Paul's "Macedonian Call,"<sup>2</sup> but are we not moved by the realization that most of our world's three billion people do not know the Saviour? The phenomenal growth of the church, of which we are justifiably proud, has not kept pace with the even more phenomenal increase in the birth rate. And in many of our cities, even where the church is strong, we have not grown as rapidly as the population. Ninety-three percent of the world's people live outside the United States, yet only a few more than two hundred gospel preachers are working among them to spread the good news that salvation has come.<sup>3</sup>

My task is not to enumerate the needs facing the church, for these are well known. We know our challenge; and we know that the Lord expects us to meet it. What we fail to recognize is that we have the tools, the equipment, the resources to fulfil these responsibilities. May we open our eyes and see our resources!

### *The Resource of Time*

One of the greatest resources possessed by Christian people is that of time. Admittedly, this sounds like a strange state-

ment in view of the Biblical teaching that life is uncertain, and in view of the fact that our lives are constantly threatened by nuclear holocaust. Yet we must believe that God will give us time to do what He has commanded; otherwise we could not justify spending a single minute in anything other than direct efforts to save the lost. We would have no alternative but to begin now and work until we dropped from exhaustion or death.

Our real emphasis here is that Christians must devote more of their time to the service of God. Think what great things could be accomplished if every member of the church would devote only one additional hour per week to some productive task in the name of the Lord! Members of the church of Christ likely have enough spare time to duplicate the Apostles' work of preaching to the entire world, if that time were only turned to more useful channels. The same people who look forward to eternity with Christ often do not know how to spend just one hour in His service. Someone has raised the appropriate question, "Of what use is eternity to a man who does not know how to spend the next hour?"

The third chapter of Ecclesiastes teaches that there is "a time for every purpose under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8). The Christian who claims not to have time to do the Lord's work denies that God has given him this great resource. When a student claimed that he didn't have time to do an assigned task, a teacher whom I knew would ask several other students how many hours they had in the previous day. Of course the answer was always, "Twenty-four." The teacher would then point out that all had been given the same amount of time, but there was a vast difference in the way that gift was used.

There is no business in the land that could survive if operated as inefficiently as the church. Preachers have been turned into Management Consultants. They are called upon to spend so much time doing a variety of things only remotely related to preaching the gospel that too little time remains for the preparation and delivery of gospel sermons. And so much preaching has to be devoted to strengthening the church and keeping peace that too little time is available for seeking and saving the lost. Our missionaries are often called upon to spend valuable time raising funds or making reports. All of these things are no doubt partly justified, but not in the measure in which they exist.

There is another and more significant way in which God has granted time to us. Peter declares that the world continues to stand because God is patient. The fiery destruction of the universe is postponed, not because some evolutionary process is incomplete, not because men have failed, accidentally or purposely, to destroy themselves; but because God is long-suffering. He is not willing that any should perish, but wants all to repent.<sup>4</sup> Time is such a precious resource, and we cannot measure how much remains. It is imperative, therefore, that we make of it the fullest and most efficient use possible.

### *The Resource of People*

Because resources are often considered to be things which people use, we may overlook the fact that people are resources. Like Esther of old, God may have for each of us some grand

purpose and destiny.<sup>5</sup> We will never know until we place ourselves in His hands, for Him to do with us as He wills.

Our home is blessed with four wonderful children—two boys and two girls. I look at them often and remember the question raised when John the Baptist was born: "What then shall this child be?" (Luke 1:16). For the most part, the answer is determined by what my wife and I do with these precious resources. It is tragic to hear so many Christian parents speak disparagingly of a life of service to Christ. Many do not want their sons to be preachers, or their daughters to be preachers' wives. It is not so much genuine love as selfishness that causes Christian parents to discourage children who would be foreign missionaries. Several years ago I heard Otis Gatewood speak of his son David's plans to be a missionary in Russia. Someone asked if he were not afraid for David's personal safety—for his life—if he went to Russia. Brother Gatewood said that he was concerned, but he had decided long ago that he would prefer to sacrifice his son in service to God, than on a battlefield of carnal warfare. Naturally we pray that our choices may not be limited to these two. However great the cost may be, we must have the full use of the finest young men and women in the world for the service of our God!

How many people spend their lives in the church, ushering? Or serving at the Lord's table? Or doing some routine work that really has little relationship to working for the Lord? Their number must be legion! The church as we know it is not unlike a military unit, with cooks painting, mathematicians cooking, etc. The elders in every congregation would do well to make an exhaustive study of the membership, in order to discover dormant talents, and put people to work for

the Lord. The preacher shortage, about which we have heard so much, is not due to a shortage of people—our membership is at an all-time high. It is not due to a lack of ability; for people now are generally more able than in any previous generation. Our personnel shortages are due largely to our failure to interest, to stimulate, and to make proper use of the great resource of people.

Even the people whom we are trying to reach—the lost—may be considered a resource. While serving as a Teacher-Counselor at the New York World's Fair last summer, I often engaged in a little exercise involving my own prejudices. Watching some person come near our exhibit area, I would decide, for no reason, that he would not be interested. Then I would force myself to approach such persons, and make a special effort to interest them. Most of the time they would enter the exhibit, and I would breathe a silent prayer of thanksgiving.

The church where I preach has long been interested in preaching the gospel in Cuba. Over a period of some thirty years we have sent thousands of dollars, many workers, and have generally encouraged the work in that country. Some months ago I realized that while we had done much to take the gospel to Cuba when more than 100,000 Cuban refugees came to our metropolitan area we did almost nothing to teach them! These are the same people we were trying to teach in Cuba, yet we show so little interest when they come to our country. Can it be that we see the lost as some great, faceless body of people, but not as individual persons? If so, we are making a fatal error, for, while our efforts to reach the masses are both necessary and proper, they will never be sufficient to do the job. After making a plea for the doing of general

good, Paul followed it with an appeal for special concern: "So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith" (Galatians 6:10). William Blake said it this way: "He who would do good to another must do it in Minute Particulars. General good is the plea of the scoundrel, hypocrite and flatterer."

We cannot know what great things God has planned for some obscure, unknown person. One of the finest faculty members at a Christian school became acquainted with the church when, as a schoolboy, he got on the wrong bus and went, by mistake, to a Christian school. Later he enrolled, became a Christian, and today is rendering valuable service to the Lord.

When Winston Churchill was a small child, he fell into a lake on the family estate, and was rescued by the gardener's son. As a token of their gratitude, the family made it possible for the gardener's son to attend a medical school. Many years later, Sir Winston Churchill lay stricken with pneumonia, near the point of death. His life was saved by the drug penicillin, discovered by the gardener's son, Sir Arthur Fleming.<sup>6</sup>

Somewhere in the world today, there is a boy or girl who may change the world for Christ. Just as Andrew rendered his most memorable service when he led Peter to Jesus, you might have a part in changing the world, simply by helping to develop some person who is a resource from God.<sup>7</sup>

*The Resource of Material Things*

The resource of material things is probably the one that we think about most often. This is not unlike our attitude toward the resources of a nation. We speak about the resources of oil, coal, forests, minerals, etc., and think too little about such resources as people, patriotism, or morality. When we speak of material things, our minds go immediately to money and church contributions. There is probably no congregation in our brotherhood that is enjoying the full measure of its monetary resources. Giving is a grace that most Christians have, unfortunately, not yet learned.

Just as most of the personal work, visitation of the sick, and other such activities are carried on by a few, so the financial burdens of the church are borne by a few. At the congregation where I preach, we inaugurated this year the purpose system of giving. Part of our plan was to have the elders, deacons, and ministers sign purpose cards before we asked the rest of the congregation to do so. To our surprise, these twenty-three men and their families promised to give about \$27,000 during 1965. This means that eight percent of our membership promised to give twenty-five per cent of our anticipated income. If all the members were to give as these men have purposed to do, our budget would be more than three times as great as it is!

Louis Cassels, Religion Editor for United Press International, recently described the hypothetical situation of every church family in America suddenly having its source of income ended, and being placed on unemployment rolls. He then contended

that if these families would give ten per cent of their unemployment checks to the churches, church contributions would be increased by more than one-third!<sup>8</sup> None of us want this kind of adversity, but perhaps it would help us to see our resources and put them to greater use.

We obviously have adequate material resources to meet the challenge of the Great Commission. Members of the church in a given locality may have a collective investment of several million dollars in their places of residence, yet hesitate and even complain when someone suggests spending a few thousand dollars for a better building or some other tool needed to do the Lord's work.

For too long we have been content with mediocre accomplishments. Elders, preachers, and other members have been too easily satisfied. Preachers have received far more compliments than they deserve and certainly more than they need. This may sound like heresy, and may not endear me to preaching brethren, but I insist that it is true. When the attendance grows a little every year, the contribution continues to increase gradually, a few people are being baptized, and the congregation assures us that we are preaching fine sermons, what incentive is there to do a better job? The realization that millions are yet lost should be incentive enough, but I am afraid it is not. There is little comfort in saying that the contribution is \$50 more per Sunday than it was last year, when God knows that it should be \$500 more per Sunday.

We desperately need leaders who are trained to see the needs of the day, and the possibilities of meeting them. Church leaders also need, in large measure, the ability to get all of us

as church members to dedicate ourselves to meeting our challenges. Business leaders recognize the importance of keeping pressure on their employees. While a parallel can hardly be drawn, church leaders do have a similar responsibility. Elders' meetings should not be a time for alibis explaining recent disappointments, but a time for saying, "Whom are we planning to baptize next week?" A sales manager expects his salesmen always to have in mind specific prospects. The elders would do well to expect the same of those who are under their supervision.

When considering our physical and material resources, it is good for us to remember that God's standards and man's standards are often far different. For example, we are tempted to emphasize those projects that are large and worthy of publicity. But the things that look small to us often look great to our Lord. The Old Testament prophet asked, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" (Zechariah 4:10). The widow's offering was pitifully small, but, in the eyes of Jesus, the greatest contribution given on that occasion.<sup>9</sup> The fact that one may not be able to preach, or serve in some other public capacity certainly does not mean that he has no talent to contribute to the Lord's work. To those who would think only in terms of great, noteworthy accomplishments, Jesus would say, "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much" (Luke 16:10).

### *The Resources of Truth and Faith*

The greatest resources possessed by the children of God are not those of time, personnel, or physical and material blessings.

They are the twin resources of truth and faith. I couple these together because they each have relatively little importance without the other. Faith puts truth to work; and truth is only an abstract concept without faith. Faith is obviously misplaced if not grounded in truth. No thoughtful person would claim for us the distinction of having *all* the truth, or exclusive rights to the truth of God. It would be a fatal error to assume that the work of restoring New Testament Christianity is anywhere near completed. But we are making the effort to be on the side of truth; and this makes all our labors worthwhile. Why do I label these our greatest resources? Because the Bible promises that if God is with us, no one can successfully oppose us.

There was a time when much of the world of Christendom had an interest in the truth of God, as revealed in His word. In our day however, many are not interested in the truth; indeed, they deny that there is any such thing as *the* truth of God. The appeal for a return to the Bible is, nonetheless, the appeal that we must continue to make, for this is what our sin-cursed world needs.

A never-ending search for truth demands a constant willingness to reevaluate our concept of the church and its responsibilities, as we seek greater and more effective ways to make Christ known to the world. Edward Gibbon charged the historians of his day (who were writing more and more about less and less) with being able to "identify a tree," but not being able to "see a forest." Our concept of the church may rest upon some premature conclusion about what *we* want the church to be, while overlooking what *God* wants the church to be. Conrad the cobbler, in one of my favorite poems, dreamed

that the Lord had promised to visit him on a certain day. After making elaborate preparations for the Lord's visit, Conrad sat back to wait for the expected knock. But the only visitors that day were a beggar, a hungry old woman, and a lost child—all of them benefiting from the shoemaker's hospitality. When darkness came,

Conrad sighed as the world turned gray:  
"Why is it, Lord, that your feet delay?  
Did you forget that this was the day?"  
Then soft in the silence a Voice he heard:  
"Lift up your heart, for I kept my word.  
Three times I came to your friendly door;  
Three times my shadow was on your floor.  
I was the beggar with bruised feet;  
I was the woman you gave to eat;  
I was the child on the homeless street!"<sup>10</sup>

The marvelously eloquent *Epistle to Diognetus*, written early in the second century, describes Christians as "the preservers of the world," or "those who hold the world together."<sup>11</sup> A modern story pictures a father tearing a map of the world, and giving it to his young son to reassemble as he would a jigsaw puzzle. When the boy finished much sooner than his father had expected, he explained, "I knew that there was a picture of a man on the other side. I know what a man looks like; and I knew that if I fixed the man right, the world would be right!" This understanding of the world's needs behooved God to send His Son, the manifestation of truth. This is our greatest resource.

The faith by which we see our resources and use them to God's glory is produced by proper motivation and stimulation. Abraham obeyed God's command to leave his country, because

he desired "a better country" (Hebrews 11:16). Moses was faithful because "he looked unto the recompense of reward" (Hebrews 11:26). Even our Lord performed His noble work "for the joy that was set before him" (Hebrews 12:2). If salvation and heaven mean to us what they must, then we will be moved to greater faith; and our vision will be strengthened, that we may see our resources.

Ten of the spies who looked over the promised land, developed what someone has called the "grasshopper complex."<sup>12</sup> They were not as confident as Paul, who could do all things through Christ, the source of his strength (Philippians 4:13). There are still those who, weak in the faith, are poor in the vision that would see the resources of God's people. One elder is reported to respond to almost every suggestion by saying, "Well, let's see what we can find wrong with that!" We must not be insensitive to that which is wrong; but is it not much more productive to find out what is good and right, than to concentrate our efforts in that direction?

One of the memorable experiences of my life was the opportunity to know Miss Sarah Andrews, and to know about her work in Japan. The stories of her faith put strong men to shame. I have heard her tell of going without food for days on end, while giving her meager wartime rations to those who needed them more than she. When questioned about it, she would say, "Yes, I have gone without food; but I have never been hungry." On another occasion she told about not receiving anticipated money on the regular mail boat. She met this crisis by going down to the seashore and praying, "Lord, you can use a little boat as well as a big one!" Of course the little boat came, and with it the help for which she was looking.

She had the resources to do God's will, though our human judgment might argue otherwise.

*We have* the resources to do the will of God. We have time, money, people, material blessings, the truth of God, in abundant measure. With eyes that are opened by faith, we will see and use what we have. An African proverb says, "You can count the apples on a tree, but you cannot count the trees in an apple." We can point to some wonderful accomplishments in the history of God's people. What lies ahead only God can know, but His promise is sure: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do . . ." (John 14:12).

—Phillip E. Morrison  
Miami, Florida

## FOOTNOTES

1. Mark 6:30-44.
2. Acts 16:9.
3. Batsell Barrett Baxter, "The Opportunities Before Us Today," *Christian Chronicle*, September 11, 1964, p. 5.
4. II Peter 3:1-9.
5. Esther 4:14.
6. Margaret T. Applegarth, *Twelve Baskets Full* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), p. 231.
7. John 1:40, 41.
8. *Miami Herald* (September 26, 1964), p. 8.
9. Mark 12:41-44.

10. Edwin Markham, "How the Great Guest Came," Hazel Felleman (compiler), *The Best Loved Poems of the American People* (New York: Doubleday, 1936), p. 296.
11. "The Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus," Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (editors), *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956), I, p. 27.
12. Numbers 13:33.

# TO SEE OUR OPPORTUNITIES

## DON GARDNER

Don Gardner was born and reared in Northeast Arkansas. He received his college training from Freed-Hardeman College, Abilene Christian College (B.S.) and Hardin-Simmons University (M.A.).

Gardner has been preaching more than twenty years, having begun to preach while still a High School student. His first full time preaching was for the 12th and Chestnut church in Abilene, Texas. In 1950 he and his family went to Africa for a four year missionary work, supported by the Highland church in Abilene. While in Africa Gardner's work was centered in Pretoria and East London where good congregations were established.

Returning to the States the former missionary began preaching for the Highland church in Jackson, Tennessee. During this period an unusual church building, featuring a circular auditorium, was erected. Also, Gardner taught at Freed-Hardeman.



From Jackson the Gardner family moved to Pittsburgh. While here he provided leadership which resulted in the launching of "Operation Pittsburgh." This was a bold plan to establish a number of new congregations in strategic areas, a program still continued by the Pittsburgh church.

Five years ago Gardner was selected to become the first President of Ohio Valley College in Parkersburg, West Virginia. Through his leadership

the college has steadily progressed, marked with financial soundness. Today it occupies a half million dollar campus. Only two revenue producing buildings are unpaid for. About a thousand people are pledged to make regular contributions to the operational needs of the college. During Gardner's administration every payroll has been met, on time, and without ever borrowing any money for payroll.

Frequently articles appear in various religious papers written by Gardner. The former missionary is also the author of a Bible Correspondence Course which was written while in Africa.

The former college head married Audrey Pettry of Akron, Ohio. The Gardners have three children: Susan, 14; Mark, 12; Linda, 10. The latter two were born in Africa.

Gardner comes from a family which has been active in education. His brother, Claude, is Dean of Freed-Hardeman College. Another brother, Albert, preaches for the church in Omaha, Nebraska.

In June, 1964 Gardner assumed duties as Vice President of Endowments at Pepperdine College in Los Angeles.

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A few months ago while in Washington, D.C., I happened to pass the National Archives building. Chiseled on the base of a statue were the words, "What is past is prologue!" A friend who has spent many years in the Capital told me that once two men in a taxi passed this building. One asked, "What do those words mean?" The other responded, "They mean—you ain't

seen nothing yet." This is our hope for the Lord's church as it moves with vigor to capitalize on its exciting opportunities.

There is a statement in the short prophecy of Obadiah which effectively illustrates the point of our theme. The prophet lived at a time which coincided with the enslavement of Israel in Babylonian captivity. His message of a single chapter was directed to the Edomites.

Edom was a small, mountain country south of the Dead Sea about 100 miles long and 20 miles wide. Its people were the descendants of Esau, twin brother of Jacob. The bitter enmity between Jacob and Esau (Genesis 25:23) was perpetuated in their offspring. Cousin Edom and Cousin Israel were antagonistic, as cousins often are.

This basic rivalry appeared when Israel escaped the bondage of Egypt. The king of Edom had no sympathetic tear for Israel and steadfastly refused to allow the Israelites to pass through Edom, though Israel only wanted to use Edomite freeways and promised to pay full price for any roadside business transacted. (Numbers 20:14-21).

A few centuries later when Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian hordes leveled Jerusalem and swept her citizens under the rug of slavery (II Kings 24, 25), Edom was elated. The prophet Obadiah predicted stern punishment for Edom because of her malicious glee over Judah's troubles.

Then with the assurance which only a man in contact with God can display, the preacher declared that the Jews would be restored to their land again, or to use his own words: "...

and the house of Jacob shall possess their own possessions" (Obadiah 1:17).

The prophet's language is paradoxical. Is it not self-contradictory to say that Jacob will possess what he already possessed? No real difficulty exists, for while the land was his by divine grant, he did not at the moment hold actual possession of it though in time he would do so.

An illustration will fix the point. Travel by air is a thriving business as anybody who lives under a flight pattern near a major airport will attest. And yet only 11 out of 100 Americans have ever flown. The service is available which will take one to any part of the country on any given day. We possess air travel and yet the vast majority of Americans have not yet possessed it.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, we as a people face opportunities unlike the church of any generation since the first century. We possess these opportunities and yet we don't possess them until we exercise ourselves in laying hands on them. Pause and give thought as we enumerate possessions we should possess.

### *Discussion*

#### *I. LIFT UP YOUR EYES . . . POSSESS THE OPPORTUNITIES CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AFFORDS OUR CHILDREN*

God's people must come to see that the proper training of their children is not optional but instead it is *mandatory*. Paul speaks decidedly to this point, "You parents, too, must

stop exasperating your children, but continue to bring them up with the sort of education and counsel the Lord approves" (Ephesians 6:4, Williams).

Many Christian parents believe that Christian schools owned and operated by Christians are valuable tools in providing the Lord-approved education called for by Paul. The Christian school not only controls the student's environment but also seeks to influence his nature. Dr. Dick Willis, a friend of mine, works with rats. As a veterinarian assigned to a project in the space program he is seeking to learn from rat study a way to change the nature of some future astronaut. If a way (through drugs, for example) could be found so that an astronaut could exist in space without frightfully expensive hardware a major breakthrough would have been accomplished. In Christian education we have not achieved our goal by erecting artificial barriers; rather, the total impact of the school is geared to influence the attitudes of the students for good for life.

Jesus influenced His disciples profoundly. Even His critics realized that the power of the disciples lay, not in formal education, but in their intimate association with Christ, for they "had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). Christian education brings great Christian teachers and eager students into fellowship.

You would not deliberately place a child's body under the care of a poor doctor in a badly equipped hospital, nor would I. Then shouldn't it scare us to place a child's soul under the influence of those who may destroy it, particularly if it involves our own children where we have control of such a decision?

In spite of the admitted values of our Christian schools the question of their survival even in the next decade is not a moot question. Does it shock you to realize that we have lost an average of one school a year for the past hundred years?<sup>2</sup> Louis Benezet, President of Claremont Graduate School and University Center, has warned that only 20 percent of America's independent colleges may survive unless present trends are reversed.<sup>3</sup> The problems of our Christian schools may best be appreciated by what I have chosen to call

"The Parable of the Corn Merchants."

Two merchants on opposite street corners engaged in marketing corn.

Merchant "A" sold his corn at 10 cents a can. However, he lost money on each can, for it cost him 20 cents to provide a can of corn to a customer. Additionally, he had to find other money with which to erect buildings in which to house his corn business. Actually, the bigger his corn business became, the more financial difficulties it posed since it meant finding more money for buildings and more dimes to offset his losses.

Merchant "A" had these troubles compounded by still another factor; Merchant "Z," across the street, gave his corn away, though he did charge a small admission fee of each customer. Furthermore, Merchant "Z" paid his employees higher wages than Merchant "A" could afford. This made it difficult for Merchant "A" to secure and keep properly qualified employees.

With all these problems, why didn't Merchant "A" quit? Why operate a business on which one loses money? Why continue if one's business loses more money the bigger it grows?

*Reason:* Merchant "A" and his friends who supported the business believed they marketed better corn than Merchant "Z."

The meaning of the parable?

The Christian college is represented by Merchant "A"; the tax-supported college is represented by Merchant "Z."

If you are aroused by the challenges of Christian education as I hope you are, you will be asking, "Specifically, what can I do?" Glad you asked. *First*, you can make a pledge to a Christian school to give regularly and indefinitely. *Second*, you can teach others about the way the Christian schools help us meet our duty to properly educate our children. Only a relatively small segment of the brethren are yet convinced. A massive education program on the values of the Christian School needs to be done. Somebody of means might well set up a Christian Education Foundation for precisely this purpose and endow its work with five million dollars, or four, or three . . . *Third*, be willing to work cheerfully in campaigns designed to raise funds for our schools. Amazingly, even elders, deacons and preachers are often most reluctant to help in this way. *Fourth*, encourage older Christians to plan their estates so as to remember Christian education.

Others shame us! Catholics display remarkable persistence in bringing their children together for education and indoctrination Monday through Friday. Davidson County in Tennessee has 18,000 Roman Catholics who operate schools for more than 5,000 students. In the same county there are more than

50,000 members of the church of Christ who struggle to maintain even one elementary school and one high school.<sup>4</sup>

In Paramount, California, the 1200 members of one congregation of the Church of the Brethren provide \$25,000 annually to provide a high school.<sup>5</sup> Approximately 50,000 of the church of Christ in California operate one small high school.<sup>6</sup>

Brethren, when will we learn that when we lose one generation the church is gone?

## *II. LIFT UP YOUR EYES...POSSESS THE UNSAVED FOR CHRIST BY PREACHING THE SAVING GOSPEL*

The Savior left marching orders for His disciples to evangelize "every creature" in the world. The proportions and complexities of the unfinished task are staggering. The sheer force of population strides makes even holding our own a mammoth job. For the first time in history one billion people were living simultaneously in 1830; in 1935 it was two billion; by 1990 it will be five billion.<sup>7</sup> Remember that 1/20th of all the people who have ever lived are alive at this very moment.<sup>8</sup> Does it stun you to realize that before the college Freshmen of the current school term are old men and women the people of China will constitute half of the world population?<sup>9</sup>

There are 135 nations in the world and almost half have no known New Testament church. Even in those nations where we can report the existence of the Lord's church in many cases we are referring to only a token beginning, but even so we do not despise the day of small beginnings.

The New Testament church is strongest numerically in the United States with an estimated 2,000,000 members served by perhaps 5,000 preachers. Though we have only 7 percent of the world's population we have kept our preachers at home while supporting approximately 225 workers abroad.<sup>10</sup>

In spite of the herculean task before us we are not prepared to admit its impossibility. Jesus would not ask us to do what He knew is clearly impossible. However, there gnaws at me the awful thought that at our present pace we will not have preached the gospel to the world during my lifetime. Is there no answer? Are there not some specific actions we may begin now that will achieve this objective? It is believed that these specifics should be implemented immediately by the Lord's people, being principles rooted in the Lord's word.

1. *Let Christ centered elders lead the church to assume an aggressive posture.* A defensive attitude will never win. When Jesus promised to build His church He said the gates of hell would not "prevail" against it (Matthew 16:18-20). There are some who believe the word might be more accurately rendered "withstand."<sup>11</sup> The first word "prevail" represents the church to be passive, enduring all that the engines of hell can throw at it. The word "withstand" implies that rather than existing passively the church is a militant group of Christian soldiers whose sole purpose for living is to expand the borders of their Master's kingdom. Whatever the meaning of the present passage, it is eminently right to view the church as a driving, aggressive, militant, unstoppable, conquering force.

There must be no compromise with denominationalism, Romanism, communism, secularism or any Christ dethroning

view. The early church brought the Roman Empire to its knee, not through weakness but through strength. The first Christians had an exclusive view. When we lose our sharp focus on the distinctive truths of the Lord we have taken the heart out of evangelism. If "one view is as good as another" then why risk limb and life in the interest of an insipid view which has no special merit anyway?

2. *Let the local church zero in on a specific target.* Fifty nations have no New Testament church. Why not urge the church where you serve to select one of these nations for its particular task. Let it resolve, "With God's help we plan to put the leaven of the gospel into this country within a decade. While recognizing that we can't do everything and go everywhere we are determined to halt our drifting in evangelism. Our entire congregational energies will be directed to planting the Lord's church in this nation while we are yet alive." One specific goal of our lesson today is to inspire a minimum of fifty churches to evangelize these totally untaught nations. This is "pick a nation" year.

3. *Identify and prepare preachers for the assault.* It is no less true now than in the first century that preachers must be sent if they are to go. Once a congregation has selected a country it should methodically but prayerfully identify the preachers it will dispatch to that country. It may well discover that it should go to the junior high school class and look for potential preachers for its new venture. Let the young people of ability be inspired to prepare for a place on the church's evangelistic team. If necessary, the church should assist these young people financially in their preparation. Following this plan may take a dozen years to implement but imagine the strides

our world wide evangelistic efforts will have made by 1980. During that year I could conceivably rejoice with you in being able to say, "The gospel is being preached in every nation in the world. Praise the Lord!"

4. *Churches begun in these various nations should be self-perpetuating.* This is in effect what Christ wants, for in His charge He instructed the taught to teach others what they had been taught and to instruct them to teach others.

A few years back Dr. Hurley, President of Salem College, was faced with funding an unaccredited college. He invited others to join him in the formation of "The Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges," familiarly designated as CASC. Member colleges banded together to focus attention on the needs of small, unaccredited colleges. Each college officially committed itself to an active program designed to bring early acceptance in their regional accrediting association. When a member college is accredited it must drop out of CASC. The expressed ambition of the officers of CASC is to put themselves out of business.

Why shouldn't the missionary attempt to so train the converts that he will eventually work himself out of a job? His purpose is not to make converts that are dependent on him but to guide them to full acceptance of the leadership of the church. Those who work from this viewpoint will establish a permanent work capable of and inspired to plant other congregations. This in no way indicates a lack of interest in the converts; rather, it shows the highest degree of concern for their ultimate welfare.

5. *Rely on the strength of God.* Alone and unassisted our task is impossible. But teamed with God we can't fail. Meredith Wilson tells a fable about a band whose music so pleased the king that he opened his royal treasury to the musicians and invited each to fill up his instrument with as much gold as it would hold. One man dejectedly reported, "And there I stood with my piccolo." With our small piccolo we can't expect to evangelize the world but aware of our limitations we turn to God and seek His strength.

Somebody once remarked, "Most churches could continue doing what they are now doing if there were no God!" What a clever way of calling us back to tap the unlimited power of God.

Moses could never have led Israel from slavery without the Great I Am. Gideon's plan to rout the mighty Midianite army with 300 men would have been idiotic had he not been an ally of Jehovah. First century Christians did not bathe the earth with the gospel unassisted; they moved under the hand of Him who promised, "I am with you always."

No job God wants done is impossible. That word is not in the Lord's vocabulary. Men are limited but not our Lord. Let us link up with God and mesh our purposes with His. Through Him we can move and march to heaven. Your program is too limited and earthly if you could continue it uninterrupted should God withdraw from it.

We seek a motivation that will cause us to evangelize. Basically, motivation lies in a truer consecration to Christ. It is like the man who planned to enter Africa who was asked, "But

isn't that dangerous? Aren't you afraid you will die?" Said the would-be missionary, "I died when I decided to go."

There is no way in which missionaries can be drafted. Imagine getting a summons from the elders reading, "You are drafted to spend five years in the Congo. Be prepared to leave in five days." The idea is intriguing for there are some brethren we might like to help send, but alas, the plan is wrong. Unless we can inspire enough Christians to become so dedicated to Christ that they will volunteer for world-wide service our task will remain unfinished. We seek to build a passion for the lost which causes man to say, "This world is a wrecked vessel. God has said to me, 'Here is a lifeboat; go out and rescue as many as you can before the ship sinks.' "

As we seek the capitulation of the world to Christ, we must not lose sight of the missionary power inherent in a Christian life. It has been observed correctly that the early church did not subdue the Roman Empire by its organizational capacity, by intellectual attainments, nor even by its devotional zeal. It may be that the greatest contributing factor was the kind of life the Christians lived before their friends and neighbors.<sup>12</sup> As men saw the community of Christians care for their poor, instruct the untaught, bury their dead with hopeful expectancy, and serve those outside their number, they were "caught alive." Soon they were Christians themselves ready to live and die to foster the Lord's way. It was Peter who urged his fellows to maintain a conduct which could cause outsiders to "see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation." (I Peter 2:12). No missionary force in the world is stronger than the Christian life.<sup>13</sup>

### III. LIFT UP YOUR EYES... POSSESS THE OPPORTUNITY TO SET A WORTHY CHRISTIAN EXAMPLE IN RACE RELATIONS

Revolution is taking place in our land. The question of race relations gets prime time among the challenging questions being debated from the living room to the White House. With calm deliberation Christians should examine God's will on the question and adjust their actions accordingly.

The feeling of race superiority is not new; it spans the centuries back to the Egyptians who "might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination to the Egyptians" (Genesis 43:32). Later, the Hebrews manifested the same racial intolerance toward the Gentiles. In one of Paul's defenses before them they gave rapt attention until the apostle mentioned his commission to preach to the Gentiles. Aroused by their feeling of race superiority the Hebrews shrieked, "Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he ought not to live" (Acts 22:22).

The opportunity members of the church should possess in race relations is three fold:

1. *We should evaluate men on the basis of character, not color.* We take our cue from an action of God. When He was ready to select a king from among the sons of Jesse, he told Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance . . . man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart" (I Samuel 16:7). A man's worth is not determined by his height, or weight, or color.

Paul once wrote, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for

you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Surely Paul does not deny the existence of Jews, Greeks, slaves, men or women. However, he does affirm that differences in race, social status, or sex does not matter with Christ—all are on equal footing. Neither has any advantage with Christ *because* of these considerations. Truly, the ground is level at the cross.

2. *Apply the rule that is golden to all race relations.* "So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them . . ." (Matthew 7:12) Think of the electrifying effect it would have on race problems if we were to exchange places and were thus positioned to experience the hostilities which we may have shown. Jesus went to the heart of the problem by telling us to treat the other man precisely as we would want to be treated if our places were reversed. Would you want taunting, jeering invectives hurled at you? Would you want your children denied the right to an equal education? Would you like to be asked to leave a church service? Would you like to be denied a job because of your race? The Savior's rule will work, but to avail it must be worked.

3. *No mistaken view of the races must cause us to withhold the gospel from any man.* When our Lord was on earth the Jews hated the Samaritans intensely. The Samaritans were sandwiched between the Jews in Galilee and Judea. Jews traveling from Galilee to Judea would cross the Jordan in order to by-pass Samaria and contamination with the Samaritans. But not our Lord. Passing through Samaria He came in contact with a sinful woman who believed in Him and caused others to do likewise (John 4).

Jesus tasted death for every man. How evil if we allow personal, racial prejudice to hamper our efforts to win the very last man to our King!

Brethren, why must we wait until we are forced by Federal power to respect the dignity of our fellows? Why must we see denominationalism shed racial prejudices and shame us into following? Rather, why can't members of the church seize the opportunity of setting a worthy Christian example in racial relations? The results for good are beyond calculation.

A sharp, sudden social upheaval is not desired nor demanded by Scripture. Slavery was not wiped out by a single divine edict by Jesus in the first century though the principles He brought, when faithfully applied, gradually eliminated this evil. Let us so apply His teachings today that we will lead the way in eliminating racial evils.

### *Conclusion*

We must possess our opportunities while they exist. It is true that the night comes. Opportunity is a bald headed man with a single lock of hair standing near the front of his head; if you don't grab it as he goes by it is too late to catch him. Philip, the evangelist, learned that opportunity is on wheels; the eunuch came riding in his chariot and would soon have vanished had Philip not aggressively seized the privilege of introducing him to Christ.

All will not be easy in possessing our possessions. Discouragements and calamities must be met. When Paul became a Roman prisoner he may have thought all was lost but actually his imprisonment served to advance the gospel (Philippians 1:12). Calamities can be turned into assets. Not long ago while visiting in Porterville, California, I saw a large tent be-

ing used as a supermarket. When the merchant's store burned down he opened up for business in a tent, reportedly doing \$10,000.00 a week more business than before. Let us take our disappointments and discouragements and make them work for God.

Did you hear about the little boy who fell into a barrel of molasses? He prayed, "O Lord, make my tongue equal to my opportunities." Brethren, let us pray that our abilities may be equal to our opportunities as we draw the noose around the throbbing Twentieth Century.

FOOTNOTES

1. *Reader's Digest*, August, 1964.
2. Stated by Cliett Goodpasture, Assistant to the President of David Lipscomb College, in a meeting of Christian college presidents.
3. Virgil C. Blum, *Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 9, December, 1963.
4. A. C. Pullias, President of David Lipscomb College, in a letter circulated by the college.
5. Interview with Joseph Smith, Principal.
6. Estimate of Glover Shipp, Assistant Editor of *Christian Chronicle* and Director of Publicity of Pepperdine College.
7. Batsell Barrett Baxter, *Christian Chronicle*, Sept. 11, 1964.
8. Dr. Leroy Augenstein, Chairman, Bio-Physics Department Michigan State University.
9. Clare Booth Luce, *Saturday Evening Post*, July 25-August 1, 1964.
10. Batsell Barrett Baxter, *Christian Chronicle*, Sept. 11, 1964.
11. B. C. Goodpasture, *Gospel Advocate*, October 1, 1964.
12. Leslie G. Thomas, *Gospel Advocate*, November 16, 1950.
13. William Barclay, *The Letters of James and Peter*, p. 239.

## TO THE CHURCH IN AN ECUMENICAL AGE

EDWARD H. ROCKEY

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He received the B.A. from Washington Square College of New York University, with a major in English. His M.A. from Brooklyn College of the City University of New York was in the field of Rhetoric and Public Address, and it was awarded with honors. He matriculated for the Ph.D. at N.Y.U. in 1962 in the field of Mass Communications, and he is now working on the doctoral dissertation, having completed all other requirements. He has also studied at the Biblical Seminary in New York, where he was a full-time student from 1952 to 1954.



He is now a full-time faculty member in the Department of Speech and Theater at Brooklyn College. The Rockeys live at 125 Kenilworth Place, Brooklyn, N.Y., one block from the college. In past years he taught part-time at C. W. Post College of Long Island University and at the School of Education of N.Y.U.

He was a minister on Long Island for nine years (seven years with the East Meadow-Bethpage congregation). At present the Rockeys are members of the Manhattan congregation. He has presented papers at two meetings of the Speech Association of the Eastern States. He has written arti-

cles for several brotherhood publications, and he has appeared in college lectureships and local church efforts in fifteen states and the nation's capital.

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The Roman Catholic Cardinal said he was "100 per cent" for the prominent Protestant evangelist. The cardinal urged Roman Catholic young people to attend the services of the Protestant evangelist. "The hand of God must be upon him," the cardinal said.<sup>1</sup> Was this a 16th century prelate speaking of Martin Luther? Or was this said of Roger Williams in the 17th century? Or could it have been John Wesley in the 18th century who was referred to? Or was it, perhaps, D. L. Moody that was spoken of by a 19th century cardinal? I'm sure that, in the light of church history, your educated guess is that this was not said of any of these men. The religious climate they lived in prohibited such an appeasing and friendly statement from a Roman Catholic cardinal.

These words were spoken in our age—the Ecumenical Age—by Cardinal Cushing of Boston. He was speaking of Billy Graham and a 1964 Boston evangelistic rally. The cardinal went on to say, "I only wish we had a half-dozen men of his character to go forth and preach the gospel of Christ crucified." Dr. Graham's response? "I feel much closer to Roman Catholic tradition than to some of the more liberal Protestants."<sup>2</sup> Yes, our age is uniquely ecumenical. Not only that, the present *decade* is uniquely ecumenical. As the editors of the Harvard Roman Catholic-Protestant Colloquium wrote in 1964: "Ten years ago the Colloquium would have been an impossibility."<sup>3</sup>

*I. What Does "Ecumenical" Mean?*

When I say that we are living in a uniquely ecumenical age, I do not mean to imply that the term ecumenical or the concept of ecumenicity are new. The word *ecumenical* is a transliteration of a Greek word (*oikoumene*) that appears in the New Testament a dozen times. The word appears in Matthew's account of a prophecy of our Lord Jesus Christ: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come."<sup>4</sup> The expression "the whole world" (or the whole "inhabited earth" in the A. S. V. footnote) is a translation of the word that has been brought into our language as "ecumenical." In the year 325 A.D. an important council was held in the city of Nicea for the purpose of discussing certain doctrinal issues. Within the same century this landmark in church history was referred to as an ecumenical gathering.<sup>5</sup> Several ecumenical councils were held in the fourth and fifth centuries. They were called ecumenical because it was believed that they represented the entire church.

The word ecumenical has been used for many centuries to mean various things; but in the modern ecumenical movement it expresses primarily "the consciousness of the wholeness of the church."<sup>6</sup> As a prominent ecumenical leader defined it, "The ecumenical movement is a movement towards Christian solidarity in life and work throughout the inhabited globe . . . Ecumenics . . . might be defined as the study

of the Church Universal, its nature, its functions, its relations, and its strategy."<sup>7</sup>

## *II. An Historical Sketch of the Ecumenical Movement*

When we stress our age as being uniquely ecumenical we are referring primarily to the nature and extent of the contemporary discussion, organization, and effort towards unity as these present a singular quality not to be found in the four hundred year period which began with the Protestant Reformation. In describing the origins and structure of the modern ecumenical movement, I must be highly selective and sketchy, of course. Henry P. Van Dusen catalogues two hundred and sixty-five milestones which marked the trail of the ecumenical movement from 1900 to 1946.<sup>8</sup> If a researcher had the time and the interest, he could do a substantial study of each one of these.

### *A. The International Protestant Ecumenical Movement*

Several attempts to discover the genesis of the present stress on unity in Protestantism go back to early missionary and Sunday school cooperative efforts. One of the clearest historical pegs was the creation of the London Missionary Society in 1795. Note carefully two important principles from the proceedings of the London group which are vital to both the Restoration Movement, to which we owe so

much, and the modern Protestant ecumenical movement. Concerning unity in a name, we read, "The petty distinctions among us, of names and forms, the diversities of administrations and modes of Church Order, we agree, shall this day be merged in the greater, nobler, and characteristic name of Christians.'"<sup>9</sup> Concerning oneness in matters of faith, we find this, "the spirit of cooperation found new expression in the foundation of the London Missionary Society by some Anglican clergymen and dissenting ministers, with the express purpose 'not to send Presbyterianism, Independency, Episcopacy or any other form of Church Order and Government . . . but the Glorious Gospel of the blessed God' to the mission-field."<sup>10</sup>

In the nineteenth century several organizations emphasizing united action were organized in various countries. Some of these were Sunday school unions, missionary conventions, and Bible and tract societies. In that century arose the Y. M. C. A., the Student Christian Movement, and the World Evangelical Alliance. In 1900 the Ecumenical Missionary Conference was held in New York, bringing together missionaries from all over the globe to discuss a world-wide missionary strategy.

The shaping of the modern Protestant ecumenical movement is most clearly seen in the flowing together of three main streams. One of these was the Life and Work movement. The founding of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America in 1908 was a landmark in this area. The primary emphasis in this stream was on organization for the sake of fulfilling the social responsibility of the churches in a unified way. On an international scale, the efforts to unite for social

action were discussed in Great Britain in 1924, with William Temple providing key leadership, and in Stockholm, Sweden, the following year, with Nathan Soderblum at the helm. The Oxford Conference of the Universal Christian Council of Life and Work took place in 1937, and the theme of the gathering was "Church, Community, and State."<sup>11</sup>

The second main stream had its clearest beginning in the Lausanne, Switzerland, conference of 1927. Sixty-nine religious bodies sent representatives to this Faith and Order conference, and Episcopal Bishop Charles Brent of the U. S. A. was chairman. Commissions were appointed to study such basic topics as the church, the ministry, and the sacraments. At the 1937 Edinburgh meeting of the Faith and Order movement the reports of the ten-year study were given.

The third stream had its origin in the Edinburgh missionary conference of 1910. At this assembly John R. Mott headed a drive to establish a permanent committee to function between missionary conferences. This led "to the constituting of the International Missionary Council, a pioneer for the movement of Christian unity in its world-wide outreach."<sup>12</sup> The permanent committee appointed at Edinburgh was "the first permanent interdenominational organization of international character and scope."<sup>13</sup> The Inter. Miss. C. did not endeavor to administer mission work, but it sought to bring many national missionary groups together for study, advice, and cooperation.

At Amsterdam in 1948 two of the streams converged. The Faith and Order and Life and Work movements became part of the newly formed World Council of Churches.\*

\*hereinafter referred to as WCC.

Representatives of one hundred and forty-seven religious bodies from over forty nations assembled at Amsterdam to bring the WCC into formal existence. The basis for association was simply put: "The WCC is a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour."<sup>14</sup> Decades of study, service, and cooperation preceded the formal shaping of the WCC in 1948. Before Amsterdam, relief efforts and reconstruction work to heal the wounds of World War II had been underway. This has been a major interest of the WCC. Its labors on behalf of refugees and displaced persons are particularly notable. In 1957 alone it found homes for over 28,000 refugees.<sup>15</sup> In 1961 it had a field staff of almost 500 workers in forty-six countries. Today the WCC is often the first relief group to bring aid to the victims of disaster in far-flung parts of the world.

The WCC has held two major assemblies since Amsterdam. In 1954 it convened at Evanston, Ill., and defined its purpose:

The World Council of Churches is an instrument at the service of the churches which enables them to enter into fraternal conversations with each other, to co-operate in various fields, and to render witness together to the world. It is not a new church (even less a super-church) and does not perform ecclesiastical functions.<sup>16</sup>

In 1961 representatives of member churches gathered at New Delhi, India, and at this meeting the International Missionary Council officially became part of the WCC. The three streams now flowed as one body. An editorial at the time of the New Delhi Assembly noted that the International Mis-

sionary Council "embraces 38 national agencies and coordinates the work of about half the 42,000 Protestant foreign missionaries in the world."<sup>17</sup> By the end of the New Delhi gathering there were 197 church bodies from 60 countries represented in the WCC. Significantly, among the groups added to the WCC fellowship at New Delhi were the Orthodox Church of Russia and a Pentecostal denomination from South America!

An attempt to interpret and further the wholeness of the church is an important part of the life of the WCC. These quotations from reports made at New Delhi are most important to us because of our concern for the doctrine of unity in the New Testament:

We believe that the unity which is both God's will and his gift to his church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into one committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one Gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all, and who at the same time are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such wise that ministry and members are accepted by all and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people.<sup>18</sup>

All that in one sentence! The report goes on to expound parts of the above quotation:

Unity requires the holding and proclaiming of the one apostolic gospel of Jesus Christ. So-called 'unionism'

is rightly to be rejected if it means outward unity with little regard for the truth of the gospel . . . Without the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as witnessed by the apostles in the Bible, preached and taught through the generations, made clear and effectual in the thinking of the church and expressed in its worship—without these there is no ground for unity.<sup>19</sup>

I hope you have noted carefully the emphasis on fundamentals made in this statement, for we will want to apply this later in the lecture. There are leaders in the WCC who are not seeking unity for unity's sake. They are concerned about the commitment of those seeking unity to the facts concerning Christ. And that is not all; notice their concern for baptism and the Lord's Supper.

But until every person who is baptized into Christ's church is recognized as a brother by all Christians in each place, only an approximate unity is seen. And until all these are considered eligible to receive the bread and wine at the table where Jesus Christ alone is the host, unity is defective. In seeking for unity in the sacraments, as churches now are doing, the passion for truth must be matched by the genuineness of love.<sup>20</sup>

### *B. The American Protestant Ecumenical Movement*

Europeans, with a much greater sense of history and theology, have not looked with favor upon the American obsession with ecumenical organization and activity. A story which circulated among Continental theologs went something like this: "Three Americans had to parachute from a crashing aircraft. And do you know what? Before

they hit the ground they formed a survival committee, with a President, Vice-President, and Executive Secretary."

The early emphasis on social action that characterized the Federal Council has been continued in the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.,\* though it has a much broader program than that. The NCC came into being in 1950, fusing thirteen interdenominational agencies and the Federal Council. The new *Bylaws* of the NCC indicate that the structure of the movement will have four main pillars (beginning Jan. 1, 1965). (1) The Division of Christian Life and Mission will emphasize such areas as stewardship, evangelism, benevolence, church architecture, worship, and dialogue and action in social, political, economic, and moral realms. (2) The Division of Christian Education will encourage Bible study and further religious education in churches, communities, colleges, and seminaries. It will also concentrate on family life and Christian vocation. (3) The Division of Overseas Ministries will encourage evangelism and relief abroad. (4) The Division of Christian Unity will further the ecumenical ideal among churches through study and action.<sup>21</sup>

Of the two hundred and twenty-two Protestant denominations that now exist in the United States, only twenty-five are in the NCC (five Orthodox groups and the Polish National Catholic Church of America bring the total number of cooperating bodies to thirty-one). But these Protestant groups which cooperate in the NCC have a total membership of forty million, which is over two thirds of the total number of American Protestants (65,000,000).<sup>22</sup>

\* hereinafter referred to as NCC

It should be noted that fewer denominations exist today than there were a few decades ago. This is largely because of church mergers. From 1911 to 1948 over 100 denominations around the world were involved in 34 mergers.<sup>23</sup> Some mergers have taken place since 1948, and several continuing conferences are working towards long range plans for mergers.

Of the twenty-eight Baptist denominations in the U. S. A., only four are in the NCC. The largest denomination in the United States, the ten million member Southern Baptist Convention, is not a part of the NCC, and, in fact, in some cases it will not cooperate with other Baptists. Though only four of the twenty-one American Methodist bodies are in the NCC, these four include 90% of the Methodists. The Lutheran movement is sharply divided over the issue of cooperation in the NCC. Of the eleven Lutheran denominations in the U. S., with a total membership of eight million, only one is in the NCC—the three million member Lutheran Church in America.

There are many movements and groups not discussed in this brief paper. I have chosen the WCC and the NCC as the most significant for our consideration. They are the largest and the best known in their respective areas. The National Association of Evangelicals is part of the World Evangelical Fellowship. Both groups are opposed to the work of the WCC and the NCC, though some members of the National Association of Evangelicals are in denominations affiliated with the NCC or the WCC. But a group far more bitterly opposed to the NCC and the WCC is the American

Council of Christian Churches and the International Council of Christian Churches.

Conscious of modernistic infiltration of the WCC and the NCC, conservative Protestants have drafted creeds far more committed of the ecumenical movement.<sup>24</sup> But, paradoxically, statements to the inerrancy of Scripture than the fellowship the conservative creeds do not *even mention* baptism or the Lord's Supper, which are so much a part of the New Testament. Interestingly enough, as we have previously noted in the New Delhi statements, the WCC study groups conclude that baptism is essential for salvation and that all Christians should observe the Lord's Supper. True, there would be plenty of room for discussion on the subjects and mode of baptism and on the manner of observance of the Lord's Supper with some WCC leaders, but at least the basis for discussion is there.

One gets the impression that many conservative Protestants are generally committed to a creed about the Bible, but they feel little shame regarding sectarianism, and many of them are extremely loose about baptism and the Lord's Supper. Many ecumenical leaders, on the other hand, are deeply moved over the scandal of sectarianism and much concerned about universal fellowship around the Lord's table for all who have been baptized into Him.

There are many things that could be said against the ecumenical movement.<sup>25</sup> In conferences I had late last year with ecumenical leaders in the preparation of this paper I found that they were among the first to acknowledge the weaknesses

\*hereinafter referred to as WCC.

of their human efforts. I found them to be charitable, concerned, and helpful men. It is not my purpose in this paper to add to the scathing rebukes of the ecumenical movement. It has been my purpose to "Lift up Our Eyes" to ways in which the church in an ecumenical age can edify and be edified, can learn and teach. can bless and receive a blessing. But before we develop this point further, we have one more consideration in our survey of the ecumenical movement.

### *C. The Roman Catholic Ecumenical Movement*

In sharp contrast with the gracious words of Cardinal Cushing with which we began this lecture, I quote from a pamphlet issued twenty years ago in this country under the imprimatur of Cardinal Spellman of New York:

Catholics believe that the Catholic Church is the only organization authorized by God to teach religious truth and to conduct public religious worship. Consequently, they hold that any creed that differs from that of the Catholic Church is erroneous, and that any religious organization which is separated from the Catholic Church lacks the approval and the authorization of God.

From this it follows that, as far as God's law is concerned, no one has a real right to accept any religion save the Catholic religion, or to be a member of any church save the Catholic Church, or to practice any form of divine worship save that commanded or sanctioned by the Catholic Church.<sup>26</sup>

Based on such principles the author continues,

If the country is distinctively Catholic—that is, if the population is almost entirely Catholic, and the national life and institutions are permeated with the spirit of Catholicity—the civil rulers can consider themselves justified in restricting or preventing denomination activities hostile to the Catholic religion. This does not mean that they may punish or persecute those who do not accept the Catholic faith. But they are justified in repressing written or spoken attacks on Catholicism, the use of the press or the mails to weaken the allegiance of Catholics towards their church, and similar anti-Catholic efforts.<sup>27</sup>

Is this 1944 statement antiquated already? Has the Roman Catholic Church changed drastically in two decades? What is the basis of the new attitude of Roman Catholic leaders towards other religious groups? What is the significance of the pronouncements of Vatican II? No one can answer these questions with certainty. Several points might help us, however, in gaining some clarification.

First of all we must appreciate the Roman Catholic doctrine of the church and the sacraments. As Cardinal Bea develops these in a book called *The Unity of Christians*, baptism places one in Christ. The baptized person is therefore in the body of Christ, and is an object of the grace of God. Though heresy or schism may cut him off from visible participation in the Holy Mother Church, and thus deprive him of many blessings and jeopardize his condition, a separated brother is still a Christian and is to be an object of charity.<sup>28</sup> In the words of Archbishop M. Baudoux, "The church has always taught, in accordance with the general doctrine of the New Testament, that men are regenerated in Christ by valid baptism, and that God justifies them in his Son by a living faith. Thus all baptized persons are, by grace, adopted sons of God and brothers, one to another."<sup>29</sup>

A second consideration is to be found in the world-consciousness that is influencing religion. "A really world-wide civilization is in process of formation. In spite of all the threats of war, the human race is realizing its unity; all the walls are being broken down by extremely powerful technical forces."<sup>30</sup> Along with the breaking down of the walls through mass communication and other means, there is a growing awareness that we are involved in each other's lives. A population explosion in India would not have concerned our grandfathers in the slightest. To us it is a source of grave concern. Racial strife, nuclear developments, the Iron and Bamboo curtains, the emerging nations in Africa, the loss of moral direction, industrialization, the increasing poverty of the poor of the world, all these are problems in the minds of every civilized human being in the world today. "No man is an island." Religious leaders, particularly, share mutual concerns on these topics, and are drawn towards discussion of them on a friendly basis. In addition, the growth of secularism, dialectical materialism, atheism, and the glorification of science have thrown theists together to face a common foe.

Today many Catholic leaders are from democratic nations and from countries where the Roman Catholic Church is a minority group. Finally, some see a move towards better rapport with Protestants in the progress that is being made in Biblical scholarship. As one scholar noted, "Today, as the recent Harvard Colloquium showed, American Protestant and Roman Catholic scholars can meet on an equal basis. Both sides have advanced scientifically to the stage where they recognize the other's work; and joint projects of translation and commentary give promise of drawing on the best

efforts of scholars of both groups."<sup>31</sup>

The pronouncements of Vatican II seem tradition-shattering at first glance, but actually they are mostly indicative of a change in attitude and approach. Articles from Rome stressing the new attitude, welcoming discussion and even fellowship in prayer, and expressing Roman Catholic repentance for past mistakes are always careful to state that no "dilution or compromise of Catholic doctrine" is intended.<sup>32</sup> While speaking of "reverence and love" towards "separated brethren" it is emphasized that the pronouncements do not "constitute a denial of the Council of Trent. Heresy is still heresy."<sup>33</sup>

An article by a Jesuit scholar neatly summarizes the situation under seven headings. (1) The present divisions are "scandalous," and fellowship and cooperation among all Christians must be fostered. (2) Without condoning heresy and schism, what unites Catholics and "separated brethren" must be stressed. (3) Past Roman Catholic mistakes in attitude must be admitted, though the Catholic Church may never encourage error. (4) Catholics must appreciate the views of "non-Catholic Christians," and they must seek to integrate these views with Roman Catholic principles. (5) The appeal for reunion must go beyond Anglican and Orthodox communions and include more Protestants. (6) Catholic doctrine must be presented in honesty, humility, and love. (7) The "true Christian values" of the works of separated brethren in benevolence, scholarship, etc., must be recognized.<sup>34</sup>

### *III. Our Debt to the Ecumenical Spirit*

If others are willing to approach us in the spirit of love, humility, and honesty, can we do less than approach them

in the same spirit? If we will pause and reflect for a moment in this attitude, I believe we will discover that we owe a great deal to the cooperative labors of others.

On my desk there is a copy of the American Standard Version of the Bible. Members of six different religious groups in Great Britain and nine different groups in the U.S.A. submerged their party loyalties and cooperated to produce a translation of the Bible that is scholarly, honest, and accurate.

On my book shelves are Bible dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other reference works that have helped me greatly in my Bible study and preaching through the years. Some of them are cooperative works of men who treated the topics assigned them with objectivity and fairness. I owe a great debt to these men and so do most Bible teachers and leaders in churches of Christ.

Would it shock you to hear me say that at virtually every worship service among our churches we join in spirit with Baptists, Methodists, Anglicans and Roman Catholics in the worship of God? When, around the Lord's table, you blend your hearts and voices to sing, "When I survey the wondrous cross On which the Prince of glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my price," you are expressing the words of Isaac Watts, a Congregationalist. We owe a great deal to this man, and I wish he were alive and that I could meet him and discuss what the sacrifice of Christ meant to him. When we express our love for the brethren by singing, "Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Christian love," we are using the sentiments of the English Baptist, John Fawcett. "Lead, Kindly Light" was written by John Henry Newman, an Anglican who later became a famous

Roman Catholic cardinal. A Presbyterian minister, George Duffield wrote, "Stand up, stand up for Jesus, Ye soldiers of the cross." "O, little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie" was penned by Philips Brooks, the famed Episcopalian. When we pray God's blessing upon our brethren by singing, "God be with you till we meet again" we employ the song of J. E. Rankin, a Congregationalist minister. And, unknown to most members of the church, the song that ends with the refrain, "Faith of our fathers, holy faith, We will be true to thee till death," was written by a Roman Catholic, F. W. Faber, who left the Anglican Church in 1845. Dozens of other examples could be given, and time would fail to tell of John Wesley, or of Fanny Crosby, or of Frances R. Havergal. From the religious fervor of these wonderful people we have selected sentiments on which we can agree, and we have employed them freely in our worship of God. If they were here today, we would speak with them lovingly and earnestly of the things we hold in common, and we would patiently try to explore the areas of disagreement. We would not hesitate to thank them and admire them for their work's sake.

I sincerely believe that we have made a mistake in being content with the estrangement which we experience in the religious world today. The pity is, some brethren glory in our isolation. If the founders of the Restoration Movement in America were here today, they would seek opportunities to meet with leaders and members of various religious groups and to discuss areas of agreement and disagreement, on the basis of the Scriptures.

#### *IV. What Can We Do in This Ecumenical Age?*

The church in the apostolic age responded gloriously to

the challenges of the first century. They turned the world upside down, or should we say right-side-up. But did you ever notice, the Book of Acts has no ending similar to the closing verses of the other books of the New Testament. The reason for that is that the history of the Lord's church is still being written, though not by the inspired penman Luke. But no matter where Luke stopped, the history of the church went on. What kind of record are we making in our response to the unique challenges of this ecumenical age? I would like to mention four areas which demand our highest attention.

#### *A. To Press our Plea*

This is a unity-conscious age. What a glorious opportunity to present the plea for oneness based upon the way of Christ and upon no other grounds. The plea that all men and women and young people should obey the gospel of Christ and be Christians only is the most beautiful, simple, and powerful message of all time. The appeal for pure Christianity—for the following of Christ and Christ alone—has more magnetism, more glory, and more transforming force than all the appeals of man put together. But we must go forth to present this plea, and here we run into problems.

#### *B. To Understand and Be Understood*

I do not believe we will ever reach the effectiveness we should unless we make a thorough and honest effort to understand the views of others. We may not agree with them, but we must lovingly and patiently try to understand. A good

example concerns the attitude of the Roman Catholic towards his church. Consider this description, by a former Catholic, on what the church means to a Catholic. Until we understand this, we will never be able to reach Catholics.

The Church is his aristocracy and romantic love; his household where he mingles with the holiest of all the ages, children, like himself, of a mother solicitous and majestic, nurse of saints, yet mindful of her sinners, and keeping in her heart memories incomparable, so far back as the age of martyrs and the missions of the Apostles. When she takes him to her embrace, he ceases to be a casual atom of humanity; he becomes an heir of the ages, a citizen in the commonwealth of God; his name thenceforth is entered in the vastest brotherhood ever known on earth, and written through this august mediation in the book of life above. The Church has saved civilization and will save him, for her mission is to save. For the mind she has light, for the soul sanctity, for death consolation. . . . Where is any likeness to her to be found.<sup>35</sup>

You may not agree with that, but until you sympathize with it you will never understand a devout Roman Catholic. In various religious groups there are loyalties, emotions, and backgrounds that must be appreciated before there is a genuine basis for communication. We must read the literature of other groups and discuss issues with them open-mindedly. We must become familiar with their history and their views.

As you may know, my wife and I were Baptists until 1955. I have been asked by more than one member of the church, "Brother Rockey, what Baptist group were you with? Were you First Baptist?" Brethren, there are over twenty different Baptist denominations, but not one of them is named First

Baptist. First Baptist is a designation for a local congregation, similar to College Church of Christ or Highland Church of Christ. A congregation known as the First Baptist Church might be in the Southern Baptist Convention, or the American Baptist Convention, or some other group. We must understand such distinctions.

And of course we must be understood. Our isolation has cost us dearly in the area of public relations. A full-page article in a popular conservative Protestant magazine discussed the North American Christian Convention and the Restoration Movement. Churches of Christ are mentioned as being the "right wing" of a five million member movement. We are squeezed into one little section, and two things stand out: (1) we are chiefly known by our "opposition to instrumental music in the churches"; (2) we are "very separatist despite" Thomas Campbell's unifying principles.<sup>36</sup> There are thousands of people in our brotherhood who could straighten that author out in ten minutes' time over a friendly cup of coffee. Surely there are many constructive features we would be known for if we were more active in establishing friendly dialogue with all people of good will.

Here is a case in point. When the Queens Church of Christ accepted the challenge of sponsoring an exhibit in the Protestant and Orthodox Center at the 1964-65 World's Fair, there was some consternation about whether any compromise would be involved. We were assured that we could teach the Bible as we understood it through our exhibit facilities. When the fair closed last season the director of the Protestant Council of the City of New York told me that our booth had rented more space than any other group, and

some major groups were not even represented at the center. Result? One Sunday morning I tuned in to a Long Island Methodist preacher on the radio. He was talking about the religious work at the Fair, and he spent several minutes talking about the Church of Christ. Every word was complimentary. He described us as a "confessing, believing, repenting church." He spoke of our plea for the restoration of the first century church, and he even gave a plug for the Bible correspondence course offered at our exhibit.

### *C. To Learn More of Pure Christianity*

Of course it thrilled me to hear such a wonderful statement of appreciation from this Methodist preacher. Another incident that touched me deeply took place at New York University. I attended a small seminar conducted by the Director of the University Christian Foundation, and when it was over I asked him about suggested books on the ecumenical movement for my lecture at Abilene Christian College. A young lady, who was about to leave, turned around and said, "Wait a minute, I have to hear this." She was a school teacher on Long Island and a Presbyterian Sunday school teacher. It seems that she had met some graduates of Abilene Christian College at the congregation which began as the Bay Shore-Exodus movement. They were colleagues of hers and had studied with her and invited her to services. I asked her what her impression was of the Christians at Bay Shore. Well, I sat back and had the time of my life as I heard this Presbyterian Sunday school teacher tell the Director of the University Christian Foundation, "They are such fascinating people. I keep going back to

their services, even though I can't accept all they teach. They are so earnest and zealous and genuinely friendly. I have never met people quite like them. And I am amazed at how firm and united they are in their convictions."

As I reflected on the comments of this young woman and the sermon of the Methodist minister, I asked myself, "It's great to receive such wonderful appreciation from others, but have we been honestly appreciative towards them?" I believe we are depriving ourselves of an opportunity to know more of the Lord's will by our failure to give a loving estimate of the life and work of those around us. While others could learn from an honest appreciation of our stress on what the Bible teaches about such fundamentals as the plan of salvation, the autonomy of the local congregation, and simplicity in worship, we could learn much through an honest appreciation of the sacrifice, the zeal, the love, and the commitment of others.

Some years ago I knew a retired Episcopalian minister named "Daddy" Hall. His real name was James Jefferson Davis Hall. He was quite a colorful figure with his goatee beard and his clerical collar. He used to preach at the lunch hour on Wall Street, right on the sidewalk. He carried large placards about with him proclaiming, "Sin Will Find You Out" or "The Saloon Is a Bar to Heaven and a Door to Hell." When a stroke felled him he began the first sermon telephone service. On a trip to Europe he knelt before a monument of one of the English martyrs and prayed for the courage of such men. After he recovered from his stroke he continued his ministry on the streets of New York until his death. Brethren, we have no monopoly on zeal.

After some Protestant missionaries were slain by the fierce Auca Indians in Ecuador, Rachael Saint, the sister of one of the murdered missionaries, accompanied the widow of one of the murdered missionaries on an expedition to live with the murderers of their loved ones. They wanted to bring Christ to these savages. Unaccompanied by men, they established an entree and went to live in the primitive jungle village. I knew Rachael Saint in 1948. She was a Wycliffe Bible worker at the time. I know that I could learn a great deal about courage and faith from this woman, and I wish that we could have her at a lectureship of this type so that we could learn from her experiences in discussion groups and conferences.

In 1962 Louis Marsh was working with the gang known as the Young Untouchables in New York's infamous Spanish Harlem. As a former Yale Divinity School ministerial student, he sought a place of challenging service. One of the early experiences the twenty-nine year old Negro had was the basis of establishing rapport with the gang. A Puerto Rican boy threw a brick at Lou Marsh from a roof-top. Lou visited the boy's home, befriended him, and tried to find him a job. Most of us would never have entered the neighborhood again. One night in January, 1963, Lou succeeded in stopping a rumble between rival gangs. Four disgruntled hoods then accosted him later in the evening, and he was beaten so brutally that he died shortly afterwards. He risked and gave his life as a peacemaker. Brethren, we have no monopoly on Christlike sacrifice.

If we had time we could speak of dozens of such cases, of men and women who have demonstrated the teachings of

Christ in unforgettable ways. We could learn much from knowing such people and from honestly appreciating the godly qualities and work they demonstrate. As it is, we are for the most part estranged from them. To the extent that we are, we rob ourselves of the opportunity of Christian growth and knowledge.

#### *D. To Take Specific Action*

There are four ways in which we could specifically "lift up our eyes" to the challenges and opportunities of the ecumenical age, while at the same time pressing our plea for pure Christianity. (1) In New York City the Protestant Council conducted a broad neighborhood survey. One of their findings was that when a housing development was built for tens of thousands of people, several churches were demolished in the process of construction. The city agreed to hold two pieces of land open for churches to build on. For a long time no one could be found to take advantage of this. Finally one piece of land was taken for church use. The other one was never applied for by any group. Surely there are opportunities to relate to area-wide research projects, discovering possibilities and problems in church location. (2) Sometimes the religious community will protest against some social evil. For instance, many religious groups jointly voiced their opposition to the proposed state lottery in New Hampshire. What would be wrong with a congregation stating that it, too, was opposed to such things, along with other religious groups? (3) There are seminars and study groups conducted by various ecumenical groups. We have personable and scholarly brethren who could (make a

definite contribution to such efforts, and they would be enriched by the knowledge and experience of others. The World Council of Churches maintains an ecumenical institute in Switzerland. In the fall of 1965 they will study the topic of stewardship. We have been invited to suggest one of our number to participate in the study. (4) Finally, there are many opportunities for individuals to seek out other individuals for private dialogue. If in steadfastness and loyalty to Christ, in love and patience, we meet with others from varying religious backgrounds to study God's Word, nothing but good can result.

Impressed with the candor and truth of an article in a Baptist paper, Brother Reuel Lemmons wrote, "We are humbly thankful that others, in various religious bodies are preaching on their side of the fence the same as we are preaching on this side. Now, let's take down the fence!"<sup>37</sup> Brethren, all I can hope for is that this lecture has helped to remove a few feet of barbed wire. Let us "lift up our eyes" in love and honesty to the opportunities and challenges of the ecumenical age.

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# TO HERALDING THE TRUTH

ROBERT W. HOLTON

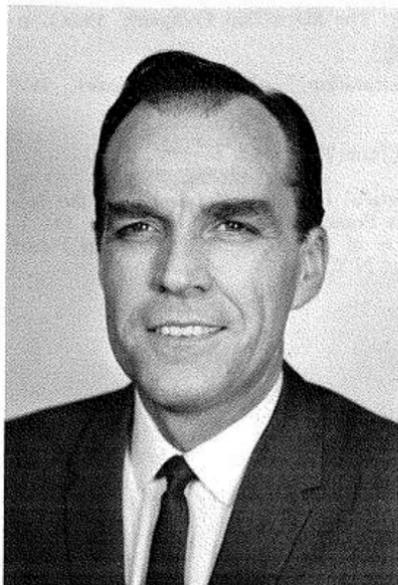
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Here at the outset it will be most helpful to me, and perhaps to you, to find the answer to the question "What do we mean by the title 'Heralding the Truth'?" Can we define it, or can we describe it, in order to properly orient ourselves for the purposes of this lecture?

My conception of it runs like this: First, "heralding" is communicating . . . the art of getting across information, ideas, and attitudes from one person to another person. We are talking about *communicating* the truth; and, yes, like Pontius Pilate, we must ask, "What is truth?" I am sure you recall that scene in the judgment hall of the governor's palace. Jesus of Nazareth gave no answer on that occasion, but on many another He did, to leave no doubt in our minds as to the correct definition. He had just said to Pilate himself, "This is why I was born, and for this I have come into the world to bear witness to the truth"; then He concluded, "Everyone who is of the truth, who is a friend of the truth, who belongs to the truth, hears and listens to my voice." (John 18:37). In behalf of His apostles, Jesus prayed to His Father in heaven, "Sanctify them by the truth," and He added, "Your word is truth." He also had told them, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Therefore, under the title "Heralding the Truth," we shall be talking about the art of *communicating*, or getting across information, ideas, and attitudes of the Christ, or the word of God, from one person to another.

It should be clear that we shall *not* be talking specifically about the radio and television programs "Herald of Truth" from which we have borrowed our title, and with which I am most pleased to be associated. Our attention is directed to the

art of communication in general and at every level and in *every* medium.

Also, we shall in no sense attempt a "how to do it" type of dissertation on this subject, but will, rather, express some personal opinions and observations about it that seem to be needful at this time. This art of communication involves three things: The message that is to be established, the method of the communication, and the person who is to receive the message. Let us consider each of these in order.

I believe that I do not need to convince you in this audience that in pure religion the message can only be the word of God or that Jesus and the Bible *are* the word of God. That assumption and faith is present in our title. However, I do suggest most emphatically that, when we come to *communicate*, the question must be constantly asked, "Is the message that we have prepared to herald the word of God?"

It is ever so easy to herald our opinions, our traditions, our party policy, our faction's foundation, our prejudice, our ignorance, under the guise of the word of God. We do not question here the perfection of God's communication, His revelation that **He** has made available to us, but we must constantly question our understanding of it. Do we have perfect understanding?

Recently, while reading one of the sermon manuscripts of A. R. Holton, I found this statement:

Let us admit that there may be some aspects of truth that we have missed. There are those who think they are very loyal to the word of God when their fellow men, looking at them, can see only the obstinacy of a narrow mind. Our blindness to truth has done more harm to the church than all the error that was ever taught. We are all the time looking for errors on the part of others, but we have never honestly let some great truth confront our minds and hearts and change our way of living. This blindness is the greatest error.

The communication of the church today is suffering more because of its blindness to great truth and failure to answer the question, "Is it—the message we herald—the word of God?" than it is to communicating error about the word of God. Let us accept the fact that Christians walk by faith, and that they are to grow in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In the light of this great truth, perhaps we can discover our own major error.

We delude ourselves into thinking that we are heralding the word of God, when actually we are just using the word of God to try to prove our righteousness and superiority to our neighbor. Our neighbor will not only reject the message because he rejects the messenger, but naturally, in a like spirit of competition, will set out to prove his own superiority!

When the content of our message is habitually of this character, we make the church we are representing not only offensive to our neighbor, but something quite different from the Lord's church described in the written Word, with its values, insights, concepts and basis of doctrine "once for all

delivered to the saints." The result of this distortion—what I shall call "heralding the half-truth"—is to establish another party in the traditions of men, the sectarian image at its worst.

This is the great flaw in the sometimes urged policy, "we must preach our differences." Such a policy will not work, except in the manner just outlined. We can only preach the Word with all the integrity and purity that we can muster, for our own benefit as well as our neighbors', and our "differences" will stand or fall through God's power, not ours.

Here is a simple example of how the content of the message can affect our communication: *Repeated emphasis* in our messages perhaps causes us to herald a "half-truth" in the minds of some, when we insist that "immersion in water is for the remission of sins." This emphasis has produced the conclusion in the minds of some of our neighbors that we are pure legalists, trusting only in externals, and that we thus represent a church that has either rejected or has no understanding of the other insights of the written word in regard to baptism—for instance, that it is also a preliminary to the gift of the Holy Spirit. A long history of "heralding the half-truth" that "salvation is final when obedience to the gospel is complete in baptism" as some believe we teach, has produced the ironic spectacle to them of a legalistic sect that strains to refute what it thinks is a neighbor's doctrine of "once saved always saved," only to practice the very same thing!

There is another aspect about the message that we communicate. It is the challenge of every generation of Christians to convey the eternal truth of God with freshness and clarity in the context of the contemporary-life situation. The material

with which to do this must be developed and refined and examined constantly within the individual Christian's growth processes in order to make contact with people in all walks and circumstances of life.

The concept of "the restoration of New Testament Christianity" is an example of this, a concept that our generation has inherited. This concept continues to have great dynamic and power in our time. It articulates a worthy goal for a Christian or an individual church to be a better Christian, or a better church. In the atmosphere of denominational Christianity, it pleads for the depth and the authority of the scriptures and the unity of believers. However, we should recognize that it is limited in appeal because it does not of itself challenge adequately the one who is not a follower of Christ. It is weak, compared to the power of the Word of God, in ability to challenge a modern man of the world whose only thought about Christianity is that it is dead and whose main interest seems to be the restoration of atheism and materialism, or other philosophies of men.

A fatal mistake in communication of this concept, however, is in the fact that what was once a PLEA for the restoration of New Testament Christianity and "The New Testament church," is now being presented as an actual accomplishment and an established fact, with absolute proof. This is far from the truth! Such self-righteous perversion of the assurance of faith causes the rejection of the faith when we thus communicate with our fellow man.

The posture is strikingly similar to that of the Pharisee in the parable that Jesus told to some who trusted in themselves

that they were righteous and despised others. The amplified version reads like this:

Two men went up into the temple enclosure to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee took his stand ostentatiously and began to pray thus before and with himself: "God, I thank you that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, robbers, swindlers, unrighteous in heart and life, adulterers, or even like this tax collector here. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I gain": but the tax collector, merely standing at a distance, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven but kept striking his breast saying, "Oh God, be favorable, be gracious, be merciful to me the especially wicked sinner that I am." I tell you this man went down to his home justified, forgiven, and made upright and in right standing with God rather than the other, for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Also, it would be helpful if we would emulate the attitude of Paul as he expressed it to the Corinthians,

I am not conscious of anything against myself, and I feel blameless; but I am not vindicated and acquitted before God on that account. It is the Lord himself who examines and judges me. So do not make any hasty or premature judgments before the time when the Lord comes, for he will both bring to light the secret things that are now hidden in darkness, and disclose and expose the secret aims, motives and purposes of hearts. Then every man will receive his due commendation from God. (I Corinthians 4:4-5).

Man's ideas and concepts which come clamoring for our attention to be included in the message that we are to herald, have their value and place in relating God's word to the

contemporary life situation, but they must not be presented as doctrines of the Word. They must be constantly examined in the light of the scripture, and at times we must cut ruthlessly through them to get at the heart of the matter.

It has been very well said:

God's deed in Christ touches life at every point, it speaks to every aspect of the human predicament, it stretches to all horizons illimitably. There is no plummet that can sound this ocean's depth, no yardstick that can measure the length and breadth of this Jerusalem. (Author unknown)

Yes, the Christian because he is a Christian, the result of being a Christian, is commissioned for the purpose of the proclamation of news, the heralding of the wonderful word and works of God.

Now from this brief delineation of the message of our communication, let us turn to the *methods* of our communication. This is the area of revolution. A revolution in media technology that is moving with overwhelming speed and that is offering overwhelming opportunity.

A statement in the book, *The Television-Radio Audience and Religion*, Everett C. Parker, David W. Barry, Dallas W. Smythe, Ed., published in 1955, delineates the situation as we find it today.

It was not too long ago in America that a church member's general life orientation was developed in his face to face conversation with neighbors and friends; in his perusal of the local newspaper; in his reading of books, especially the Bible; and in his participation, weekly or more often, in large congregate assemblies in church presided

over by a clergyman whose chief purpose was to give him fundamental, moral orientation. All these exist today and are powerful influences in orientation, but superimposed upon them are all the highly developed mass communication devices of our age. (p. 402)

It says further:

The new revolution in communications technology is just as fundamental and far more widespread in influence than was the printing press. It has made basic changes in the ways in which American people receive information, develop attitudes and opinions, receive cues as to appropriate behavior and are generally oriented toward life in our complex, modern society. (p. 409)

Yes, for the spiritual institution which is the church, which must communicate or die, and which has such a great commission, these are indeed challenging times. The opportunities represented by the methods and media of audio-visual aids, mass circulation newspapers and magazines, radio and television, place within the reach of this generation the dissemination of the word of God to every creature. These opportunities must be grasped with boldness and courage by those who would communicate the word of God. These media are unparalleled in the history of mankind. There is a great open door, particularly offered in the use of the mass-media of radio and television. In television, here in our own country, for example, there is enough respect left for God's word to make it possible to broadcast, with time given free of charge, quality programs that truly disseminate from a nonsectarian viewpoint, the truth of God. The "ecumenical movement" is the bright star of communications in the religious atmos-

phere around us. It could very well be replaced by a true and real Restoration movement if enough Christians were to take advantage of the opportunities offered in these mass-media.

But I would not mislead you into thinking that these media, and this revolution in communications technology, bring us to the threshold of Utopia in preaching the gospel. Success or failure in the use of these media, as in all others, depends directly upon whether or not the people that are using them embody the word of God; and on whether or not they are filled with the spirit of Christ.

Almighty God has delineated the method for the communication of His word in all places and in all times—that is by human personality. Consider the wonder of God's works and God's plan. The very creation was spoken, communicated, into existence, by Almighty God. The word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

In the intercessory prayer of Jesus for the apostles, recorded in John 17, you will recall that Jesus said:

Neither for these alone do I pray—It is not for their sake only that I make this request—but also for all those who will ever come to believe (trust, cling to, rely on) me through their word and teaching. So that they all may be one just as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be one in us, so that the world may believe and be convinced that you have sent me. I have given to them the glory and honor that you have given me that they may be one even as we are one: I in them and you in me, in order that they may become one and perfectly united, that the world may know and definitely recognize that you sent me, and that you have loved them even as you have

loved me. Father, I desire that they also whom you have entrusted to me may be with me where I am, so that they may see my glory which you have given me—your love gift to me—for you loved me before the foundation of the world. Oh just and righteous Father, although the world has not known you and has failed to recognize you and has never acknowledged you, I have known you continually; and these men understand and know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them and revealed your character and your very self, and I will continue to make (you) known that the love which you have bestowed upon me may be in them—felt in their hearts—and that I (myself) may be in them. (John 17:20-26)

The word came from God living in Jesus, from Jesus living in the apostles, from the apostles living in all who believe through their word. In this prayer, Jesus contemplates all the centuries that were to come in which the gospel would be the good news to the millions on earth. The Christ filled human personality, the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit is the method that God would have us use that the world might believe in His Son.

Here, we come face to face with our point of failure—and our hope of success. What you *are* speaks ever so much more clearly than what you say, and *how* you said it, than *what* you said.

The apostle Paul said:

My language and my message were not set forth in persuasive, (enticing and plausible) words of wisdom, but they were in demonstration of the (Holy) Spirit and power that is, a proof by the Spirit and power of God operat-

ing on me and stirring in the minds of my hearers the most holy emotions; and thus, persuading them, So that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men, (human philosophy,) but in the power of God. (I Corinthians 2:4-5).

And again, "for the kingdom of God consists of and is based on, *not* talk, but power—moral power and excellence of soul (I Corinthians 4:20).

A much less gifted man, but a student of the communication problem, has put it this way:

"Would you convince your opponent? Then touch his heart . . . if he has one. One cannot conquer anyone's belief with words and arguments. He merely adjusts them to this own truths and prejudices . . . unless he likes you." (Joost A. M. Merloo, "Conversation and Communication").

We have tried to convince the world that we are Christians by intellectually arguing certain doctrines. We have asserted the necessity for others to believe what our intelligence dictates to be the truth, and we have been very careful about our logic and soundness. But we have had little regard for the truth that God's children are to embody the spirit of truth.

We have had some success in restoring the externals of New Testament Christianity from our own human effort; one wonders what might be accomplished if the one ingredient that makes Christianity real and true and powerful were accepted fully in our lives.

We must admit that Jesus knew and revealed in His prayer, what would be central for all times.

Someone in speaking of the lonely human souls without Christ, has said:

They want somebody who does not have to run like a distant page through long and winding corridors whispering what someone has told him, having heard it from someone else, who in turn has got it from another, to one of whose acquaintances the King has spoken and expressed his sovereign will.

You and I are here not to listen curiously at the threshold of other lives for some report that will fit our fancy; we are here ourselves to enter into that intimate association from which alone a man can come and on the ground of his own discovery give voice to the word that is not his own. That way, he will never have to cover up uncertainties, and your dark and hidden insecurities with a bigoted and dogmatic front. Such narrow moods of the soul cometh from nothing but of trying to double the emphasis for lack of any confidence in the proof. Conviction that is strong and deep is not argumentative. It is not merely intellectual or philosophical or academic. It is what love is in Paul's catalog of shining dignities. It suffereth long and is kind, it envieth not, it vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil. (I Corinthians 13). It is a moral state that comes not of theory, not of being expert in Biblical criticism, but of being expert in that long pilgrimage toward the City of God which the Bible records; not of familiarity with the philosophies of any bygone age, but of a knowledge of one who is himself, the truth, to whom all stammering philosophies must come at last to hold out their hands or perish. (*Author Unknown*).

First John, 1:3 says:

Of what existed from the very beginning, of what we heard, of what we saw, of what we witnessed and touched

with our own hands, we bring you word so that you may share our fellowship; and this fellowship that we have (which is a distinguishing mark of Christians) is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

The secret of successful communication of the word of God is not only in what you say and how you say it, but how you *embody* it. To make use of the words of Paul, it is "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

The hope of communication in our time, and all time is "Christ in you" people using all media that can be devised.

We have considered message and method in heralding the truth, now let us consider the audience.

With whom are we trying to communicate? This is a specially important question when we come to use any of the mass-media. The simplified answer is of course, everybody; but to those working in the field, the answer in most cases seems to be very complex. The pulpit preacher gives consideration to the special needs of his audience at a given time and place. *The Television-Radio Audience and Religion* states,

This we believe is the central and most important finding of this report, that in programing for religious use of the mass-media the ingenuity and flexibility of the planners must match the complexity of needs and circumstances of the potential audience.

It further states that,

The message must be consciously directed to each social group in the population in terms of its own values, needs, and states of readiness. It needs to be developed specifically for intellectuals, for women, for the frustrated operator on the factory production line, for the professional, for the teenager, for the young parent, for the churchd and unchurchd.

Such considerations have great value in selecting or devising *techniques* of communication in the mass-media, particularly in radio and television, and to some degree, the selection of subject matter from the word of God. But devising and aiming programs on radio and television at special groups is, in my opinion, a misuse of those media. The outstanding characteristic of the potential audience of the mass-media is that it is widely diversified. Common denominators are called for. You are reaching many *people*, but one at a time. The central theme of God's word, the Gospel of Christ, is the common denominator of interest and appeal to all human hearts; and we all share a common "human predicament." The mistake is made in the assumption that the audience is composed of people in one group or another. The most common mistake is to assume that everyone in your audience is well versed in the scriptures. Presenting lengthy dissertations about dogma and differences among denominations would, of course, limit the size and number of people that would be interested in listening. Such matters could be handled much better in a different situation. On the other hand, with the aim of the saving of souls in mind, it would be a mistake to assume that you were talking only to people who have not accepted Christ. Dissemination of the word of God is to nurture as well as to convert.

The theory that religious programing in radio and television should be directed to special groups also seems to carry with it the assumption that there can be no unity in Christ, that the church is forever to be fragmented in the pattern of the social structure of contemporary society. This we cannot accept in the light of God's word. As the words "mass-media" imply, these tools should always be used with the aim in mind to reach the largest possible audience that the skill of the communicator can attract. With very few exceptions, the professionals in the field operate under this criterion. That is why they have the audience ratings and the research that we hear so much about.

Another factor in considering the audience, and this should apply to all methods of our communication, is the factor of the definition of terms. This is a broad field in itself, but it must be applied in every Christian communication situation. It will not only help his hearers, but the speaker himself will grow by so doing.

In the final analysis, we should emphasize that communication is the getting across of information, ideas, attitudes from one *person* to another *person*. The audience is a *person*; and in particular, if we may use the concepts of our Lord he is a person who is "of the truth" for He said, "Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice." He is a person who is, or can be, poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. He is a person who mourns for they shall be comforted. He is a person who is meek for they shall inherit the earth. He is a person who hungers and thirsts for righteousness for they shall be satisfied. He is a person who is merciful for they shall obtain mercy. He is a person who is pure in heart for they shall

see God. He is a person who is a peacemaker for they shall be called sons of God.

Yes, the audience for the Christian is the same as that described by his master who came to preach the "good news" to the poor, the captives, the blind and the oppressed, those that labor and are heavy laden, not the righteous, but sinners.

Now may I direct our attention to some special problems and perils involved in the use of mass-media, radio, television, motion pictures, and the implements that go with them—publicity, promotion, exploitation, and what is sometimes referred to as ballyhoo. The life of each one of us is enmeshed in the web of these things of the twentieth century. In a most tragic way, they make us aware of position, prestige, status, public image—a way and pattern of life that is diabolically opposed to the Christian way; and when we see Christianity take up these tools for its purpose, it is no wonder that thoughtful Christians become somewhat uneasy. As an example, these tools and techniques have made the name of Billy Graham a household word. *Time* magazine ("The New Evangelist," October 25, 1954, p. 38) speaking of Billy Graham, has written:

While evangelist Graham sincerely considers himself nothing but a tool of God, he believes in giving God plenty of help with some tools of his own. The tools he has fashioned add up to an intricate technology of soul saving that might astonish St. Paul, bewilder John Wesley, and give any Madison Avenue ad man some ideas.

Mr. Graham has said:

I am selling the greatest product in the world, why shouldn't it be promoted as well as soap? In every other

area of life, we take for granted publicity, bigness, modern techniques. Why should not the church employ some of these methods that are used by big business or labor unions to promote their products or causes in order to win men for Christ. ("Billy Graham Answers His Critics," *Look* magazine, February 7, 1956, p. 47)

In the book *The Television-Radio Audience in Religion* there is a statement in regard to this problem:

The most critical and sensitive spot in the ethics of mass communications, we believe, is in the use of these media for the manipulation of people. Here is the danger area for religious groups using the mass media, they are working in an environment where the secular world has elaborately rationalized and even cynically advocated the manipulation of people for the purposes of the sponsor. The entire technology and technique of mass communications is imbued with the psychology of manipulation of calculated motivation of audiences for purposes that may or may not be made explicit to them; and religious groups, amateurs at best in this field, may all too easily compromise their own fundamental principles when they believe themselves to be only adapting professional communication techniques to serve the gospel. (pp. 412, 413)

We should also point out that the secular world has long understood and used the basic technique of communicating through the human personality. But theirs is a technique in which *ego* is the Holy Spirit. What is called the star system is the result of this technique. Many of us think that these outstanding personalities are just unusually talented people. Sometimes they are, but most of the time they are simply artisans who have learned to project a personality which is publicized and promoted and exploited until great segments of

the population accept them as idols, models, and symbols of the ideal. Sadly, we see evidences that people do not understand what is happening, and the great desire to emulate this pattern in the communications activity of the church.

The question is, should these dangers of manipulating audiences and partaking of the modern ego worship prevent us from using the media? A statement of the World Council of Churches is worthy of our consideration:

We face today the overwhelming impact of the cinema, radio and television, as well as the greater perfection of posters, newspapers and magazines. The result is that the convictions and decisions of individuals in many countries are reached under the pressure of a common mental climate which these media of mass communication tend to create. Hence, the Christian church must use these same media for it is essential that Christianity, the questions it asks and the answers it offers, should permeate the general consciousness if the ground is to be prepared for individual decision for Jesus Christ. ("Evanston Speaks," *Reports From the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches*, pp. 37 & 38)

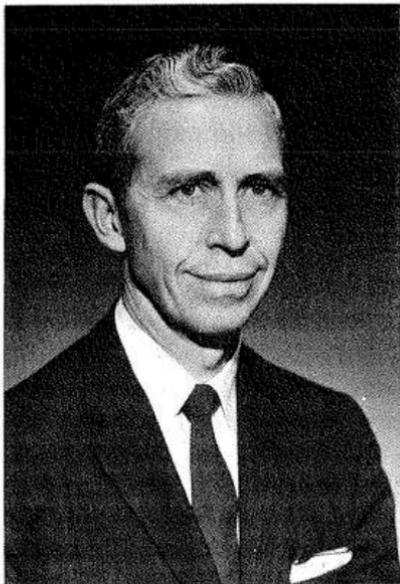
May I suggest that we need have no fear of using or misusing any method of communication that man can devise in God's creation, if we ever keep in mind the audience to whom we are speaking as delineated by our Lord; that the message is purely and faithfully the word of God; and that it is presented in the medium of a Christ-filled personality.

## TO FOREIGN CAMPAIGNS FOR CHRIST

FRED B. WALKER

Fred B. Walker was born on May 31, 1914, in Huntsville, Alabama, a descendant of A. B. Walthall, of Virginia, a pioneer preacher in the early days of the Restoration Movement. Baptized by T. B. Thompson, he was encouraged to preach, at the age of fourteen, by Cecil B. Douthitt in Lakeland, Florida.

He was graduated from Freed-Hardeman College in 1934 and from Wabash College in 1937 as valedictorian in both colleges, and elected to Phi Beta Kappa, honorary scholastic society. He received the M.A. from the University of Florida in 1947, and taught speech while there. He is Assistant Professor of Speech and Bible at present in David Lipscomb College. He is a member of Kappa Delta Pi and Phi Delta Kappa, professional educational fraternities.



Among churches he has served are: South Park, Beaumont, Texas; High Springs, Gainesville, and Tallahassee, Florida; Arlington, Virginia; Central in Chattanooga and Grandview in Nashville, Tennessee. At present he preaches for the Joywood church in Nashville.

He served as Chaplain of the House of Representatives in the Florida State Legislature in 1945.

He was Co-Director of personal work in the 1961 London Campaign for Christ and Director and evangelist in the

Glasgow, Scotland campaigns in 1962 and 1964 which resulted in 58 baptisms.

The author of *Following Through for Christ*, he serves as Associate Editor of *Personal Evangelism*, a quarterly journal, and is on the staff of *Power for Today*.

He is married to Margaret Pheil, of St. Petersburg, Florida. They have three children: Alec, Freddy, and Mrs. Trudy Moore.

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Four hundred and eighty-one years before Christ, in the spring of that year, the greatest army ever marshaled in the history of carnal warfare set out from Persia toward Greece. It is variously estimated to have numbered from a half-million to a million, eight hundred thousand men gathered together from the forty-nine different nations. Xerxes, identified by some as possibly Ahasuerus, the husband of Queen Ester, was its commander-in-chief. He had inherited from his father, Darius, an all consuming hatred for the Athenians, and this mighty campaign was undertaken for the purpose of subduing them forever. This campaign was doomed to defeat by the heroic efforts of the Greeks under Leonidas at Thermopylae. Such must ever be the end of all campaigns undertaken solely for self, and depending upon mere human strength.

“Campaigns for Christ” is a much more glorious thing. It is an undertaking in which every Christian can have a part, and which has for its object the conquest of the whole world for Christ. Churches of Christ today now number over two million souls and have for their commander-in-chief, Jesus, “the Captain of our Salvation.”

Wherein does a campaign for Christ differ from a gospel meeting? Let us bear in mind that since we are dealing in terms

which are accommodative, adaptable to modern language, we are not proposing that any consideration as to whether the term "campaign" is any more or any less Scriptural than the terms "gospel meeting," "Vacation Bible School," "teacher training series," etc. Let me say at the outset that I believe the idea is entirely Scriptural since Paul wrote: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the casting down of strongholds" (II Corinthians 10:4). The Christian life is a constant warfare against the forces of evil in whatever form they present themselves. The kind of strategy used may differ according to the nature of the attack which the devil makes as well as other circumstances. The kind of Campaigns for Christ, as I shall discuss, has developed strategy in converting souls and enlisting the rank and file of Christians which bids fair to becoming perhaps the most important development in the 20th Century to restoring the zeal of New Testament evangelism.

Campaigns for Christ, in the context of this discussion, does not refer to a specific group, incorporated or unincorporated, but to a means of doing mission work with voluntary workers for a specified time usually under the oversight of one congregation, and as has been exemplified by a number of congregations, such as Hillsboro and Joywood in Nashville, the Central church in Valdosta, Georgia, the Broadway church in Lubbock, Texas, and others.

### *The Purpose of Campaigns for Christ*

The purpose of every campaign for Christ ought to be to carry out the Great Commission. That this should not merely

mean putting on a crash program just to get people baptized is evidenced from a re-examination of Matthew's account of the Great Commission. Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Thus He said "teach," "baptize" and keep on teaching those baptized.

This concept of a campaign for Christ was especially emphasized by Jerry Porter, evangelist for the Castlemilk church in Glasgow, Scotland, for the past five years. As the co-director of the personal work program for the campaign for Christ there in August, 1964, Brother Porter continually pointed out that we were not there just to baptize people. We were there to convert them to Christ. Several precautions were taken to keep from baptizing people until we were reasonably sure they were converted to the truth. Our forty-eight workers were urged not to leave a large number of baptized, but unconverted people with the church there when there would be only a few local workers to follow through.

In one instance, Tom Wicker, an Abilene student and Miss Betty Roehmer, a worker from Berlin, Germany, in door to door work, had engaged in conversation an older woman who immediately showed considerable interest. After less than an hour's teaching, the lady said that she had studied her Bible enough to know that what our workers were teaching was the truth and that she was ready to be baptized. Sister Roehmer told her she would like for one of the preachers to talk with her. Returning to the hotel she told me the circumstances. I suggested she immediately get in touch with Brother Porter and take him back to her house, which she did. With his back-

ground of five years' experience with the religious beliefs of Scotland and the Scottish people, we felt that his judgment would be sounder. Although the lady had never attended a service of the church, Brother Porter became convinced that she had a sufficient background knowledge to recognize the truth when she saw it. She came to church that night, made the confession and was baptized.

Door to door, person to person contact, on the part of many workers is an integral part of most campaigns for Christ with which I am acquainted. It must be a sound practice in winning souls to Christ, because we have so many examples of it in the New Testament. Jesus talked with individuals where He found them, as in the case of the woman at the well in Samaria. He sent out His disciples two by two (Luke 10:1). When the early church was scattered abroad, they "went everywhere preaching the word." The apostles stayed in Jerusalem, so Christian workers in the first century must have gone out into the highways and byways just as we try to do in a campaign for Christ. The Apostle Paul, in citing the extent of his labors to the elders of Ephesus, said he "taught publicly and from house to house" (Acts 20:20). No greater campaigner for Christ ever walked the roads of the Roman empire than Saul of Tarsus. A husband and wife team, Aquila and Priscilla, taught Apollos the way of the Lord more perfectly. In campaigns for Christ our brethren have learned that a man and woman working together can make a better impression and contact more people than two men or two women working together. This was especially true in Glasgow, Scotland, when we would be mistaken for Mormons if two men went together.

Campaigns for Christ as a means of restoring New Testament methods in carrying out the Great Commission does not

set aside our traditional means, but supplements them as perhaps nothing else will. Perhaps 75 percent of our congregations are still relying on traditional means alone for reaching the outsider. These include: (1) Engaging an evangelist and putting most of the dependence on him to convert by pulpit preaching during a meeting, (2) relying on newspaper ads and printed brochures half of which are often never distributed when the meeting ends, (3) interpreting the responsibility of the average church member during an evangelistic effort as consisting of being present every service, entertaining the evangelist for a meal, and inviting the same person to church we have been asking for years. A campaign for Christ will likely do all of this and considerably more. It will also involve a large number of workers in knocking on doors and otherwise mingling with people in every walk of life to tell the gospel story.

### *Planning the Campaign for Christ*

Many a congregation would like to launch a campaign for Christ, either in its own neighborhood or on a mission field, but does not know how to go about planning it. There is no set method and we are learning more all the time about campaigns. I can only speak about campaigns with which I have been associated. Christians interested in being a part of a campaign, may approach their own elders or the idea may originate with elders of any congregation. Next it is desirable to have a supporting congregation, or sponsoring if one wishes to use that term. This congregation will select the place and director. If the city or town already has a congregation, then, of course, the wishes of the congregation must be followed on

the conduct of the campaign. In many cases it is best that the desire for the campaign originate in the congregation of the city where it is to be held. With the great success which has attended most of the campaigns for Christ within the past few years, there are far more communities and congregations desirous of having such efforts than there are congregations willing to conduct campaigns.

In the Glasgow, Scotland, campaigns both in 1962 and 1964, the desire for such a campaign originated with the Castlemilk congregation under the leadership of Dale Buckley and Jerry Porter, American evangelists who (in 1962) had been on the ground for three years. There is a decided advantage in having level headed men like these two, who know the customs and the local community before making arrangements to house fifty or sixty workers and supervise their daily work for three weeks, as was the case here. Their request for me to direct and preach in a campaign in Glasgow was directed to the elders of the Joywood congregation. The elders accepted the responsibility of overseeing this campaign on this side of the Atlantic, appointing a committee and a treasurer for all funds. Except for clerical and mailing expenses, which are paid from regular contributions, a separate bank account was set up and moneys for food, lodging, and transportation of all workers were paid from this account. The forty-one workers in 1962 and the forty-eight workers in 1964 raised their own funds for their expenses. In 1964, it was \$450 round trip from New York to Glasgow and included food and lodging for twenty-five days for each worker. The entire campaign for Christ in Glasgow, Scotland, in each of the two years cost less than \$25,000, most of which was raised by the individual workers. We had no high salaried promoters or men to pay. Al-

though over one hundred congregations participated in the financial support of the workers, these were not solicited by Joywood or by me personally **except** in a few instances where we were in dire need for funds for key men we needed and in purchasing tracts.

We purposely tried to keep the number of American workers to around forty-five as the hotel engaged could take care of only that number. How were these selected? For the most part they heard of the campaign through the *Christian Chronicle*, other brotherhood publications, and by word of mouth. Application blanks were sent, which when filled out provided data and references for workers applying. Every worker was asked to have a written recommendation sent from his home congregation. In some instances, such as the selection of a song leader and other key personnel, workers were invited to be a part of the campaign.

To make all travel arrangements, the Enzor Travel Agency was selected because I have labored under Brother Enzor as an elder when I preached for the church in Arlington, Virginia. His competence in his business, his integrity, and his interest in mission work were unquestioned.

As the time approached for the group to leave, meetings were held with the workers from Middle Tennessee to brief them on personal work, customs in Scotland, etc. Dale Buckley from Freed-Hardeman College, and Andrew Gardiner from Edinburgh, Scotland, were among those who spoke at these meetings, which were held at David Lipscomb College. Meanwhile the Harding College students held frequent meetings to better prepare themselves for the campaign. Brother Buckley and I visited one of these meetings.

Over in Scotland, Jerry Porter and the leaders of the Castle-milk church made all the preparations. Some forty thousand attractive brochures were printed and most of these were distributed by the Scottish members before the American workers arrived. In the London campaign, in 1961, we learned that it is unnecessary to tie up expensive talent in merely giving out brochures the first week of the campaign. Boys can be hired, if necessary, to do this the week before the outside workers arrive. In this way, the experienced workers can begin knocking on doors and making personal contacts immediately.

Newspaper ads were found to be effective. In the 1962 campaign Bill Collins, age nineteen, who lived across Glasgow some ten miles from the meeting place, came by city bus as a result of seeing the campaign advertised in the newspaper. After attending two services and studying one night in the hotel with Brother Dale Buckley and me, he was baptized. He is now studying in Freed-Hardeman College preparing to return to Glasgow to preach the gospel. This leads us to the third aspect of this discussion, the present results of campaigns for Christ.

### *The Present Results of Campaigns For Christ*

The amazing results in terms of audiences attending, studies made, and persons baptized and restored can be summed up in a statistical way from campaigns such as the one in Dallas in which Jimmy Allen preached where the responses exceeded 300. The one in Muncie, Indiana, with one hundred workers including Larry Swaim and Danny Cottrell as evangelists preaching, resulted in one hundred and one responses.

Almost every home in a city of 80,000 people was contacted. Campaigns in Johnstown, and Altoona, Pennsylvania, conducted in the summer of 1964, by some fifteen workers under the leadership of Owen D. Olbricht, of Lamar, Missouri, resulted in fifty-three baptisms, almost evenly divided: twenty-seven in Johnstown and twenty-six in Altoona. The church in Altoona had been meeting for only one month, with five Christians assembling. Of those baptized, none had ever heard of the church before the campaign. The campaign in Lubbock, Texas, last October, with Batsell Barrett Baxter preaching, resulted in over three hundred responses with one hundred and thirty-three baptized.

#### *Results in Two Glasgow Scotland Campaigns*

In the Glasgow campaigns the results were twenty-five baptized in the 1962 effort and thirty-three in 1964. Of the twenty-five baptized, in 1962, some sixteen or seventeen were faithful in 1964. This is not as high as we would like, but probably compares favorably with the results of our efforts here in America, percentage-wise of those baptized who remain faithful. We have high hopes that a good number of the thirty-three baptized in 1964 will remain faithful because of the excellent leadership in a follow-up program they have in Glasgow. An account of the conversion of some of these in 1964 may help you to visualize the type of persons who can be converted in a three weeks' campaign.

In 1962, Bill Collins became a personal worker for the Lord immediately upon his conversion. He led his close friend, Jim Howie, to the Lord before the 1962 campaign ended. This

year I heard Jim Howie relate his own conversion in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jim MacDonald, both of whom were baptized a few days later. The MacDonalds had shown some interest in 1962, but Mrs. MacDonald's strong Roman Catholic ties with her family formed a barrier then, although she was attending the Church of Scotland where her husband was a member. However, since they did not attend between the two campaigns, they had been dropped as poor prospects. In the 1964 campaign, my wife Margaret remembered them from 1962 and we called on them early in the campaign. As he was scheduled to have a varicose vein operation that week it looked doubtful if either would get to attend services especially Jim, as he would have to stay off his feet a week after coming home. My wife and Brother Marvin Bryant called on Mrs. MacDonald in their home and I called on him twice in the hospital.

Sitting in their living room, Jim Howie said, "Betty, two years ago I was an atheist. One day I looked into the sunset and said to myself, 'There has to be a God to create such a gorgeous sunset as that. If there is a God, I will find Him.' That very evening my friend called me and invited me to church, saying, 'Jim, I have found what I have been looking for for several years, a church that teaches and practices what the New Testament church teaches and practices. Come go with me tomorrow night.' I went with him," Jim continued to tell Betty MacDonald, "and after two nights I was baptized. These past two years have been the happiest years of my life."

Jim Howie's story made quite an impression on the MacDonalds. On the Thursday before the meeting was to close

on Sunday, my wife and I visited them. Jim MacDonald was now home from the hospital. We were studying the Bible earnestly with both of them when her mother, who is a Roman Catholic, came in. She was pleasant to us, but some tension crept over the whole group. I did finish the point I was making with Jim, showing him from I Corinthians 10:13 that one can live the Christian life and resist going back into the ways of sin and error if he tries. Turning to his mother-in-law, I said, "Isn't that right?" She said, "Yes." With that I felt it best not to pursue the subject of religion any more in that interview. Betty MacDonald seemed to appreciate our not pressing the matter in the presence of her Roman Catholic mother. Two years before, her mother had said to her, "Betty, if you are baptized into the Church of Christ, it will kill your father." (He had been suffering from heart attacks.) My wife and I left discouraged, believing that we had not made much headway, especially with Betty. That night, however, Betty walked alone almost a mile to church. She sat down by my wife and said, "Margaret, I am going to be baptized tonight." And she was. It developed that she had left her father and mother in their apartment, and just announced to them, "I am going to the services of the church of Christ in Castlemilk."

On the following Saturday night, Jim MacDonald was present at services, having been brought in Andrew Gardiner's car. Brother Gardiner is the faithful native Scottish preacher in Edinburgh. During the invitation song, Jim MacDonald smiled and nodded to me indicating his desire to accept the invitation. After making the confession he hobbled across the front of the rostrum to the dressing room and was baptized in the cold water of the baptistry. The water heaters had not yet been installed in the new building.

Bill Phillips, age thirty-eight, was a senior foreman in a canvas factory and a member of the Church of Scotland. Bill came the second Sunday night, August 23. When he was given a visitor's packet with a card to register his visit, he told the hostess that he was there seeking Christ. He went on to say that he had tried for thirteen years to find Christ, but could not find Him. The hostess gave Brother Bryant the card and the information and he went into the auditorium and introduced himself to Bill, suggesting a study after the service in the building. After an hour's study with him, Brother Bryant came back to the hotel and said, "When I left Bill Phillips, he was the happiest man in all of Glasgow and I am the second happiest man in Glasgow tonight. Bill has found the truth and I believe he will be baptized tomorrow night." He was.

Jim and Betty Hanna heard a knock on their door on August 16 and were greeted by an American campaigner. They attended and heard the preaching each night. Dale Buckley and others studied in their home with them. Jim was a bread salesman. He had been padding his expense account and his company had told him to give false reports about his product when it was to his advantage. After a week of preaching, Jim was under conviction for dishonesty. He reasoned that he could not quit this practice as long as he worked for this company. He would get a different job as soon as possible and then obey the Lord. However, by the end of the second week, after hearing the gospel night after night, Jim said, "I'm going to turn in the exact amount on my expense account and tell the truth to every customer, even if they fire me." At the invitation, however, they still did not respond. Immediately after service, the new convert, Bill Phillips, went up to them and said, "Jim, you know the truth is being preached, why

didn't you go forward tonight?" Jim Hanna turned to his wife and said, "I was waiting on Betty." Betty said, "Why I was waiting on you!" With that, Bill said, "Both of you can be baptized right now." Asking those remaining in the building to be seated, Jerry Porter took their confessions and baptized them both immediately.

We can help reach denominational preachers in campaigns for Christ. Where the sheer preaching of the gospel *emphasizes* a return to New Testament Christianity, personal work on the part of campaigners who have left comfortable homes and soft vacations for hard work shows a zeal for a cause which *italicizes* a return to New Testament Christianity.

In Glasgow, Norman Murphy, a campaigner from Abilene Christian College, handed a man a brochure on the first day of the personal work. The man came out the first Sunday night of the meeting. We learned that he was an English preacher for the United Free Church of Scotland. He has a thriving congregation and building less than a mile from our building in Castlemilk. His name was George Young, in his late forties. From then on he did not miss a single night of the meeting—nineteen nights during the three weeks, as we had no services on Friday nights. Brethren Bryant, Porter, and I studied with him. As I write this, Brother Porter is still studying with him and we feel Mr. Young is not far from the kingdom.

### *The Future of Campaigns for Christ*

Saturating a city or a community with trained workers going from door to door will produce astounding results. This has been proved time and time again here in America and overseas in the past four years. It combines New Testament zeal, fellowship, and evangelism with New Testament doc-

trine in a way unparalleled since the first century A.D. We are still making mistakes, but we are learning more with each campaign. There are still some unsolved problems. For some reason the same workers cannot accomplish the same results in their home congregations. This is understandable, however. We simply cannot work up the zeal for campaigning in places where both the workers and the church are well known. Even the Master Teacher said, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country" (Mark 6:4).

Bringing in outside workers, which is essentially what campaigning for Christ is, has several advantages over using local workers alone. *First*, there is a sense of urgency as they are there for a limited time and feel all the more the impact of the Savior's statement in John 9:4, "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." Local workers know that they can call back on a person after the meeting closes, although often they never do. *Secondly*, distance lends enchantment in securing able workers, who would not work as hard as at home. I saw people who wore corns on their feet and who stood on street corners in London who would not do the same thing in Nashville. A worker literally wore out his shoes beyond repair in Glasgow in searching for souls, which he isn't likely to do in his home city. *Thirdly*, outside workers have less distractions. They are cut loose, for the time, from jobs, from family with its pleasures and problems, and from daily distractions of telephones, schools, and dozens of other local ties we have that severely limit the time we have to do personal work. *Fourthly*, we get new ideas from new people with whom we work. Workers familiar with each other on the local scene tend to multiply or repeat the old ways of doing things, grasping new ideas slowly. On a new field, among new faces, rather than compound

our ignorance, we enrich our knowledge by being more open to suggestion to new methods and ideas being brought from workers who come from diverse sections of the country.

On assessing the value of campaigns, let me insert a statement made by Brother Marvin Bryant in his news letter from Gaffney, South Carolina, made after a week's campaign for Christ in Gaffney which followed the Glasgow campaign. He wrote:

This was our third city-wide effort since March, or in seven months. Every campaign we have helps the next one. We have now in fifteen and one-half months baptized forty-eight souls into Christ. To win men today we have got to go to them. We've got to seek out as never before to find those seeking after truth. House to house teaching must supplement public preaching to win the masses. I am persuaded the Campaigns for Christ will now be conducted everywhere and that as a result the church will enjoy its greatest growth since the Restoration Movement began in this continent. We hope . . . each campaign puts the church ahead from two to five years depending upon the number of campaigners and the length of the meeting. I know of NO greater work and I commend it to all.

Clayton Pepper, Editor of the quarterly, *Personal Evangelism*, says that campaigns for Christ is the greatest discovery in a method of doing mission work, at home and abroad, since the days of the Apostles.

Offer yourself to be a part of a campaign for Christ. One of the least expected but one of the most oft-repeated results of such a campaign is that the workers themselves say, "I will never be quite the same again. I now have a zeal for doing the work of the Lord and I will never again become abathetic."

# TO UNITY WITHOUT UNION

JOHN C. STEVENS

BORN: Richland, Navarro County, Texas, July 15, 1918.

## EDUCATION:

Richland High School

B.A., Abilene Christian College

M.A., University of Arkansas

Ph.D., University of Arkansas

Also attended the University of Colorado.

During World War II attended the Chaplain's School of the U.S. Army at Harvard University.

## MILITARY SERVICE:

Served during World War II as a chaplain with the U.S. Army participating in the European campaigns of Normandy, Northern France, the Rhineland, the Ardennes, and Central Europe with an infantry regiment.



## WITH ABILENE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE:

Joined the faculty of Abilene Christian College in 1948 as Assistant Professor of History. Became Dean of Men in 1950, Dean of Students in 1952, and Assistant President of the College in 1956.

Serves as Director of the American Studies Program for the College.

## PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:

Member, American Historical Association and Academy of Political Science.

## CIVIC ACTIVITIES:

Works with many civic groups, including the Chamber of Commerce, United Fund, Kiwanis.

Recipient, 1961 George Washington Honor Medal, Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge, Pa., for public address.

## FAMILY:

Wife: the former Ruth Rambo

Children: son, Clark (born 1950), and daughter, Joyce (born 1952).

In studying the subject, "Unity Without Union," we may well begin by defining the two terms. By "Unity" I mean the spirit of oneness exalted by the Psalmist when he wrote,

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is  
 For brethren to dwell together in unity!  
 It is like the precious oil upon the head,  
 That ran down upon the beard,  
 Even Aaron's beard;  
 That came down upon the skirt of his garments;  
 Like the dew of Hermon,  
 That cometh down upon the mountains of Zion:  
 For there Jehovah commanded the blessing,  
 Even life for evermore.

(Psalm 133)

Or again I may say that by "unity" I mean that spirit of oneness, agreement, and harmony for which our Lord prayed shortly before the cross:

Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me.

(John 17:20-23)

And, again, by "unity" I refer to that spirit of solidarity which Paul exhorted the church at Corinth to have:

Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

(I Corinthians 1:10)

Now when we speak of unity we do not mean that all Christians are going to have to agree among themselves on every question which may arise. There is plenty of room for diversity of thought, opinion, taste, and habit among members of the Lord's church. So Paul exhorts us in the Roman letter,

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling.

(Romans 14:13)

There are, however, certain essentials in which there must be unity among Christians if indeed we are to remain Christians. To the Ephesians, the apostle to the Gentiles wrote,

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to work worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Having given this exhortation to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, Paul then proceeded to list seven concepts on which there must be agreement:

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.

(Ephesians 4:1-6)

This, then, is the kind of unity we must preach, pray for, and practice as children of God.

Now let us consider the meaning of the term "union" as distinct from the meaning of "unity." Whereas "unity" means "oneness, the state of existing as essentially one," "union" refers to "a bringing together of things that have been distinct, so that they combine or coalesce to form a new whole." (Britanica World Language Edition of Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary, "Union.")

The word "union" does not refer to unity of the spirit so much as it implies organization and arrangement.

One of the great problems the followers of Christ have had to contend with through the centuries is how to have unity without union. For union can be a very bad thing and utterly destructive of unity. For instance, there was a kind of organizational union in the congregation of which Diotrephes was a member, but I do not see how there could have been much unity of spirit. You remember John's description of that situation:

I wrote somewhat unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not. Therefore, if I come, I will bring to remembrance his works which he doeth, prating against us with wicked words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and them that would he forbiddeth and casteth them out of the church.

(3 John 9-10)

Organizational union in religion means that when the people at the top forsake the faith or stray from the path of righteousness, the whole organization suffers. We should be thankful that the divine plan of organization for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ calls for no entity on this earth higher than the congregation. When Paul told Titus, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city . . .," he gave him the last word insofar as the organization of the church on this earth is concerned. No higher organization than that is authorized anywhere in the Scriptures. To be sure, there is danger in having any kind of organization—even the congregation. For it is usually true that if the elders of a congregation go astray, the bulk of the congregation will follow them in their waywardness. We know that although each of us must be

subject to the bishops of the congregation who watch for our souls, we must at the same time be fully aware that ultimately we are individually responsible to God for our soul's salvation. If we depart from the truth we will be able to find no comfort in the alibi that perhaps the elders of the congregation of which we were members led us in digression.

But someone may ask, "Why then have a congregation? Why not let each of us retire to himself and strive to do God's will and forget all about working with others?" The answer is simple. God wants us to work as a body. We could not accomplish God's purposes for us without working together. Efficiency is a divine requirement. When the inspired apostle wrote, "Let all things be done decently and in order," he was teaching us to practice maximum efficiency in all of our work for the Lord. We must not waste our time, talents, or resources.

We must first of all insist on scripturalness in every program of work which may be undertaken in the name of the Lord. Our brethren in days gone by have demanded a "Thus saith the Lord" for every essential item of faith and practice in the Lord's church. Let us pray that neither we nor our children nor our children's children will ever depart from that great principle. Even though it may sometimes seem that we could get more things done if, for example, the church was governed by a hierarchy instead of according to the New Testament teaching of congregations with elders, we know that we cannot afford to sacrifice scripturalness for the sake of efficiency. For in addition to the fact that such would be a violation of God's law, it is also true that we mortals have much too limited a vantage point to be able to argue that our way is more efficient in the long run than God's way.

For example, a little more than a half-century ago, there were members of the church who decided that the preaching of the gospel on a world-wide scale could be done more efficiently if missionary societies were organized to do the work the Lord commissioned the church to do. Their position was not justified by the Scripture, but they thought it was justified on grounds of efficiency.

Now I suppose we will have to grant that up to now missionary societies have actually sent more workers into all parts of the world than have congregations of churches of Christ which have continued to operate according to the scriptural plan. But the fact is that if and when we get a vision of our obligations and opportunities, the Lord's churches will far surpass any effort being put forth by man-made missionary societies. It is quite probable and altogether possible that with forces and energies now building up in the church, the world is going to witness during this century the greatest "breaking out" of gospel preaching on a world-wide basis since the days of the apostles. And it will all be done by individuals and congregations who are following the New Testament pattern.

But the job will never be done if we do not combine scripturalness with efficiency. When our Lord commissioned the church to preach the gospel to the world, He did not commission the church to hide behind the scriptures as a justification for not doing what He commanded us to do. This would be too much like the one-talent man who argued, "Lord, I knew that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst not sow, and gathering where thou didst not scatter; and I was afraid, and went away and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, thou hast thine own" (Matthew 25:24-25). Truly we must not be guilty

of refusing to act for fear of doing something unscriptural. At the same time we must not consent to an abandonment of the Scriptures for fear of being guilty of hiding our talents in the earth.

Probably the most glaring example of present-day inefficiency on the part of the church is in connection with the work which we call "mission work"—that is, the preaching of the gospel on a world-wide basis. About the only qualification which is indispensable to an arrangement for taking the gospel to a distant place is the willingness of a man to go and of a congregation or congregations to send him. There is no standard arrangement for teaching the gospel preacher who is to go the language of the country to which he is going or anything about the culture or the customs of the people there. We do not require that he learn anything about the religions or the philosophies he may encounter there. We may let the preacher wear himself and his car out striving to raise the money for travel to his field of work and for sustenance while there. And then after a few months or years, we may bring him back weary and disillusioned because he was not equipped to meet the problems he encountered nor did he have the spiritual or material backing to enable him to cope successfully with problems in the field.

Or even worse, the congregation may send word to the preacher working his heart out in a distant field that because a new educational wing seems desirable, it will be necessary for the congregation to discontinue support for the present. What the evangelist is to do from this point forward is a matter for conjecture and contemplation.

There are certain problems that are greater than one con-

gregation can handle. Evangelizing the world is an example. The job of preaching the gospel to the whole world is too big a job for one congregation or a hundred congregations. But it is not too much of a job for all the congregations now in existence.

Suppose now that each of the larger congregations among us should decide to take the responsibility for seeing that the gospel is preached and that the work is carried on efficiently in one of the nations or provinces of the world where the work is not now firmly planted and growing.

For example, the College Church in Abilene might announce, "We are going to do our best, the Lord willing, to see that the gospel is preached throughout the continent of Australia in this generation." Or perhaps the congregation might announce, "We shall concentrate our efforts on New South Wales and leave the other four provinces for other congregations."

Suppose at the same time Hillcrest Church should announce to the brotherhood, "We have been primarily concerned with the work of the Nhowe Mission in Southern Rhodesia, Africa. One of our elders has made a tour of that area, and we are going to do our best to keep that work going and growing, with the hope that the church can become firmly established throughout Southern Rhodesia."

And at the same time suppose that other strong congregations everywhere were choosing and announcing to the brotherhood that they were choosing to specialize in the preaching of the gospel to particular areas of the world. Would this not be a contribution to efficiency?

If, say, the Roman Catholic Church is faced with a problem like this, the hierarchy simply makes decisions and assignments and the program is implemented. But we do not have such a hierarchy. There is no organic union which can accomplish such projects. We do not want such a union. We believe it would be unscriptural and therefore displeasing to Christ, the Head of the church. What we need is unity without union.

If a congregation should, for example, announce that it is going to concentrate on seeing that the gospel is preached throughout the length and breadth of Switzerland, in every canton, city, and hamlet, what are the implications? Some of them may be listed here.

1. The congregation does not mean that it can do the job alone. No exclusive franchise is sought. If ten, twenty, or fifty other congregations want to send preachers to Switzerland, such information would be received with enthusiasm. There would be no effort on the part of the congregation to control what others might want to do.

2. But the congregation would undertake to accumulate a vast amount of information on Switzerland. Liaison would be established with the proper government agencies so that problems of travel could be ascertained and solutions determined. Surveys would be made of the country. Perhaps elders and faithful brethren who are knowledgeable concerning the country and its peculiar characteristics could be sent to "spy out the land" and report back to the church on findings which might make an evangelistic effort a greater success.

There are many works of the church which are too great for

one congregation to undertake but which can be done by many congregations working together. Unity is required but union is not.

For example, we have rejoiced in the success of the Herald of Truth. The Highland Church in Abilene is to be commended for the zeal and vision with which this great work has been advanced. But Highland could never have done it alone.

The Gospel Press is another example of a work in which many congregations could well afford to cooperate. The idea of getting the gospel before millions of readers through the advertising columns of most widely-circulated periodicals in existence is a commendable one and many congregations should be helping with the program.

The World's Fair exhibit at New York this past season turned out to be a striking success. When the announcement came that the Queens congregation was taking the lead in establishing such a project and that the cost would amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars, no doubt there were many who did not see how the job could possibly be done. But with the help of many congregations throughout the nation the work was done. There was unity of purpose, action, and achievement. And yet not one aspect of congregational autonomy was sacrificed: unity without union.

The establishment and maintenance of orphan homes and homes for the aged is another area demanding that congregations work together. The church ought to be providing more facilities than ever for the care of those who need a home. This job can be done by the many working together. We have had enough experience in this type of work to know it can be done.

There are many brotherhood needs which are larger than any congregation. For instance, there is the need for trained and qualified preachers. There may be a young man who is above average in ability and who aspires to be a gospel preacher, but whose membership is with a small congregation not able to help him very much in furthering his education. Now there may be a larger congregation a hundred miles away which could help him and see him through a program of training which would admirably equip him to do the work of a gospel preacher. But members of this congregation may feel that it is not their responsibility inasmuch as the young man is not a member of the congregation with which they work. But fifteen years from now that congregation may secure the services of that young man to preach. So whose responsibility was it to help him prepare himself for the work?

The time has come for the churches of Christ to assume their responsibility toward supplying the pulpits of the churches. A few years ago it became the fashion to say that certain works could be done only by individuals. Now it is undoubtedly true that there are many things which can be done and should be done only by individuals. But at the same time the church must assume responsibility for the work it should do. Surely the church is responsible for getting the gospel to the world. This responsibility includes being concerned with the supply of preachers.

Cooperation among congregations is essential, not just desirable. We can have full cooperation without violating the principles of congregational autonomy. There can be unity without union. There is no need to develop a competitive spirit or a

spirit of rivalry among congregations. There is so much to be done that we will never get it all done anyway, so why should there be any idea that one congregation will take over another congregation's territory?

There are several instances in the New Testament of cooperative unity. J. D. Thomas, in his book, *We Be Brethren*, lists some of these. For example:

And we have sent together with him the brother whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches; and not only so, but who was also appointed by the churches to travel with us in the matter of this grace, which is ministered by us to the glory of the Lord, and to show our readiness . . . .

(II Corinthians 8:18-19)

In discussing this passage Brother Thomas raises the question as to why such an arrangement did not violate the autonomy of the churches, and declares: "The answer is of course that they, just like today's orphan homes, were delegated an authority and a responsibility by the elders of the local churches, and they discharged their work within the province of that delegated authority for the specific assignment which they were given; and they were definitely subservient to the elders in the relationship."<sup>1</sup>

In Genesis 13:8 we read the famous words of Abraham to

Lot, "We be brethren." This is our concept of brotherhood today, too. We are the family of God, not just members of a local congregation. We are many members, but one body. We need to lift up our eyes to the greater opportunities that are ours if this great body of believers can cooperate in getting the Lord's work done. "Unity without union" is the Lord's way of getting the job done.

1. J. D. Thomas, *We Be Brethren*. (Abilene. 1958) pp. 153-156.

# TO SEE THE GLORIFIED CHURCH

DON McGAUGHEY

Don Hugh McGaughey was born September 15, 1929, in Kirkland, Texas, the second son of Caswell Ellis McGaughey and Pauline McCanlies McGaughey. His father is a minister of the Church of Christ.

McGaughey received the B.A. degree, from Abilene Christian College in 1951. He received the Masters degree in Religion from Harding Graduate School of Religion, Searcy, Arkansas, in 1957. From 1954 to 1957 he studied under Professor William Foxwell Albright in the Oriental Seminar of The John Hopkins University. In 1959 he received the S.T.B. degree from Harvard Divinity School. In the spring of 1963 he received the Th.D. degree from Boston University.

Since 1951 McGaughey has served as minister for five congregations of the Church of Christ: Aurora, Missouri, 1951-1952; Tuckerman, Arkansas, 1953-1954; Hyattsville, Maryland, 1954-1957; Brookline, Massachusetts, 1958-1963. He is now preaching for the church in Torrance, California, and teaching in the Department of Religion at Pepperdine College, Los Angeles, California.



McGaughey is married to the former Lonavene Janet Marshall. They have two sons and a daughter.

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How can we presume to speak of the glorified church? It is a monumental task. The human mind really is not capable of understanding such a subject. Language cannot carry the concept. Even the New Testament can only deal with it in apocalyptic symbols, which in itself is an attempt to describe the indescribable. We too, then, if we would speak on this theme, must inevitably turn to the Book of Revelation.

This book is of such wonderful and grand magnificence that it fairly takes our breath away. And it is altogether appropriate that the canon of Holy Scripture should close with this apocalypse—by far the greatest apocalypse of them all. The Book of Revelation is not a program of the events of history which we can unravel if we but find the key. It does tell us of the consummation of history. This is true, but to seek for a detailed chronicle of events and dates is a misunderstanding of the nature of the book. Even our Lord said He did not understand the exact dates of the end of time. We therefore should not expect the servants to be greater than their Master.

But if the Book of Revelation does not furnish us with a libretto of future events, it does call upon Christians of all ages to believe in the eternal promises of God. Indeed, it is perhaps the grandest call to faith that has ever been produced by the children of God.

It shows that the powers of this world can never overcome the purposes of God. The forces of evil will disintegrate in utter and absolute defeat. Or to put it more correctly, they have already been defeated—their time is short. Rome, and any government that sets itself in opposition to the

Living God, is but the instrument of the ancient Evil One, and in the event of Jesus Christ, he was defeated once and for all. He may yet strike bitterly, but it is only his death throes. His doom is certain, and all those who have aligned themselves with him will be judged on that day when the stars begin to fall, and the books of God are opened.

If there are any scriptures in the New Testament that cause one to honor the church it is certainly those chapters toward the close of the Book of Revelation. In these chapters John shows the conflict between the two cities, the city of God, and the city of Babylon. When we understand that Babylon symbolizes not only Rome, but any and all powers that set themselves in opposition to the people of God, we are beginning to understand something of the glory of the church.

The city of God—the holy, redeemed, lovely bride of the Lamb—the church of the living God survives all the pomp and glory and honor of any city like unto Rome. All Romes, no matter how great, have only their little day, and soon pass away.

Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great . . . .  
Alas! Alas! Thou great city,  
Thou mighty city, Babylon!  
In one hour has thy judgment come . . . .  
The sound of harpers and minstrels,  
    of flute players and trumpeters,  
    shall be in thee no more;  
And the voice of the bridegroom and bride  
    shall be heard in thee no more.

Rejoice over her, O heaven,  
O saints and apostles and prophets,  
For God has given judgment for you against her!<sup>1</sup>

God is for the church. He is on her side. This is why she is great, and this is why she overarches the decaying kingdoms of time. God saves her to be joined with her Bridegroom:

Hallelujah! For the Lord our God  
 the Almighty reigns.  
 Let us rejoice and exult and give him  
 the glory,  
 For the marriage of the Lamb has come,  
 and his bride has made herself read.<sup>2</sup>

When this comes to pass, the city of God, the eternal kingdom, the glorified church of Jesus Christ will begin its eternal days. It is with the description of the church in these eternal days that John closes his apocalypse. And as it were on tip toe, he strains to see the vision and convey it to mortal men. What he sees can only be described in his language:

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared, and the sea was no more. I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride dressed in beauty for her husband. Then I heard a great voice from the throne crying:

"See! The home of God is with men, and he will live among them. They shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Death shall be no more, and never again shall there be sorrow or crying or pain. For all those former things are past and gone."

Then he who is seated upon the throne said,

"See, I am making all things new!"

And he added,

"Write this down, for my words are true and to be trusted."

Then he said to me:

"It is done! I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the thirsty water without price from the fountain of life. The victorious shall inherit these things, and I will be God to him and he will be son to me."<sup>3</sup>

In these beautiful words, John is describing the glorified church as a many splendored city. The city is as lovely as a bride adorned for her beloved. In fact, the city is indeed the bride of the Lamb of God, and they are now to be joined eternally. John continues: "Come, and I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." (Note, "The bride, the wife of the Lamb." John pictures the bride, i.e., the church, as a city.)

Then he carried me away in spirit to the top of a vast mountain, and pointed out to me the city, the holy Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven, radiant with the glory of God . . .

Then he showed me the river of the water of life, sparkling like crystal as it flowed from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of the street of the city and on either bank of the river grew the tree of life, bearing twelve fruits, a different kind for each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Nothing that has cursed mankind shall exist any longer; the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be within the city. His servants shall worship him; they shall see his face, and his name will be upon their foreheads. Night shall be no more, they have no more need for either lamp-light or sunlight, for the Lord God will shed his light upon them and they shall reign as kings for timeless ages.<sup>4</sup>

Such is John's description of the glorified church, and such is the only way that it can be described. If the holy apostle

himself could speak of it only in apocalyptic terms, how can we do any other, but repeat his language?

But if this is the New Testament picture of the end of this age, the beginning of the New Age, and the glorified church, the question is, what do we make of it? To put it more bluntly, do we believe it? Before answering this question more directly, we must make some necessary observations.

During the nineteenth century, due in a large extent to the influence of the philosophy of Hegel, many churchmen came to feel that they could no longer accept the Biblical picture of the end time. Hegel's philosophy implied a certain concept of history, a concept of human nature, and indeed a whole world view. These implications and concepts were developed in such a way that they ran counter to the inherent concepts of history and human nature and the world view implicit in the Scriptures, and so evident in the eschatology of the New Testament. Thus New Testament eschatology was called into question. This was the position of those who aligned themselves with what was called the liberal movement, or the modernist movement. There were many strands of thought that were woven together to make up this movement, but basic to its thinking was the nineteenth century confidence in man. This was almost an unbounded confidence in man's ability, and in the possibility of human progress. Those connected with this movement stoutly believed that the elimination of human suffering and inequality was possible through the proclamation and instrumentation of the Christian ethic among all strata of human society. It was confidently believed that this could be accomplished through human effort, for man was basically good. Evil was essentially lack of knowledge and lack of humanity and love.

As a result of this, the Biblical message of the sinfulness of man and the corresponding need for a radical redemption and regeneration through Jesus Christ was discounted. Also, the eschatological message of Jesus and the New Testament was discounted. In the place of these, the liberal movement ardently and vigorously proclaimed the ethical and moral message of Jesus. Thus it was believed that the kingdom of God would be ushered in by human efforts.

Great was the fervor and the hope of this movement. The Social Gospel it was called. Many were the illustrious names aligned with this movement: Walter Rauschenbusch, Harry Emerson Fosdick, and the young Reinhold Niebuhr. Let us give these men the credit for being honest. Let us not, as we are sometimes prone to do, snipe snobbishly at this movement and its leaders. On the other hand, let us not allow our esteem for these personalities to blind our eyes to the grave errors in which they were involved. Perhaps one of the greatest of their errors was the failure to recognize that a basic problem in ordering a model society is the stubborn perversity of the human heart. A philosophy of history that longs for an ultimate utopia of happiness must eventually come to grips with this perversity.

Two global conflagrations with their human indignities and genocides opened the eyes of most advocates of the Social Gospel. Furthermore, Albert Schweitzer's *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* fell somewhat like a bombshell on the liberal-modernist concept of the teachings of Jesus. The liberals had said that Jesus' eschatology was secondary and unimportant. They had maintained that Jesus' moral and ethical utterances were the important matters. Schweitzer

clearly demonstrated that, quite to the contrary, Jesus' eschatology was fundamental to His teaching. As a result of Schweitzer's work there was ushered in a revival of interest in New Testament eschatology which has prevailed unto the present day. To many, the honest confrontation with the New Testament apocalyptic concepts was (to use Emil Brunner's apt phrase) "like a blow in the face."<sup>5</sup> As a result there followed various attempts to reinterpret New Testament eschatology.

C. H. Dodd, the noted English New Testament scholar, sought to interpret New Testament eschatology in terms of what he called "realized eschatology." Dodd felt that the early church (which was largely a Jewish church) was so greatly under the influence of the apocalyptic thinking of much of Judaism that it was very difficult for it not to interpret Jesus' teaching in terms of this Jewish apocalyptic thinking. But to do so, Dodd suggested, was a mistake. Jesus was really emphasizing the *possibility* of *realizing* the hope of the kingdom *here* and *now*. Jesus was not primarily concerned with a futuristic fulfillment—whether short or long. For Him time measurement was irrelevant.<sup>6</sup>

Now, in one sense Dodd was right. Jesus does indeed teach that in His presence the hope of the kingdom has come nigh, and it must be admitted that this theme is consistent in other New Testament books.<sup>7</sup> But to say that the New Testament writers have a much stronger appeal to the futuristic aspect of the kingdom than does Jesus, would appear to be an unwarranted statement.

Perhaps the school of thought that has most successfully advanced its reinterpretation of New Testament eschatology

is that of Existentialism. Now there are many different types of Existentialism, and one should not categorically across the board condemn all Existentialists. In one sense of the word we all are Existentialists.

Rudolf Bultmann, the German theologian and New Testament scholar, gained a wide following in his existential interpretation of the New Testament. Bultmann begins with his understanding of man as an existential creature, that is, the really deep concerns of man are those that most seriously call his existence into question—perhaps the greatest of which is death. Now Bultmann feels that man is most deeply interested with these concerns and that he has characteristically dealt with them in terms of myth. Bultmann does not deny that there is eschatology in Jesus' teaching, but he believes that the New Testament has expressed this in mythical terms such as *parousia* and *second coming*. Bultmann believes that this is precisely what takes place in the New Testament. Thus his understanding of Last Things in the New Testament depends upon his understanding of "myth," and the need to "demythologize" the language, and thus arrive at the true message.

Now Bultmann does not make light of myth, he simply feels that modern man cannot accept it as literal. Bultmann insists that modern man's world view has so changed that a literal understanding of myth is irrelevant for him. The task then for New Testament interpreters is to see through the mythical language to the essential concept.<sup>8</sup>

But precisely *here* is the question we must ask Bultmann. Can we really say that the New Testament language is

myth? Is it possible that Bultmann has tripped over the same stumbling block over which the Jewish and Greek contemporaries of Jesus stumbled? Is it possible that the Eternal God really did become flesh in Jesus of Nazareth? Is it possible that this same Jesus really was in fact raised in victory over the grave?

If these things really did in fact happen (as the New Testament witnesses emphatically affirm), then God has indeed intervened in human history in a dramatic and unique way. Why is it then incredible to believe that He will do so yet once more? This is the decision the New Testament witnesses force us to make.

But perhaps Bultmann has after all done us a favor. For he has called attention to what is probably the most serious problem of the modern age. He is stating a widespread fact when he says, "Modern men take it for granted that the course of nature and of history, like their own inner life and the practical life, is nowhere interrupted by the intervention of supernatural powers."<sup>9</sup>

Here is the creed of scientism. Here is the creed of the materialist. Here is the creed of the secularist. Here is the creed of the atheist. And here is the subtle, unconscious, growing mentality of modern man, especially modern western man.

Our task then becomes clear. The primary reason why modern man doubts the eschatology of the New Testament is that he has forgotten. Our tremendous fixation on science has caused us to forget the realm of the supernatural. Our

fabulous preoccupation with cause and effect and the question of "how" has lulled us away from the question of "why." Our preoccupation with description has allowed little time for questions of ultimate value and truth. The unbelievable contributions of the empirical sciences to modern society have caused us to suppose that the empirical is the whole of reality. If this is a correct analysis of the problem, then our task is exceedingly clear. We must emphatically assert that the empirical is *not* the whole of reality. We must proclaim the Biblical message and demonstrate the relevance of this message, And alas how relevant it is! For that message is precisely this, that man forgets. And today he has forgotten.

Today man stands in the Garden of Eden, once more seeking to become his own God, doubting his God, doubting Him at the behest of the Ancient Serpent. Once again man seeks to build his tower of Babel. But just as surely as he does, God will confound him. For this too is the Biblical message—the judgment of God upon a godless generation. Perhaps there is no clearer enunciation of this than that of the unknown Hebrew poet who gave us the second Psalm:

Why do the nations rage, and the people  
 Imagine a vain thing?  
 The kings of the earth set themselves,  
 And the rulers take counsel together  
 Against the Lord and his anointed.

But

He who sits in the heavens laughs;  
 The Lord has them in derision.  
 He will speak to them in his wrath  
 And terrify them in his fury.

Now

Therefore, O kings, be wise,  
Be warned, O rulers of the earth,

Serve the Lord with fear,  
With trembling kiss his feet,  
For his wrath is quickly kindled.

The Ancient Serpent and his allies will be brought into judgment. This is the message modern man needs. Just this, the judgment of God—God who will call the vineyard keepers into account—God who will not tolerate insubordination among His creatures.

Ah, but the rest of Biblical eschatology is relevant also. And this too is our task, to rekindle the smoldering embers in the human heart. To proclaim the message in such a way so as to strike those responsive chords in man's soul by showing how wonderfully the Christian hope is really that for which he longs.

What are the things for which modern man longs? Does man long for a better world, then let him look at the Christian message which offers a new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. It is true that he is offered some alternatives to this. Perhaps the most vigorous of these is the social utopia of the Marxists. But let us ask a few questions concerning this alternative. Such a utopia certainly shows no sign of immediate inbreaking. So what consolation is it to me as an individual to know that others will inherit that for which I labored and died? It will never be mine. I

will never enjoy the comradeship of a classless society, or sit at the common table of universal brotherhood.

But what for those who will have this privilege? What then for them? What hope will dawn on their horizon of tomorrow? Will not the great evolutionary system that brought them their utopia keep its onward march, and at last will not man's utopia pass on, and not only his utopia, but man himself?

In Edward Carpenter's poem about a little flower called the Squinancy Wort, the little flower speaks words of wisdom on this point:

What have I done? Man came,  
 Evolutional upstart one!  
 With the gift of giving a name  
 To everything under the sun.  
 What have I done? Man came,  
 (They say nothing sticks like dirt)  
 Looked at me with eyes of blame  
 And called me Squinancy Wort . . .  
 Yet there is hope; I have seen  
 Many changes since I began.  
 The web-footed beasts have been  
 (Dear beasts!) and gone, being part of some wider plan.  
 Perhaps in His infinite mercy, God will remove this  
 Man!<sup>10</sup>

But what beyond this, when at last the great driving force of the universe begins to run down, and the second law of thermodynamics runs its course? The fabulous universe slowly grows cold and dark and the icy silence of a dead world remains unbroken while the endless aeons roll on and

on. So thus it all comes to an end not (as T. S. Eliot puts it) "with a bang but a whimper."<sup>11</sup> Is this the alternative we choose? No, if there is a choice, I'll stake my chances on the possibility of the New Heaven and the New Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

But what does man long for? Does he long for immortality? Life beyond the last breath? Certainly he does! And how fervently he longs! For he dies while his sun is at its zenith. He passes with his noblest poetry unwritten, and his loveliest song unsung. Man longs to live. Perhaps it is Miguel De Unamuno, the Spanish philosopher, who has best expressed this longing of the human heart:

Is it pride to want to be immortal? Unhappy men that we are! I am dreaming . . .? Let me dream, if this dream is my life. Do not awaken me from it . . . . And wherefore do you want to be immortal? you ask me, wherefore? Frankly, I do not understand the question, for it is to ask the reason of the reason, the end of the end, the principle of the principle . . . . "Man is perishable. That may be: but let us perish resisting, and if it is nothingness that awaits us," let us so act that it shall be an unjust fate.<sup>12</sup>

Christian eschatology speaks to this longing. It speaks an everlasting "yes" to the "no" of human frailty. "I am the resurrection and the life," says Jesus, "he that believes in me though he die, yet shall he live."<sup>14</sup> And those that have believed in Him—those that have by the grace of God been united to the spiritual body of their Lord—who have become His holy church listen with rapture to the words of promise.

Then I saw the dead, great and small standing before the throne . . . . And the sea gave up the dead in it. Death and Hades gave up the dead in them . . . . And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire . . . . And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more.<sup>14</sup>

But what do men long for? What is the greatest longing of their heart? Without doubt the greatest longing is to see their God—the Hebrew Psalmist puts it this way:

As a hart longs  
for flowing streams,  
so longs my soul  
for thee, O God,  
for the living God.  
When shall I come and behold  
The face of God?<sup>15</sup>

Philip put it in childlike truthfulness: "Show us the Father, Lord, and we shall be satisfied."<sup>16</sup> Philip said it for us, didn't he? "Let us see the Father and we shall be satisfied." But modern man is not satisfied. Modern man is restless. And much of his restlessness is probably attributable to his efforts to find happiness in things. Our task is never to grow weary in reminding man of the utter and hopeless futility of this search, and to show him that his restlessness can only be resolved in the bosom of his eternal God. Even now, the pure in heart know better than all others the meaning of rest and peace—because they, as our Lord promised, have begun to see God.

But it is indeed only the beginning. For the Christian hope is that we some day shall see God as He really is. We see Him now through a veil darkly—but then face to face.

Thus we have returned full circle, for we have come to where we began. Who is that group of whom John speaks beholding their God? Is it the church? Yes, it is the church, the glorified church, the bride of the Lamb, the city of God.

And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready like a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice proclaiming from the throne: 'Now at last God has his dwelling among men! and God himself shall be with them . . . He who conquers shall have this heritage. I will be his God and he shall be my son . . . I could see no temple in the city, for the Lord, the Almighty God, and the Lamb are themselves its Temple. The city has no need for the light of sun or moon, for the splendor of God fills it with light, and its radiance is the Lamb . . . The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be within the city. Night shall be no more, nor will they need the light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will shed his light upon them. His servants shall worship him, and they shall see him face to face.<sup>17</sup>

Brethren, this is our hope. This is the coming glory of that church we so love. This is the glory that will be ours on that day when God makes up His own. Even so—Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!

1. Revelation 18.
2. Revelation 19:6,7
3. Revelation 21:1-7.
4. Revelation 21:10; 22:1-4.
5. *The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith and the Consummation* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962), p. 427.

6. Cf. *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), p. 82.
7. Cf. Matthew 12:28 and Romans 8:9-25.
8. *The Presence of Eternity* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957). For a summary of Bultmann's views on this matter (and also for a summary of other writers' views) cf. Harold B. Kuhn, "The Nature of Last Things," *Christian Faith and Modern Theology*, edited by Carl F. H. Henry (New York: Channel Press, 1964), pp. 403-419.
9. *Jesus Christ and Mythology*: New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968), pg. 13.
10. Taken from J. S. Whale, *Christian Doctrine* (Fontana Books, 1958), p. 167.
11. "The Hollow Men," *T. S. Eliot: The Complete Poems and Plays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1952), p. 59.
12. "If you were to die Tomorrow," *Approaches to the Philosophy of Religion*. Edited by Daniel J. Bronstein and Harold M. Schulweis (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1960).
13. John 11:25, 26.
14. Revelation 20:12-14; 21:4.
15. Psalm 42.
16. John 14:8.
17. Revelation 21:2ff.



PANEL DISC



# THE LIMITATIONS OF SCIENCE IN THE REALM OF FAITH

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A few years ago a Christian lady approached me with this question: "Do you have any kind of explanation to help a person who is having trouble accepting the virgin birth of Jesus?" She was not seeking a historical or biblical account of Jesus' birth

nor was she looking for a philosophical treatment of the question, but rather she wanted a scientific explanation of the event. This was not to reinforce her conviction—she was sound in the faith—but rather for a friend who refused to become a Christian because she could not accept the virgin birth of the Christ.

The conviction that things scriptural must be weighed in the scientific balance to establish their validity is not at all unique. Actually it is very prevalent among our present day youth, as expressed forcefully by a high school senior<sup>1</sup> in an address entitled "Youth, The Reformer." He states:

"The second demand that youth in the role of reformer makes is that religion accept modern science. The unanswerable proof of science as to the formation of the earth and the development of life upon the earth he accepts, and he will accept in religion only what is compatible with the accepted science he knows. Youth will far more readily believe that he is the highly developed son of the monkey and the cave man than that he is a degenerate from Adam—he would much rather be on the upgrade from the ape than on the downgrade from the first man."

This attitude is not lacking in proponents. It results from an exaggerated notion of the nature, scope, and authority of science.

What is science? To some people science is truth. If science is truth, then the validity of the scriptures must be established by harmonizing them with science. This is a position of confusion. It implies that science contains all truth and that all truth is science. This is far from reality. Over the years I have known a number of scientists and for the most part they are

basically honest, seeking truth, the whole truth. This is their ideal, but never is it a full reality. We must not confuse the ideal with reality. Truth in its popular usage has two different senses—in one sense it is an absolute, eternal correctness while in the other it is only relative, a temporary correctness. For example, I might state in truth that Mary's hair is brown and time was when this could be a correctness of considerable duration; in this modern era it might be truth only for today. Tomorrow Mary's hair may be red, or blonde, or even gray. In contrast, an absolute correctness would be a truth such as two and two are four. "It should be clear that science cannot deal with truth of the absolute variety . . . Its method is unable to determine the absolute . . . Science can only adduce evidence for temporary truths, and another term for the temporary truth is theory."<sup>2</sup>

Others suppose that science is nature. Now, if science is nature, and nature is God's creation, is it conceivable that God's Word, upon which Christian faith rests, could be at variance with His creation? Must not the Bible be made to conform to God's Law of Nature? You have heard of the laws of nature. Do you think of them as God's Laws of Nature? Of course they are not! They are man's laws of nature. They are formulations of the human mind based on human observation. They may closely approach God's Laws of Nature, but they are not God's Laws. They are man's laws. This has been brilliantly expressed by Dr. I. I. Rabi,<sup>8</sup> Higgins professor of physics at Columbia University, who said: "A scientific theory is not a discovery of a law of nature in the sense of the discovery of a mine, or the end result of a treasure hunt, or a statute that has been hidden in an obscure volume. It is a free creation of the human mind . . . but it is hardly to be expected

that the creation of the finite human mind would duplicate existing nature in every respect." No, science is not nature.

To some, science is nothing more than an accumulation of facts—cold, hard facts, irrevocable facts. If this be true, then surely our faith must be subject to trial by facts. Science is more than just facts. Professor Rabi<sup>3</sup> says, "Facts are to the scientist what words are to the poet. The scientist has a love of facts, even isolated facts, similar to the poet's love of words. However, a collection of facts is not science any more than a dictionary is poetry. Around his facts, the scientist weaves a logical pattern or theory which gives the facts meaning, order, and significance."

Sometimes the cold, hard facts of science, the so-called irrevocable facts, prove not to be facts at all. This we should expect since facts are nothing more than the recorded observations of the human senses aided by man-made technology. Can we expect our senses to be infallible? I cite the example of the human chromosome number. The human body is constructed of billions of tiny building blocks called cells. Within the cells are smaller bodies called nuclei and within these even smaller bodies called chromosomes. The genes of inheritance are carried on the chromosomes. The number of chromosomes within each cell is relatively constant for the species. This is referred to as the chromosome number. For years the human chromosome number was set at 48. This was a fact of science. But this irrevocable fact has now become revocable, because with better methods of observation 46 chromosomes are revealed. Occasionally the number may vary in an individual but variation usually is accompanied by freakish body development.

Actually science is continually changing its notions. It is not just a matter of facts at all. James B. Conant<sup>4</sup> gives us one of the best descriptions of science when he says: "Science is an interconnected series of concepts and conceptual schemes that have developed as a result of experimentation and observation and are fruitful of further experimentation and observation." Science is made up of concepts—human notions and ideas based on facts of human observation. It must not be equated with absolute correctness, but rather with a temporary correctness that is fruitful of further study and experimentation. The scientist constantly seeks truth, the whole truth, but never really finds it. Continually his concepts are being revised in the light of new discoveries. Always science contains a lot of truth but never is it the whole truth.

Science has made tremendous contributions to our society and civilization. I am almost overwhelmed by the genius behind many great scientific discoveries. But scientific concepts can never be an infallible yardstick for measuring the soundness of our faith in God and His Revealed Word. Scientific concepts are ever changing. They become obsolete and are replaced by new ones. The concepts of contemporary scientists are often diametrically opposed to each other and thus science is at conflict with itself. Can we even imagine that it would never conflict with the Word of God? "For who hath known the mind of the Lord that he should judge him?"<sup>5</sup>

Let us consider the procedure of science. Science begins with observation. This involves the use of the senses, aided by such technology as man can devise. Based on observations, problems are recognized and defined. To be valuable scientifically these must be problems which are relevant and testable. To be relevant and testable they must be problems dealing with

things material that are subject to experimentation. These are often problems of "How?" and "What?" Usually problems of "Why?" fall outside the testable category. After defining the problem the scientist then postulates a possible solution, a hypothesis. This is a type of guesswork; however, the skilled scientist generally is able to eliminate a lot of bad guesses at the very beginning. Following the postulation of a hypothesis the next step is experimentation to test the validity of the hypothesis. After a great deal of experimentation the final step in the procedure is to formulate a theory if the hypothesis has been supported by a good body of experimental evidence. This is a tentative truth. It can become an absolute truth only if supported by an *infinite* amount of experimentation. A theory which receives support over a long period of time may ultimately be called a law of nature. Even then it is a concept of the finite mind.

Now knowing the nature of science and its procedure we readily recognize its limitations. First, science is limited to the study of observable facts. These must be facts related to material things, things which we can see, feel, hear, measure. Science is limited to the study of nature and natural things. The miraculous, the supernatural, is beyond the explanation of science, but this does not necessarily negate its occurrence. Second, science is limited to repeatable observations, since a very important step in scientific procedure is experimentation. A problem dealing with one-time occurrences is not really testable by the scientific method. Third, science cannot judge values; these are judgments of the human mind, but they cannot be determined by the scientific procedure. Fourth, science cannot make moral decisions. Science is neither moral nor immoral and it does not give the answers to morality.

Fifth, science cannot deal with things spiritual or religious. It is limited to the study of the material. Sixth, science does not reveal purposes. Science reveals that man is plagued by a variety of parasites, but it cannot reveal whether man was put here to provide a home for the parasites or whether the parasites were put here to plague man. Purpose determination is beyond the scope of science.

Now back to the virgin birth of Jesus. Science has no explanation. This was a once-in-eternity occurrence and the scientific procedure makes no allowance for the study of such an event. Scientific investigation may lead us to conclude that virgin birth does not now occur, but it cannot say with absolute certainty that it never occurred nor with finality that it will never occur. Science is limited to the natural and to natural forces which are subject to perception and measurement. It cannot measure nor define the limits of the infinite powers of God.

Although science has no explanation for the virgin birth, when we consider happenings which occur in nature and which science has repeatedly demonstrated, the virgin birth of our Lord becomes not so incredible after all. Consider the colony of the bees. At least three types of individuals are present: the queen (fertile female), the workers (infertile females), and the drone (fertile male). The female bees develop from fertilized eggs, and the difference in the queen and the workers results from a difference in their diet. Those larval forms destined to become queens are fed on royal jelly; the larvae which feed on ordinary nectar and pollen develop into the sterile workers. But especially consider the males—they develop from unfertilized eggs. This phenomenon is called natural parthenogenesis. It is not peculiar

to the bees but occurs in other animal groups as well. Aphids, rotifers, and ants are also characterized by parthenogenesis. Even though parthenogenesis has not been seen as a natural occurrence in some animal groups, it often can be induced artificially by the intervention of man. Many eggs can be induced to develop parthenogenetically by agitation such as pricking them, shaking them, subjecting them to abnormal acidity or to high osmotic pressure. Sometimes stroking them with a camel hair brush is effective. Sea urchin eggs have been induced to develop this way. Frogs have also been reared to maturity from artificially activated eggs. Artificial activation has been successful in at least one type of mammal. A few years ago at the University of Texas, a group of scientists surgically removed an unfertilized egg from a female rabbit, agitated it, replaced it in its normal site of development, and achieved success in inducing an otherwise normal embryonic development. Such results seem almost incredible, but they are repeatable. They border on the miraculous, yet they do not offer an explanation for the miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit. However, if the almost miraculous can be induced by the skilled hands of man, is it so difficult for us to accept the virgin birth of Jesus as being the miraculous workings of God?

Our faith rests upon the miraculous, upon that for which science has no explanation. We must not stumble over the things of God which we cannot comprehend nor explain. Consider the resurrection. If God could not overcome the natural forces which bind us in death, and thus raise His only begotten Son, then our faith is in vain. If Christ were not miraculously raised from the dead, what hope can we have for a resurrection? Christian faith depends upon the miraculous. Ex-

plain away the miracles of the Scriptures and they become little more than science fiction. Reject the miracles and you strip the Scriptures of their power.

"For the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek."<sup>6</sup> Where is the power without the miraculous? The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit. It is sharper than a two-edged sword; but take from it the miraculous and it becomes duller than a no-edged sword. And beside that it loses its point. Can you think of anything as worthless as a no-edged sword without any point?

There are many things scriptural upon which our faith depends for which science has no explanation, but science is not an infallible standard. Some things apparently were not intended for us to comprehend. In this God had a definite purpose.

"Now, behold your calling, brethren, how that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God chose the foolish things of the world that he might put to shame them that are wise and God chose the weak things of the world that he might put to shame the things that are strong and the base things of the world and the things that are despised did God choose, yea, and the things which are not, that he might bring to nought the things that are: That no flesh should glory before God. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who has made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."<sup>7</sup>

If we could explain everything which God has done, where would our glorying be?

When it comes to matters of faith in God, we would do well to heed the words of the Apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, his son in the gospel:

"But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them. And that from a babe thou hast learned the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."<sup>8</sup>

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## THE IMPACT OF 20th CENTURY SCIENCE

MOODY LEE COFFMAN

Moody Lee Coffman was born in Abilene, Texas on 25 July, 1925, to Mr. and Mrs. J. Lee Coffman. After graduation from Abilene High School in 1942, he enrolled in Abilene Christian College. During World War II he served for three years in the U. S. Navy, but with one year of Navy schooling at Southwestern University, he returned to be graduated in mathematics from Abilene Christian College in 1947. During his senior year, he met and married Marjorie Echols, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. Q. Echols of Abilene. Two years of graduate study at the University of Oklahoma earned him the M.S. degree in physics and the M.A. degree in mathematics. Further graduate study at Texas A&M University earned him the Ph.D. in physics in 1954. Dr. Coffman has held faculty positions with East Texas State College, Texas A&M College, Texas Christian University, Abilene Christian College, Rensselaer Polytechnic



Institute's Hartford Graduate Center, and is now Professor of Physics and head of the department of Oklahoma City University. In addition he has been active in industrial research serving periods up to three years as employe and consultant to companies including General Dynamics, Fort Worth, Chance Vought Aircraft Corp., Hamilton Standard Division of United Aircraft Corp. and others; and he is currently a director and Vice-President (Research) of Acoustic Controls, Inc., of Abilene, which owns his invention for controlling reverberation time in auditoriums. Dr. Coffman has presented many papers to professional societies

in which he is active including Am. Physical Soc., Am. Mathematical Soc., Am. Geophysical Union, Am. Assn. of Physics Teachers and Math. Assn. of Am. His biography has been selected for *American Men of Science*, *Leaders in American Science*, *Who's Who in the South and Southwest*, *Who's Who in American Education* and *World Who's Who in Science 1700 BC-1964 AD*. Moody and Marjorie live in Oklahoma City with their children: Kenneth (1949), Donald (1954), Paul (1956) and Sharon (1958). They enjoy work in the Mayfair congregation of the church, where Moody serves as a deacon.

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The laws of physics do not change; but interpretation and meaning of the laws of physics, as revealed to man through experience, do change. That the laws of physics do not change is a basic assumption in science, although it is implied in Psalms 148:6. That the meaning and interpretation of laws of physics change with increased experience of the scientific community is abundantly evident through a brief review of some of the basic developments in 20th century science.

To understand the reason for a change to occur in the understanding a scientist may have of physical theory, it is essential for one to realize that a scientist bases his conclusions upon logical deductions from a basis. Just as in spiritual matters, wherein faith is the substance of things hoped for (Heb. 11:1 KJV), faith in his basic assumptions is the substance for that which the scientist hopes. His assumptions are formulated from ordinary language with rather carefully worded definitions and under consideration of the whole of experimental data. The assumptions, once they are formulated, form the basis from which predictions are derived by logical deduction; and each prediction from the basis, that

is found to be an experimental fact, increases the confidence of the scientist in his basis. His faith is increased. However, it is impossible to make enough observations to prove the basis to be true, and I shall discuss presently the 20th century discovery in the field of logic that has been recognized as a limitation of logical deduction. Therefore, one cannot rid himself of the necessity of faith in his basic assumptions; and it is in this sense that all knowledge is relative to its basis. In other words, all scientific conclusions are of the "if . . . , then . . ." type. If the basis is true, then the derivations from the basis may be considered true provided the derivations do not themselves contradict experimental data.

It is hoped that the contention that knowledge is relative to the basis is clearly applicable to spiritual matters. We assume (a) that God exists, (b) that all things are possible with Him, and (c) that the Bible is the inspired word of God. Our faith in these assumptions lead us to accept Jesus as Christ, to adopt a way of life patterned after His life, and on and on.

It will be seen that, while relativity theory may emphasize that knowledge is relative to its basis, relativity theory does not lead one to this conclusion; or else the conclusion itself would be built upon relativity theory. Relativity theory simply provides a language of communications between scientists.

It is rather the whole of knowledge and experience that leads to the conclusion that knowledge is relative to its basis. In the final analysis one must trust a basis, even if the basis

is as broad as all knowledge and experience. Without faith in the basis, there is no hope that the conclusions derived from the basis by deductive logic are true.

Now I shall undertake to discuss four important developments in the formulation of 20th century science that lead me to the conclusion that, although science is authorized by God (Genesis 1:28) to be of service to man, science has some recognized limitations which serve to keep man from knowledge of absolute truth through science. Neither can man know his surroundings with exactness; thus, he cannot find through science either the future or the past history of the universe with certainty.

The key developments, as I see them, are these: (a) the realization during the nineteenth century that Euclidean geometry is not necessarily the natural geometry of space, (b) the suggestion of Einstein that space and time are related, (c) the development of the quantum theory of matter including the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, (d) the proof of Kurt Goedel regarding logical deduction, and (e) the recognition that physical quantities should be defined by describing how they are measured, or that physical quantities should be given an operational definition. I shall give a brief review of each of these and show how they relate to the limitations of scientific knowledge.

### *Nature of Space*

The plane geometry taught in our secondary schools is a part of the geometry of Euclid, who established his five postulates of geometry about 280 B.C. Euclid convinced

those who heard him that his postulates, from which deductive geometry has come, were self evident truths. By the time Sir Isaac Newton discovered the calculus, about 1665, the geometry of Euclid was so firmly believed to be the geometry of space that Newton used his calculus to establish the mechanics of physics in what the thought was absolute space. Of course, a scientist with access to absolute space could hope to obtain absolute truth by scientific efforts.

It was not until the 1820's that a Russian mathematician named Lobachevsky suggested an alternative to the fifth of the self evident postulates of Euclid. Shortly after this, a German mathematician named Riemann invented a third alternative to the fifth postulate of Euclid. However, during the reign of Euclidean geometry, much of classical physics had been developed; and it took the philosophical approach of Albert Einstein to jar physical scientists away from the notion that absolute truth was available from Euclidean geometry. With the studies in relativity, it became evident that Euclidean geometry was not of necessity a description of "real space." In fact, at present no experiment has been able to prove which of these alternatives does represent real space; although all of them are useful in certain areas of physical science. Therefore, the theorems which are developed with one of these geometries are of necessity relative to the chosen geometry; and the given geometry itself is based upon its postulates and gives truth relative to the postulates of the geometry.

The next question that arises is as follows: does one know that all the deductions, which are obtained from a given basis, are consistent. This question was investigated by Goedel.

*Consistency of Logical Deductions*

If one could be sure that as long as no conflicting data to a theory has been found, no conflicting data would ever be found to arise from the chosen basis, then even a relative basis could gain a reputation of yielding truths that are unimpeachable except through the postulates of the basis. However, no such confidence can be had. The realization of this limitation on the field of logic was made by Kurt Goedel, a Danish mathematician, and was first published in 1931.

Briefly, Goedel was able to show in an extensive logical argument that a proof, that all the theorems which come from a given basis are consistent, is impossible if one remains within the given basis. For example, this means that ordinary arithmetic must be looked on as potentially giving rise to a theorem or derived fact which is inconsistent with the other results derived from arithmetic. Logic itself is therefore limited in finding out the nature of the real world.

By going outside the basis of arithmetic, one can gain confidence in the consistency of the results of arithmetic; but it is seen that this simply broadens the basis, and the same result of Goedel's Proof applies to the new basis.

Now there is a lesson regarding spiritual matters here. Christians can understand that God has not left logical proof that He exists, but by faith one knows of His existence (Hebrews 11:6). The last trump shall sound before it is proved that the Christian's contention is consistent with all the observations of man. Those who know God are without

excuse, because God is revealed to them through His creation (Psalms 19:1-6, Romans 1:16-25); but no logical argument will convince the unbeliever (I Corinthians 1:18-25), for man must seek God of his own will. The righteous live by faith. (Galatians 3:11).

### *Uncertainty in Science*

Just as deductive logic is limited by the fact that an unknown inconsistency may destroy the truth of an apparently true theory, physical measurement theory has come into possession of a limitation of its own. In 1925 Heisenberg published his Uncertainty Principle, and physicists and philosophers have argued among themselves ever since as to its reality. Briefly, the principle states that a position in space and a corresponding velocity of a given physical body cannot be known with certainty at a given time. If it were not for this principle, one could hope for a physics that would predict with complete accuracy the motion of physical bodies throughout eternity in both directions. One could tell where bodies were in the past and where they will go in the future with certainty. The Uncertainty Principle states that the data necessary to do this, namely the position and velocity of the body at some given time, is not available in principle. This means that no improvement in instrumentation will remove the difficulty.

It should be pointed out that even the Uncertainty Principle itself is not certain, but it must be looked upon as is the second law of thermodynamics: no contradictory experiment has been demonstrated. It is interesting to note that Albert

Einstein never accepted the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle; but his arguments against it convinced many others that the Uncertainty Principle is a truth.

The Uncertainty Principle should be no surprise to those who believe the Bible. First, it is emphasized that man is limited in that he cannot predict the end of the world which is to accompany the second coming of Christ. Secondly, judgment of the thoughts and intents of the heart is denied Christians; because it is impossible to tell from his physical actions, with certainty, what a man is thinking.

### *Operational Definitions*

The problem of communications is a most difficult one. Scientists have attempted to reach agreement on at least the method by which communications may be made. One of the key steps in the development of the method is the concept of an operational definition.

To give an operational definition of a physical quantity, one describes what operations must be performed to make a measurement of the quantity. One of my favorite examples is the definition of time. To define time, one describes what physical activity is happening to represent the passage of time. This might entail a description of a needle or clock-hand that rotates past an array of numbers, or a description of the movements of a pendulum. Having settled on a definition, the motion of other physical bodies is timed by observing how many of our defined units of time elapse during the given physical motion to be timed.

In my way of thinking, Moses gave the first operational definition of time; for he described in Genesis the physical events that took place in the first day, for example. There being no comparison clock, it is not possible to compare that first day with any other concept the word "day" may have; however, we would admit that from an operational point of view a repetition of the events described in the Genesis account of the first day of the creation would constitute a repetition of what Moses called one day. In other words, there is no physical method to determine the relationship between the present use of the word "day" and the word "day" which I take to be defined operationally in Genesis.

### *Faith in Operational Definitions*

Do you believe there is such a thing as an electron? What is your basis for this belief? An operational definition of an electron demands that a method be given for determination of its charge, its rest mass, its angular momentum and its linear momentum. From these determinations, one can put the numbers obtained into the mathematical expression of the laws of physics with the expectation that equalities will be obtained. In a sense, an electron is represented by the numbers which define its interaction through physical laws with other particles. The electron is more of an invention than a discovery; and yet, there are few people who do not believe in its existence, because those who do understand its existence have made its properties well felt through technological development and through education.

*Conclusions*

There are physicists who become highly emotional when a physicist attempts to draw some conclusion about his knowledge of physics. Nevertheless, I shall give the implications of the things I have just reviewed.

God did not make it possible for man to do all things, but placed him under the limitations of physical laws. His reason for giving man this limitation is found in the seventeenth chapter of Acts.

“He made of one every nation of men to dwell on the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being . . .”

Thus, it is clear that the limits of man's habitation, which may be looked upon as physical laws under which man must work, were established that man might realize the existence of God in whom he lives.

Man is not able to determine the future or past motion of physical bodies with certainty. Therefore, man cannot know in advance when the end of the world may come (Mark 13:13).

We must realize that God, having established physical laws, is not bound by them **Himself**. This is evident in the statement of Jesus that “all things are possible with God” (Matthew 19:26). Therefore, the situation is not unlike that described in I Corinthians 15; where Paul writes that God put all things in subjection under the feet of Christ,

but "it is plain that he is excepted who did subject all things unto him." God is not bound by physical laws.

It is clear that logic alone is not a sufficient basis for the acceptance of God; but it is equally clear that no logical basis can be given for His rejection. Jesus said those who will may come. There is no compulsion in physical laws to follow Jesus. However, the physical senses are used to acquire faith on which one can follow Jesus. Faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17). Faith comes through acceptance of the Word of God, which is obtained via the physical senses. That faith is the substance of all the things for which the Christian hopes. If one tries to prove his faith to be based upon something more firm, failure is assured just as surely as scientists are denied access to absolute truth through science.

Finally, I wish to turn to the notion that faith is evidence. Faith is "the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1, KJV). I know that the word "conviction" is used in place of "evidence" in the revised versions; but I wish to play on the word evidence. Reflect on what I said about the electron. Was it not the faith of those who understood what they called the electron that was able to convince others of its existence? By analogy, does it not follow that those who believe in God offer by their faith an evidence of His reality?

You may ask me then, why do so many scientists reject God? My answer is a quotation from I Corinthians 2:24. "The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned."

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# BIOLOGY AND EVOLUTION

NORMAN HUGHES

W. Norman Hughes was born in Nashville, Tennessee, on March 26, 1932. His childhood years were spent in Nashville and later in Crestview, Florida. He graduated from Dasher Bible School (now Georgia Christian School) in 1950. After four years at Harding College, he received the B.A. degree in 1954, with a major in general science and a minor in Bible.

He and his wife (nee Nancy McDaniel of East Point, Georgia) spent the 1954-55 school year as teachers at Georgia Christian School. During this time, he preached for the church at Alma, Georgia. 1955-58 were spent in Atlanta, Georgia, where he attended Emory University Graduate School and preached for the Union City Church of Christ. He received the M.S. degree from Emory in 1956 and the Ph.D. from the same school in 1958. His doctoral dissertation, "Hybridization and Heteroploidy in Two Subspecies of *Triturus viridescens*" was published in the *Journal of Morphology* in 1961.



His doctoral dissertation, "Hybridization and Heteroploidy in Two Subspecies of *Triturus viridescens*" was published in the *Journal of Morphology* in 1961.

Following his graduation from Emory, he and his family moved to Lubbock, Texas, where he assumed the duties of chairman of the biology department of Lubbock Christian College. He and his family worshiped at the Greenlawn Church of Christ in Lubbock where he was a deacon and his wife was active as a teacher of preschool children. During the five years he was at L.C.C., his research concerning the developmental genetics and systematics of amphibia was support-

ed by grants from the National Science Foundation and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

In 1963, he moved to Searcy, Arkansas, as associate professor of biology at Harding. He and his family (two sons, Michael and Russell) worship at the College Church in Searcy.

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I consider it to be both a pleasure and an honor to have been invited to participate in the series of panels on apologetics which is a part of this ACC Lectureship. Our topic is of considerable interest today. Most of you, I expect, have seen Rita Rhodes Ward's articles in the *Firm Foundation*, in which she reviewed a new series of biology texts which is being adopted all over the country. These texts, along with many popular books and magazine articles, are clearly, and without apology, written from the point of view that evolution is a scientific explanation of life, and as such is not to be questioned.

Perhaps we should begin by defining "evolution." In this discussion, we shall use the term to mean the development of life from non-living matter by natural processes still in operation and amenable to scientific inquiry. Further, we mean that all presently living organisms are the descendants of this first life, and that the modifications and specializations which they manifest are the products of natural forces which are still in effect. This definition makes evolution a naturalistic, materialistic interpretation of the living things we see around us.

What is the Christian's responsibility in a situation where this attitude is so prevalent? It is not my purpose to deal with

the activities or techniques a Christian should engage in as he opposes evolution. Instead, I am presently concerned with the development of a proper attitude toward evolution as a scientific theory. We also want to discuss some factual information about changes in living organisms, because the knowledge of certain basic information and the development of a proper attitude is of great importance in this matter. Unfortunately, many well-meaning but poorly informed persons have written or spoken on this subject and I'm afraid we would have to judge that more harm than good has been accomplished some of the time.

Obviously, our disagreement with the organic evolutionist is one of interpretation of facts, rather than of the facts themselves. That is to say, our difference is basically a philosophical one. Brother Thomas, who is much better qualified by training and by experience than I, will discuss this matter of evolution as a philosophy in more detail. I want to include in my remarks, however, my conviction that the difference in philosophy is the heart of the issue. We might argue and discuss details such as certain fossils, mutations, geologic strata, or the meaning of particular scripture passages for years, but if the other man's philosophical outlook is that of faith in a mechanical, purely naturalistic universe, and I believe in a righteous God who may intervene in the natural world in a supernatural way—we would never be able to come to a basic agreement. Assume that I had sufficient facts (I don't, incidentally) to disprove the current theory of evolution. In that case, the evolutionists would not become converted to a belief in creation—they would simply develop a new theory of evolution which incorporated the new facts. This very thing has happened many times in the history of biology.

The traditional fundamentalist view has been that all species of plants and animals on the earth now are essentially the same as those which populated the earth at the time of creation. It is usually admitted that a small number of minor changes may have developed—such as seedless grapes or oranges, loss of eyes by cave dwelling forms, or other “degenerative” modifications. A little thought will reveal, however, that quite substantial modifications have occurred in various domestic plants and animals. Dogs demonstrate a tremendous range in color, body shape, and size, yet all our various breeds of dogs are the descendants of the single species of wild animals (some zoologists maintain that our dog breeds are derived from two separate lines) domesticated by our ancestors far back in antiquity. To a smaller degree the same sort of descent with modification can be seen in horses, corn, roses, and a host of other examples.

These domestic species have changed, of course, because of man's selective breeding for certain traits which he finds desirable—color, size, yield, disease resistance, disposition, etc. This causes us to wonder about wild plants and animals—are there any mechanisms in natural populations that could bring about similar changes? It appears that there is a combination of two processes at work in populations of plants and animals which provides this mechanism. The first of these is mutation—random changes in the hereditary make-up. No one knows for sure what mutations are, but there is overwhelming evidence that these alterations of genes occur, and furthermore, they occur with a statistically predictable frequency. Since the genetic make-up of an individual is a dynamic, but delicately balanced biochemical combination, any al-

teration is likely to be deleterious. Hence most mutations are harmful, if not completely fatal. However, there is no reason for supposing that all mutations are bad, and whether a gene is desirable or undesirable depends to a great measure upon the environment in which the individual develops.

If a mutant gene confers some reproductive advantage upon the individual(s) possessing it, the relative abundance of the mutant gene will increase in the population. This is the present day conception of Darwin's theory of natural selection, and is the second mechanism of the two I mentioned earlier. Not the cruel, "strong-survive-at-the-expense-of-the-weak" mechanism its 19th century protagonists conceived it to be, natural selection is simply a matter of varying rates of reproduction within a population. The results of this non-random reproduction are inevitable—if certain individuals in a population are reproducing faster than others the ratios of the types in the population will change.

So in natural populations, there are two processes which can produce change. Mutation produces the variety, and then natural selection results in an increase in number of those variants whose mutant genes have resulted in their possession of some advantage in their natural environment.

Next we may consider whether or not there are examples of such changes. Actually, there are many examples. Perhaps the best known example is that of color changes in certain European moths (genus *Lymantria*). These moths have, during the past 150 years, effected a remarkable color change. This change from yellow wings with narrow black stripes to

almost completely black wings has accompanied the increasing smokiness of European cities. This environmental change *may* be the reason for the advantage in these moths being black. We ourselves actually constitute a pertinent example. All races of human beings are the descendants from a common ancestry, yet the racial differences are quite striking. I surely believe this differentiation within the human species has resulted from completely natural processes such as mutation and natural selection occurring in groups of humans living in geographic isolation for many generations.

All the examples we have discussed so far—domestic organisms, moths, and human—represent variations *within* a species. Now we might ask “Are there any documented examples of modifications which cross species lines?” That is to say, are there any species of plants or animals living on the earth today which were not present at the beginning? This question may hinge upon the semantic problem of defining “species.” I don’t want to take time now to elaborate, but let me merely say that I seriously doubt that we should equate a biological “species” and the “kinds” of Genesis.

I am convinced that there are species of both plants and animals living today which were not a part of the original creation. Let me give some examples of speciation, i.e., species which have come into being since the creation. Humans are subject to infections from a host of parasitic bacteria, protozoa, and worms of many sorts. It is inconceivable that the first humans (even after the fall) could have been infected even with a small proportion of the known human parasites. On the other hand, many of the parasites are so specific that they

would have to have been in a human host in order to survive. I can see only one solution to this dilemma, and that is that the parasitic species are the modified descendants of free living, non-parasitic ancestors.

Other examples are documented by paleontological records. In rock strata of the Silurian and Ordovician Periods (usually estimated to be 400-500 million years old) there are abundant fossils of some bizarre fish, the likes of which are not known today. The fish were of two large groups—the Agnatha, which were fish without jaws, and the Placoderms, which were fish with heavy plates of bony armor. Except for the degenerate lampreys which are the only living Agnatha, there are no examples of these groups of fish living today. In the rock strata just younger than the Silurian and the Ordovician (the Devonian) there are fossils of fish more similar, though not identical, to many present day fish. I realize fully that there are many who have serious reservations about accepting the estimates of age which paleontologists assign to some fossils. However, in our context, the actual ages are irrelevant. The relative ages are the important thing, and there is no question that the Ordovician fossils are older than those from the Devonian strata, and that the Devonian fossils are quite ancient. Either there has been a series of separate creations of different fishes, or our modern fish species are modified descendants of the Agnatha and/or Placoderms which lived during the earlier times. I think the latter explanation is more reasonable.

The matter of the geographic distribution of plants and animals yields additional evidence of speciation. Perhaps the most thoroughly studied example is that of the finches which

inhabit the Galapagos Islands just off the northwestern coast of South America. The finches on these islands are so similar to species native to the mainland of South America that there is little doubt that they have migrated to these islands from the mainland. The islands are of volcanic origin and have never been connected to the land mass of South America. In spite of the similarity of the finches on the islands to mainland species, they are not identical. Furthermore, there is quite a variety of species of finches living on the different islands. There is some dispute among ornithologists as to the *causes* of the variety, but the *fact* of the variation is very clear. If we accept the assumption that these birds migrated to the islands from South America after volcanic activity formed the islands, then we must conclude that the present bird populations are the modified descendants of the original migrants. This then becomes a clear example of the formation of new species.

Now, what conclusions may be drawn from the examples of change which we have considered? Does the fact of new species formation prove that the entire evolutionary hypothesis is true? "... it is unfortunate that the average evolutionist uses evolution and speciation as almost synonymous terms. Since speciation can be demonstrated quite conclusively, and since speciation is obviously "change" in action, anyone who questions evolution in its larger scope is, therefore, considered an unscientific ignoramus."<sup>1</sup> The existence of speciation actually reveals nothing about the nature or the source of the first living organisms. To describe a few examples (or many examples, for that matter) of speciation and then to conclude that all life is a result of evolutionary change is a non sequitur, even though this fallacy appears in many writings which support evolution.

We bring no credit to ourselves or to the cause of fundamental faith in God and his word when we dogmatically assert that all forms of plants and animals are just the same today as they were at the time they were created. As believers in the truth of the scriptures, we believe that life is the produce of God's creative work as described in Genesis 1 and 2, but there is nothing in these passages to suggest that no subsequent changes of any kind would occur. This is an idea we have read into the scriptures, rather than its being there originally. On the other hand, of course, the evolutionist must admit that our belief in creation is intellectually and scientifically valid provided that our conception of creation is broad enough to include the clearly documented changes. He must admit further that all changes that can actually be documented are within particular groups of plants and animals. The size and extent of the groups vary—in humans, the known changes are within the species or perhaps the genus if such forms as Neanderthal man are included. In other groups, broader and more inclusive classification categories (taxa) have been crossed. The fish we mentioned earlier represent groups zoologists refer to as "classes," which is a more inclusive taxon than "family" or "order." In discussing such changes, however, we can maintain strongly that there is no sequence of fossils available which would conclusively document the hypothesis that all living things are related by descent. There is no such evidence.

This matter of how to interpret the known changes illustrates well the contention that it is a philosophical difference rather than a scientific one which causes us to differ with the evolutionist. As believers in creation, we see changes within groups of living things and interpret these as being changes occurring since the creation—with provisions and mechanisms

to allow such changes as being a planned part of the creation itself. The evolutionist, on the other hand, sees the same changes within a group and concludes that this supports his hypothesis as a total explanation of life. He further interprets the fact that changes can be found only within particular groups as only an indication of the incompleteness of the paleontological record.

All of this means that evolution is quite valid as a scientific theory provided that the naturalistic, materialistic philosophical view of the evolutionist is accepted. If we were to accept only scientific evidence (that is, truth discovered by man's investigations based on naturalistic philosophy), then evolution becomes reasonable and logical. However, as a Christian, I'm not willing to admit that truth comes through scientific investigation alone. I believe that truth is (or at least, has been) revealed to man supernaturally as well. It is when man's conceit leads him to reject the authority and truth of revelation that we begin to have disagreements in our interpretation of the natural world. In the absence of faith a righteous God who has participated in the formation and in the continuation of the universe, a faith in a uniformitarian, mechanical universe is assumed. In our opposition to evolution, the attack must be made on the philosophy behind it rather than on the superficial matters that catch our attention most often.

<sup>1</sup>Bullock, Wilbur L. "Systematics and Speciation," p. 121. In *Evolution and Christian Thought Today*, R. L. Mixer, editor (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959).

# EVOLUTION AS A PHILOSOPHICAL FAITH

J. D. THOMAS

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Thomas served as Assistant City Manager in Lubbock, Texas, from 1939 to 1942, and as minister at the Northwest church of Christ in Chicago from 1945 to 1949. He has been the director of the Annual Bible Lectureship at Abilene Christian College since 1952, and is the graduate advisor for the College in the Doctrinal field.



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He has been a frequent contributor to various brotherhood periodicals, and in 1958 published *We Be Brethren*, a study in Biblical interpretation. In 1961 he published *The Doctrine of Evolution and the An-*

*tiquity of Man*. He is the editor and publisher of the sermon series, *Great Preachers of Today*, and of the funeral sermon volume, *Sorrow and Joy*. He is now writing two volumes on *Facts and Faith* which will treat the whole range of apologetics and Biblical criticism. He has written a *Self-Study Guide to Romans* and a commentary on *Romans* for *The Living Word* series.

Thomas was the 1958 speaker on the Far East Fellowship in Tokyo, Japan, and also visited and spoke in Korea, Okinawa, Formosa, Hong Kong, and the Philippines.

He is married to the former Mary Katherine Payne, and they have two children—Hannah (Mrs. Dwayne Kissick), and John Paul; and three grandchildren, David, Sammy, and Lucky Fish.

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I appreciate very much having Brother Norman Hughes, who holds the Ph.D. degree in the field of biology, to publicly state that the doctrine of evolution, as it is commonly understood, is a philosophical conclusion rather than a scientific one. My paper is purposed to show that evolution is only a philosophy, or a faith; but so many times people reject anything that a preacher or Bible teacher might say in this area just because he is not a scientist, assuming that he is motivated purely by prejudice. I am thus glad to be able to say about my thesis that a "scientist has said it," and I hope that my comments will make the conclusion more clear and understandable.

### *Limitations of Science*

In any field of human concern, an expert is a man who can determine and organize facts. However, for arriving at con-

clusions which incorporate the facts, an expert is not needed—indeed, the judgment of a layman might conceivably be better than that of the expert. In a court trial, experts are often used as witnesses to establish what the facts are, but ordinary men are used as jurors for making the decision, and it can well be that the ordinary juror would know better than the expert witness the conclusion which should be drawn, in view of the facts presented. Military men, who are technical experts, furnish the President and Congress with the facts concerning the defense of our country, but it is and should be civilians, who are not themselves expert in the details of war making, who made the decisions as to what the facts mean and what final conclusion should be drawn.

Scientists, in the fields of paleontology, geology and biology, are able to determine and organize certain facts for us with respect to matters that concern the theory of evolution. The paleontologists gave us facts concerning the finding of fossil remains. Geologists are qualified to advise with respect to dating, and biologists are counted as expert in life processes, including heredity, mutations, and related matters. Oftentimes other sciences, such as chemistry and physics, are brought to bear for particular information. The facts determined and organized by the scientists, however, must be interpreted and a conclusion must be reached. Sometimes philosophical assumptions enter into such final conclusions and actually dominate the conclusion more than do the scientific facts. The average man is capable of drawing valid conclusions about evolution if he were told only the actual facts, uncolored by philosophy.

To state our basic problem, is there a real chain of evolution demanded by an overwhelming number of facts and with on-

ly a few missing links, or are there only a few factual "links" with the larger part of the chain missing? It is the latter which is true.\*

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\*See Leakey, L. S. B., *Adam's Ancestors*, (New York: Harper & Bros., 1960) p. 159.

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It is our insistence that not enough actual scientific facts are known to establish the broad, overall doctrine of evolution—that all living forms are related by descent, having evolved by natural means only from simple, primitive life forms, which themselves arose from non-living matter. The various sciences have contributed certain facts which have been incorporated into a broad and comprehensive theory of evolution, but the theory is based more on naturalistic and mechanistic assumptions rather than upon the few actual facts. There are tremendous gaps in the needed evolutionary chain, which are filled in by faith (or philosophy). In the evolutionary hypothesis there is a problem of the origin of the first life, the solution of which is provided by faith or assumption. There is also a gap in the "chain" from the first life up to the time when we find the first fossils, and it has been admitted that this gap calls for a more-complicated evolution than the entire later period, from amoeba on up to man.\*

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\*See Simpson, G. G., *The Meaning of Evolution*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949), p. 16.

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There are also other gaps which are apparent when succeeding complicated life forms appear suddenly, or emerge, in the fossil record without evidence of their having come from previous life forms. In other words, at many points in the "chain"

of evolution there is a complete absence of necessary transitional forms, so that the overall doctrine of evolution is based more on a philosophical faith, or assumption, than on fact. In the "evolutionary tree" it is a fact that we have the "fruit" (different forms of life), but the "wood" of the tree is missing and is only assumed. This means that the basic and commonly understood theory of evolution cannot be counted as a real scientific fact.

### *Scientism*

It is well known that conclusions are sometimes made by scientists or by others in the name of science which are not really demanded by true scientific knowledge, but are only an extension from scientific observations into the field of philosophy. This practice is called Scientism. Such a conclusion is not actually a part of science, yet seeks to use the name and the authority of science to support its own philosophical conclusions. Scientism is thus not science but only a faith.

Since evolution is not demonstrable, it must be classed as scientific theory. Only when scientific hypotheses can be shown to actually work are they classifiable as "scientific fact." For example, that water is composed of two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen by volume is a scientific fact, since it can be demonstrated. That life can be produced from non-life in a test tube is, however, only a scientific theory at the present time. It cannot now be demonstrated. The actual facts about "change" which are presently known by science are in no wise adequate to support the real theory of evolution. Change does occur, but there is no knowledge of

any fact which demands the thesis that "all known life came from a common ancestor" or even that the "kinds" of Genesis have not always been completely distinct. Any final conclusion, therefore, in favor of the theory of evolution, as the common person understands the term, is not based upon scientific knowledge, but only upon the philosophical presuppositions of the person who believes the theory, and is therefore only Scientism.

### *The Known Facts*

It is easy to see that young people and others can be led to feel kindly toward the doctrine of evolution since "change" does occur and is demonstrable. When we see in the laboratory or other experimental situation that change does happen, and when any number of illustrations of it are mentioned in biological handbooks, students are certain to be influenced. This influence is also augmented by the fact that the students are not taught the philosophy which undergirds the evolutionary, but, rather, are exposed to the problem only as a scientific concern. They are probably also not made aware that the evidence is extrapolated from known areas into unknown areas, thus leading to a conclusion which is thus not scientific but an assumption. This extrapolation is the way the gaps are filled in.

When we say that it is a fact that changes do occur, we acknowledge that the principle of mutation is scientifically demonstrable. Most mutations are harmful and many produce death to the individual; however, science maintains that some

mutations are beneficial. By definition mutations are hereditary changes and are thus passed to the offspring. The present theory of mechanism for evolution is based upon the ideas of favorable mutations and of their being passed on to and augmented in the later population. Known evidence of progression of life forms through mutations and natural selection is not adequate, however, to support the thesis of "all life being derived from a common ancestor." There are no "missing links" in the most needed sense and known progressive changes are comparatively negligible.

There is also a very high degree of mathematical improbability that the mutation-natural selection cycle could ever happen, up to the point of producing present life forms. This point is admitted by Julian Huxley, one of the world's noted evolutionists:

... With this proportion, but without any selection, we should clearly have to breed a million strains (a thousand squared) to get one containing two favorable mutations; and so on, up to a thousand to the millionth power to get one containing a million.

Of course, this could not really happen, but it is a useful way of visualizing the fantastic odds against getting a number of favorable mutations in one strain through pure chance alone. A thousand to the millionth power, when written out, becomes the figure 1 with three million noughts after it: and that would take three large volumes of about five hundred pages each, just to print! Actually this is a meaninglessly large figure, but it shows what a degree of improbability natural selection has to surmount, and can circumvent. One with three million noughts after it is the measure of the unlikeliness of a horse—the odds against it happening at all. No one would bet on any-

thing so improbable happening; and yet it has happened. It has happened, thanks to the working of natural selection and the properties of living substance which make natural selection inevitable.

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Huxley, Julian, *Evolution in Action*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953), pp. 41, 42.

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Even though Huxley feels that these mathematical improbabilities have been surmounted, it is obvious that to accept the theory of evolution requires more faith than it does to believe in creation and that, indeed, evolution is based only on faith. The facts do not warrant the conclusion.

### *Speciation*

We are faced with what biologists call speciation or differentiation, which terms indicate real change within the minor groups of taxonomic categories. It would be foolish for us to argue that there never has been any kind of change. Many Bible believers are well aware that there have been many instances of change from the original "kinds" of Genesis. This fact must be recognized and dealt with. It is the basic problem that troubles most people. It keeps the naive evolutionist believing the doctrine, and it worries the non-evolutionist, for he does not know its extent or actual significance.

Speciation is not evolution. There is no change between the major taxonomic groupings, as the phyla. There are no transitional fossils known between the major classifications, and the assumption that any member of one phylum has had an ancestor in another phylum has no scientific basis. To illustrate: "no elephant ever came from a bird or an insect." We

freely recognize, however, that the different kinds of dogs came from a common parentage, and we even admit that speciation involves much more radical changes than many have supposed.

### *Summary*

There are true facts which are incorporated into the theory of evolution, but these do not themselves demand a conclusion establishing the doctrine as a scientific fact. There is such a thing as change, commonly known as speciation or differentiation (which serves as the "proof" to many biology students and to the general public), but which does not prove that "all life forms are related in descent from a common ancestor." Comparatively minor changes are real, but "evolution" is not proved a fact. There is a claimed mechanism—that of mutations and natural selection. There are mutations and natural selection *does* operate, but these have not produced any major changes of the needed type and they are not adequate to overcome the extremely high improbabilities, in order to establish evolution as a fact.

All of this means that although we cannot prove absolutely that evolution is not how life has come to its present state, there is not the slightest proof that the theory of evolution is true; and, because of the many improbabilities which the doctrine of evolution must face, it is far more logical and reasonable to have faith in God and in the creation view instead of the faith of the evolutionary theory. Faith in a "mind behind the universe" has more rational support than does "faith in a mindless universe."

# SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND THE ORIGIN OF MAN

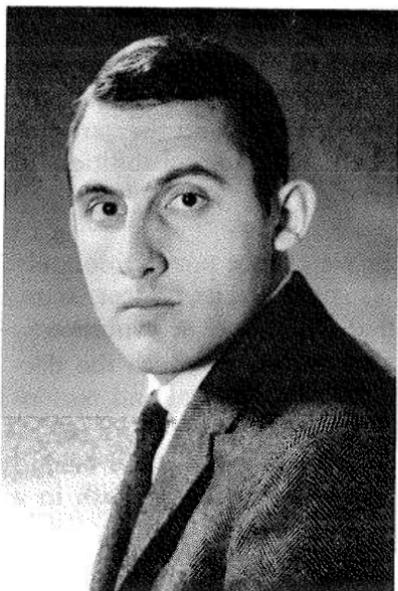
MICHAEL WEED

Michael Weed was born on November 26, 1941, in Austin, Texas. Receiving his public education in Austin, he attended the University of Texas for two years before transferring to Abilene Christian College. While attending ACC as an undergraduate, Weed was a staff writer for *The Optimist*, ACC's weekly student publication. At present Brother Weed is a candidate for the Master of Arts degree in Bible, writing his thesis on the theology of Oscar Cullmann. He intends to go into Bible Chair work.

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At the time that Darwin published *The Origin of Species* (1859) there were other important events going on in the scientific world in regard to the study of man's "evolution." At Brixham Cave in England, excavations were begun in July

of 1858 lasting until the following summer. Here were found man-made flint tools in direct association with the bones of a mammoth and other animals long extinct. At this same time, at Abbeville, France, the association of human artifacts with extinct animals was finally accepted as authentic.<sup>1</sup>



From these (and other) timely discoveries the modern science of Anthropology has developed. Using the term "history" to refer to the period beginning with the invention of writing, anthropology and related dis-

ciplines dealing with the origin of man may be said to study "prehistory." All knowledge of prehistory is dependent upon archaeological evidence of some kind.<sup>2</sup> It is necessary, however, in order to interpret the observed evidence to presuppose some sort of "working hypothesis" or model of the past which will aid in organizing isolated details into a coherent pattern.<sup>3</sup>

While avoiding intricate philosophical discussion, it should be emphasized that the hypothesis of organic evolution is programmatic to most present quests for prehistoric knowledge. It is of paramount importance to recognize that the nature of the evidence dictates the nature of the inferences that can be drawn. Often, however, inferences are drawn, not from the evidence but from the hypothesis itself, thus exceeding the proper limits of historical (and scientific) investigation.

In order to determine the significance of fossils, certain criteria are established by which they may be evaluated. Taxonomists (those who deal with the classification of animals according to morphological similarity ) make statistical comparisons of the wide variety of types within a single species. Such studies are believed to provide a morphological pattern which takes into account the amount of variation possible within a single species.

It is necessary for the taxologist to discern between genetic characters and those determined by postnatal factors (e. g., dietetic deficiencies or constitutional disturbances). Characteristics determined by other than genetic factors are not passed on to further generations and therefore are not relevant to human "evolution."<sup>4</sup> For example, the extent to which nutritional factors may affect cranial or facial proportions is

quite uncertain.<sup>5</sup>

The significance here is twofold. First, it is necessary to compare total morphological patterns (or reasonably complete) of animals in order to assess properly their relationship. Judgments based upon single criteria (e.g., brow ridges, canine fossa, tympanic plate, etc.) are not sufficiently based. Such criteria are not completely diagnostic in themselves.<sup>6</sup> Second, the amount of influence of factors other than genetic ones upon the entire morphological pattern is uncertain.

While evaluation of groups based strictly upon structural similarity is believed to demonstrate kinship, in the final analysis evolutionary lines of development can be determined only by the demonstration of an actual temporal sequence.<sup>7</sup> In this regard several methods have been developed by which it is believed that approximate ages may be discerned from fossils and the strata in which they are located.

There are only two methods of dating fossil bones directly which are in any degree satisfactory. The most widely publicized method of dating is that referred to as C14 (or radioactive carbon). In all living animals the ratio of carbon (C12) to C14 is static. Upon death of the organism, however, C14 begins to return to the atmosphere at a measurable rate. By measuring the ratio of carbon to C14 in a fossil bone it has been generally believed that fairly accurate age estimates may be made up to about 50,000 years.<sup>8</sup> In this regard, however, recent studies have shown the chemical content of bone to be extremely active and subject to much contamination. Radio-carbon dating based upon more refined methods so far have yielded dates back to about 9,000 years.<sup>9</sup> Because significant

transition is believed to have occurred long before the C14 limit, the method is admittedly inadequate in the direct dating of any possible human "evolution."<sup>10</sup>

The other test possible for the direct dating of fossil bones is the fluorine test. The mineral matter of bone has the faculty of picking up the element of fluorine from ground water. The degree and rate of incorporation varies with the amount present in the ground water, however, and is thus not a true time scale at all.<sup>11</sup> Thus both methods of dating fossil bones directly are inadequate insofar as they do not provide age estimates early enough (C14) or certain enough (fluorine).

In the dating of the strata in which fossils are found, many methods based upon radioactive isotopes are available.<sup>12</sup> In order for these methods to be useful, it is necessary that either the radioisotope itself or its parent element be incorporated in the material at the time that the material was formed.<sup>13</sup>

The source bed of a fossil may be dated by radioactive isotope methods or by correlating the bed with deposits of known age. Studies of the Pleistocene (the last one million years) deal with a period of extensive glaciation. The geological record of such a period is always discontinuous and fragmentary.<sup>14</sup> Requirements for dating human fossils on the basis of glacial and interglacial events are met only back to about 70,000 years.<sup>15</sup> As previously stated, this is not early enough to have any direct significance upon the question of human evolution.

Certain problems associated with radioactive dating should

be mentioned. Although science is bound by the principle of uniformity, it is only an assumption that the various rates of decay have remained unchanged from the past. Philosophically this is open to question.<sup>16</sup>

It is also interesting to note that when it is possible to use different methods on the same specimen, the results seldom agree and thus are called "apparent ages."<sup>17</sup> Contamination is another difficulty causing considerable uncertainty in evaluating radioactive dating.<sup>18</sup> In short, dating processes based upon radioactive isotopes rest upon many unprovable assumptions and involve methods which may be affected by unknown variables.

That the search for the "missing link" is in reality a quest for the "missing chain" is admitted by many anthropologists.<sup>19</sup> Since 1871 (Darwin's *The Descent of Man*), however, a large number of primate fossils have been discovered. Several finds have disclosed *Homo sapiens* (human) remains of apparently great age. The oldest of these fossils are the Swanscombe skull bones which are now believed to date from the Middle Pleistocene (Mindel-Riss interglacial period) or about 150,000 years ago.<sup>20</sup> Thus, those fossils dating after this time, while perhaps interesting, may not be regarded as ancestral to *Homo sapiens*.<sup>21</sup>

Only those fossils dating before the Middle Pleistocene are believed to have significance in determining lines of possible human "evolution." There are at present four major hominid groups which are believed to be represented by fossil evidence and having bearing on theories of human evolution. These four hominid types are represented by:

The famous "Java man," discovered in 1891, was further substantiated by discoveries to boost the fossil evidence to four skulls and several pieces of jaws.<sup>22</sup> Given the genus name "Pithecanthropus," further division has been made into two species. On the basis of the now lost Peking skulls, species "pekinensis" has been postulated along with "erectus (the species name given to Java man)."

Insofar as the admittedly scanty fossil evidence allows, *Pithecanthropus erectus* displays a smaller cranial capacity (about 900 cc.) than does *pekinensis*. (850 to 1,350 cc.).<sup>23</sup> *Pithecanthropus erectus* is believed to date from the Lower or Middle Pleistocene on the basis of beds in which the fossils were discovered.<sup>24</sup> *Pithecanthropus pekinensis* is believed to date slightly later.

On the basis of several small bones found in association with *Pithecanthropus pekinensis* skulls it is assumed that there is no distinction between its limb bones and those of *Homo sapiens*. A *Homo sapiens* femur was also found with the first Java discovery and on the basis of the fluorine method it is apparently contemporary with the skull.<sup>25</sup> On the basis of this evidence then it is generally believed that there existed in Java and slightly later in China a type of hominid exhibiting nearly identical body morphology and yet having smaller and otherwise less well developed skulls than *Homo sapiens*. While it is the consensus of scientific opinion that *Pithecanthropus* stands in ancestral relationship to *Homo*, it is also recognized that on the basis of the scanty evidence that such an opinion must be accepted as little more than an hypothesis.<sup>26</sup>

Dating from the first third of the Pleistocene and confirmed

by some thirty or more fragments of fossil bones is *Australopithecus* (Ape of the south). Having a cranial capacity of about 700 cc., *Australopithecus* otherwise differs from *Homo sapiens* in skull shape and (to a lesser extent) in dentition.<sup>27</sup> Definitely capable of walking erect, the limb skeleton exhibits characteristics seemingly more primitive than those of *Pithecanthropus* and *Homo*.

It is not known if *Australopithecus* made tools. Further, nothing is known as to the intrinsic nature of the brain (cranial capacity not being a criterion for intelligence).<sup>28</sup> It is believed that the present *Australopithecus* fossils represent individuals existing too late in geological time (contemporary with *Pithecanthropus*) to be regarded as ancestral to the hominid genera, i.e., more particularly *Pithecanthropus* and *Homo*.<sup>29</sup>

On July 17, 1959 in Tanganyika, East Africa (Olduvai Gorge) a fossil skull was discovered in the form of several fragments now known as *Zinjanthropus boisei* (East African man).<sup>30</sup> The first dating done on the basis of fossil animals found nearby ascribed a date of 600,000 years to *Zinjanthropus*.<sup>31</sup> This early being is believed to have walked erect, made tools (small sharp rocks were found nearby) and possibly engaged in articulate speech.<sup>32</sup> Quite odd looking by modern standards, *Zinjanthropus* displays a sagittal crest (bony ridge crowning the skull), flat skull and a rather small cranial capacity.

In order to regard *Zinjanthropus* as ancestral to *Homo*, however, certain reassessments of the time factor are necessary. Leakey postulates that "upon becoming man" (whatever this means), the rate of physical change may have become accel-

erated in addition to the rapid cultural change.<sup>33</sup> At any rate, the amount of change necessary exceeds that which would be expected by many evolutionists if the fossil be regarded as ancestral to *Homo*. The total lack of skeletal parts of the body and the fact that only one skull has thus far been discovered makes it necessary to hold judgment until more information is available.

In 1961 at Fort Ternan, Kenya in East Africa a "piece of upper jaw" was unearthed and is now referred to as *Kenyapithecus wickeri*. Although the fossil exhibits a canine fossa (slight depression about the canine teeth) similar to that of *Homo sapiens*, it is regarded as "emphatically not a man" seemingly on the grounds that no tools have been found in association with it.<sup>34</sup> *Kenyapithecus* also had small canine teeth much like those in *Homo sapiens*. The fossil is believed to be about 14,000,000 years old due to results of the potassium-argon dating process upon deposits (not the fossil itself) just above those in which it was located.<sup>35</sup>

Leakey's assertion that the fossil is not that of man (presumably meaning *Homo sapiens*) is interesting in the light of the complete absence of sufficient evidence to discern a morphological pattern from the fossil. As earlier mentioned (see page two) evaluation of fossils upon less than a reasonably complete morphological pattern is difficult if not impossible. Leakey seems to throw some doubt upon his evaluation of *Kenyapithecus* by his own words:

The presence or absence of a canine fossa is not by itself a criterion to use in assessing the nature of a skull, but it is one which must be taken into consideration with other characteristics.<sup>36</sup>

Other than the canine fossa, the only other characteristic available is the small canine tooth admittedly much like that of *Homo sapiens*. The question necessarily arises as to whether Leakey is reasoning from the fossil evidence or from his hypothesis. It would seem that the latter is the case. In any case, it is apparent that *Kenyapithecus* is not sufficient evidence to allow any type of assertion as to the possibility of the evolution of man.

In view of the above examples of "early human" remains we see that there is at present no fossil which can unequivocally be regarded as ancestral to *Homo sapiens*. Although there are "indications" on the basis of morphological similarity that certain types *may* have given rise to *Homo sapiens*, the entire premise that such similarity implies kinship is subject to question.<sup>37</sup> The scanty amount of fossil evidence and the problems associated with dating procedures accent the difficulty of establishing any evolutionary line of man's descent.

With respect to those fossils which have been discovered, several interpretations are possible to the creationist. The Genesis account provides no criterion by which man may be evaluated on the basis of bone structure.<sup>38</sup> Certainly, insofar as mental qualities for fossil man cannot be determined with any remote degree of accuracy, it would seem even more difficult to ascertain capacity for spiritual insight from bone structure.

Without considering the traditional Biblical source of the races as Noah's sons, we can accept that some sort of change or alteration has and does occur. There is no need for a Christian to insist that human forms have always been exactly the same

as they are now in every detail. While some revision may be required of the tacit concept of Adam resembling a modern Cinema star, there is no evidence that man "evolved" from some type of "inferior" or "primitive" type of being. The first man was made as fully in "God's image" as is his modern descendant.

1. James O. Buswell, "A Creationist Interpretation of Prehistoric Man," in *Evolution and Christian Thought Today*, ed. Russell Mixer (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959), p. 66.
2. Stuart Piggot, "Prehistory and Evolutionary Theory," in *Evolution After Darwin*, Vol. II, ed. Sol Tax (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 87.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
4. John Tyler Bonner, *The Ideas of Biology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 45.
5. W. E. Le Gros Clark, *The Fossil Evidence for Human Evolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 36.
6. L. S. B. Leakey, *Adam's Ancestors* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), pp. 162-169.
7. Le Gros Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
8. W. E. Le Gros Clark, *The Antecedents of Man* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1959), p. 34.
9. Rainer Berger, Amos G. Horney, W. F. Libby, "Radiocarbon Dating of Bone and Shell from Their Organic Components," reprinted from *Science*, May 22, 1964, Vol. 144, No. 3621, pp. 999-1001.
10. Cesare Emiliani, "Dating Human Evolution," in *Evolution After Darwin*, Vol. II, ed. Sol Tax (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 58.
11. William Howells, *Mankind in the Making* (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1959), p. 147.
12. Other methods of radioactive dating operate on the same principle as the C14 method (these include: U238, U235, Th232, Rb87, K40).

13. Emiliani, *loc. cit.*
14. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
16. Maurice Caullery, *Les Etapes de la Biologie* (Paris: University of France, 1941), p. 125.
17. Frederick E. Zeuner, *Dating the Past* (London: Methuen and Company, LTD., 1958), p. 28.
18. James H. Zumberge, *Elements of Geology* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1958), p. 348. Some criticism has been made of the radiocarbon method based upon the belief that organisms buried in the glacial deposits have been enriched in carbon of "recent" origin and therefore date far younger than they should.
19. Leakey, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
20. Clark, *The Fossil Evidence for Human Evolution*, p. 65.
21. Neanderthal man (*Homo neanderthalensis*) is regarded as a peripheral development of already present *Homo sapiens* during the initial stages of the last glacial period. *Ibid.*, p. 72.
22. Howells, *op. cit.*, p. 156.
23. Clark, *Fossil Evidence For Human Evolution*, p. 98.
24. Howells, *op. cit.*, p. 158.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 154.
26. Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 107.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 123.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 154-155.
30. L. S. B. Leakey, "Finding the World's Earliest Man," *National Geographic Magazine*, September, 1960, p. 424.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 434.

32. *Ibid.*
33. L. S. B. Leakey, "The Origin of the Genus Homo," in *Evolution After Darwin*, Vol. II, ed. Sol Tax (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 29.
34. L. S. B. Leakey, "Adventures in the Search for Man," *National Geographic Magazine*, January, 1963, p. 138.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 134. See also Garniss H. Curtis, "A Clock for the Ages: Potassium-Argon," *National Geographic Magazine*, October, 1961.
36. Leakey, *Adam's Ancestors*, p. 166.
37. Jan Lever, *Creation and Evolution* (Grand Rapids: Grand Rapids International Publications, 1958), p. 195. (Lever is Professor of Zoology at the Free University at Amsterdam).
38. There are at present several criteria used by science to determine whether or not a fossil was "human." By and large, the ability to make and use tools is accepted as diagnostic. The possibility of some intelligent pongid using rock tools, however, cannot be discarded.

# BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION AND SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

NEIL R. LIGHTFOOT

Neil R. Lightfoot, Associate Professor of Bible, has served on the Abilene Christian College faculty since 1958. He formerly attended Freed-Hardeman College, Florida Christian College, Baylor University and Duke University; he holds the B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees. He has written three books published by the R. B. Sweet Co. of Austin, Texas: *How We Got the Bible*, *The Parables of Jesus* (Series I), and *The Parables of Jesus* (Series II). His *How We Got the Bible* has also been published by Baker Book House of Grand Rapids, Michigan. He has been preaching for seventeen years and has done local work with churches in Texas and in North Carolina. In addition to his duties at Abilene Christian College, he is now preaching for the Eleventh and Willis congregation in Abilene.



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The subject of the Bible and science is a subject that is broad and difficult. It is a subject which poses knotty problems, and one which, even after long study, presents few clear-cut solutions. Here there is little room for dogmatic pronouncements either by the scientist or the theologian. The whole area must be approached with caution and humility, with the desire only to attain truth.

With this in mind, I would like to discuss briefly the topic "Biblical Interpretation and Scientific Knowledge."

The topic implies, I think, that there is apparently a deep-rooted disagreement between the Bible and modern science. This disagreement is not new, but has been developing over a period of 400 years. It involves not only the Bible and science, but it touches all religions and every type of religious experience. In recent times even philosophy has been called upon to give up its legitimate discipline of metaphysics. The Logical Positivists, for example, maintain that the task of philosophy is nothing more than the analysis of verbal statements. Anything more than this, according to them, is "non-sense" and cannot be discussed.

Ideally the Bible and science should always be in agreement. In actual practice, however, it often appears that Scripture says one thing and science says another. More and more it seems that the struggle that exists between the two is more than superficial. There are two questions that I want to raise: "What is responsible for this struggle?" and "What can be done about this practical conflict between Scripture and science?"

The problem that exists between science and Scripture is twofold. On one hand, there are the dogmatic scientists. These are the men who in the name of science make final pronouncements on questions that are outside the scope of the scientific method. Most of these men in the last century and a half have had, to say the least, an unsympathetic attitude toward Scripture. Of course, this is not to condemn all scientists. Some of the greatest men of science have also been great men of faith. Some examples are Sir Isaac Newton, Pasteur, Pascal, Thomas

Edison, and others. J. G. Crowther has written a book entitled *British Scientists of the Nineteenth Century*. In this book he names five men as the most eminent British physical scientists of the last century—Davy, Faraday, Joule, Kelvin, and Clerk-Maxwell, all of whom were devoted Christians. Yet it is true as a whole that recent scientists have not looked with favor upon the basic postulates of Biblical theism; and, therefore, many times they have advanced theories that at heart are anti-Christian.

On the other hand, there are the dogmatic theologians. These are the men who regard their particular interpretations of Scripture as the final, authoritative voice of God. Their interpretations are sternly rigid and inflexible. If there is a conflict between science and Scripture, science is always wrong and Scripture is always right. It never occurs to them to take another look at Scripture, to make sure what the Scriptures do and do not teach. This kind of Bible interpreter does the cause of Christ great harm.

Let us look at some concrete points to illustrate what I mean. In 535 A.D. a monk by the name of Cosmas wrote a book entitled *Christian Topography*. Cosmas had traveled very widely, had visited India and Ethiopia, and came finally to live in the cultured city of Alexandria. In his book, based on his private interpretations of Scripture, he denied the existence of the antipodes and asserted that the world was a flat parallelogram whose length is double its breadth. To us the whole thing seems preposterous. We do not believe that the Bible teaches the earth is flat. But for a long time this was considered "Christian topography."

More recently Christian conservatives have done their cause grave harm by maintaining that the Bible says the earth is only 6,000 years old. In reality, however, as to the age of the earth, the Bible is absolutely silent. It does not teach that the earth is 6,000 years old, or 60,000 years old, or 6,000,000 years old. Modern science says that the earth is considerably older than any of these figures, and the Christian should recognize that, since the Bible does not declare itself on this point, the age of the earth is no more than an incidental item of interest. Likewise, many sincere people think that the Bible holds that man has been on earth only about 6,000 years. This view, however, instead of coming from the Bible, is due to the labors of Archbishop James Ussher of the seventeenth century. Ussher, on the basis of the genealogies and other time-data in Scripture, worked out an Old Testament chronology that placed the creation of man in the year 4004 B.C. John Lightfoot of Cambridge went so far as to maintain that Adam was created on October 23, 4004 B.C., at 9:00 A.M., forty-fifth meridian time. One acute writer has suggested that beyond that Lightfoot, as a cautious scholar, would not commit himself. But it is supremely important to remember that any such dating does not rest on the Bible but on Ussher's interpretations of Biblical chronology.

Ussher's system of chronology is based on several questionable assumptions. First, it assumes that the dates throughout the Old Testament should be followed as preserved in the Masoretic Text (standard Hebrew text). However, many dates in the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch differ from those of the Masoretic Text. The Septuagint, for example, lengthens the span of time from Adam to Abraham by more than 1300 years. It may be that the Hebrew text is more exact,

but the point is that Ussher's system depends on the meticulous accuracy of the Masoretic Text at precisely the points where there are differences. Second, Ussher's system assumes that the early genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 are successive generations from father to son. This is a large assumption, for frequently in the Old Testament "son of," "father of," and "begat" indicate a broad relationship. In Genesis 46:21 the "sons of Benjamin" include grandsons as well as sons; in Matthew 1:1 Jesus is spoken of as "the son of David, the son of Abraham." So a list of a Jewish genealogy might not denote strictly a father-son relationship. Third, Ussher's system assumes that the writer of Genesis sought to record a complete, detailed chronology back to the time of Adam. But the very opposite appears to be true. The writer seems to be concerned simply with the main line of descent. This is Matthew's main concern as he records the most important of all genealogies, that of Jesus Christ. He did not attempt to give a full genealogy. He omitted three generations after Joram in order that in his list there might be the symmetry of fourteen generations separating the main periods of Jewish history. If Matthew does not give an absolutely complete genealogy, why should it be persistently maintained that the genealogies of Genesis must be complete? Close study of the ages of the patriarchs shows that Genesis itself gives some hints that the genealogies are not complete; otherwise, Noah, Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah, Eber, and Peleg would all be contemporaries of Abraham, and Shem, the son of Noah, would still be living at the time of Jacob's birth. Surely what is intended here is not a complete chronology but only a tracing of the main genealogical tree. This is why Ussher's system of chronology must be forevermore discarded. It is unscientific, it is unbiblical. The Bible, then, does not rule out the possibility that man may have

been on earth for 10,000 years or more. When this is kept in mind, if a certain city were to be dated by archaeologists at *c.* 7,000 B.C., such a date would not necessarily be contrary to the Scriptures.

I wish to mention another matter or two where we have taken positions in these regards without allowing for different interpretations of Scripture. For a long time many of us have assumed that the Genesis statement "after its kind" means "according to its species." But the Genesis word "kind" does not mean "species." The Hebrew term is *min* and means a *split* or *division*. In Leviticus 11:13-19, several birds are mentioned according to their "kinds." The hawk is one of these, and the hawk today is classified in a larger group than "species." The Genesis record says that things brought forth in their divisions, in their groups, and these groups are larger than what we mean by "species" today.

The Bible says that God made things according to their kinds. We do not know exactly what the Bible word "kind" means; but the problem is not easier for the modern biologist, for he has trouble with his groups of classification as well. God created the kinds. These are the larger groups. In these groups there may have been considerable development over a period of time. *This is where practically all of the evidence of evolution applies.* If it is granted, for instance, that the modern horse has developed through the stages of Eohippus, Mesohippus, and Protohippus, *still this would not be in conflict with the Bible.* The Bible does not teach the fixity of species! It teaches rather that God made things in their groups; and evolution has not begun to prove its case until it can produce evidence for transition from group to group.

It may be necessary for us to re-examine other Scriptures that have to do with science. As I have looked more closely, I have found several meanings for the word "day" (Hebrew *yom*) in the creation account. I myself am not sure that the six days of creation were six twenty-four hour days. There are problems here. But it is not a question of whether I believe the Bible. I believe the Bible with all my heart. It is simply a question of what the Bible *means*. What does Jesus mean when He says that we must eat of His flesh and drink of His blood? (John 6:53ff.) What does Paul mean when he speaks of "putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ?" (Colossians 2:11). These questions are decided only by interpretation.

Many apparent conflicts between the Bible and science disappear on a closer look. It is true that much of what goes under the name of science is not fact. It is also true that much that is charged to Scripture is not Scripture at all. The Bible was not written as a handbook on science and we should not expect it to make scientific declarations. Neither should we try to understand it or interpret it from the viewpoint of science. The Bible must be understood in its own light. And always we want to make sure that our interpretations of the Bible are truly Biblical.

# INSPIRATION AND CANON

## EVERETT FERGUSON

Everett Ferguson is a native Texan—born in east Texas (Montgomery), reared in south Texas (El Campo), and educated in west Texas (Abilene). His parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Ferguson, have been active in establishing churches and encouraging preachers in south Texas for many years.

After completing a B.A. and M.A. at Abilene Christian College, Ferguson took a S.T.B. and Ph.D. at Harvard. Then he served for three years as the first Dean at Northeastern Institute for Christian Education in Villanova, Pa. Dr. Ferguson joined the faculty of Abilene Christian College as Associate Professor of Bible in 1962.

During his years of studying and teaching he preached for churches at Star, Texas, Melrose and Roxbury, Mass., Carlisle,

Pa., and Princeton, N.J. He is now a deacon at the Hillcrest Church in Abilene where his wife, the former Nancy Lewis, is primary supervisor in the Bible School.



Since coming to Abilene, Brother Ferguson has been selected for Who's Who in American Education and for the Directory of American Scholars. He has published articles in the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* in England and in the *Harvard Theological Review*. He is on the editorial board of *Restoration Quarterly*, a staff writer for *Power for Today*, and has contributed articles for *Firm Foundation* and *Twentieth Century Christian*. He is a member

of the American Society of Church History and the Society of Biblical Literature.

The Fergusons have two children, Ray and Ann.

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### *Revelation and Inspiration*

The doctrine of inspiration grows out of the doctrine of revelation. Inspiration derives its meaning and becomes believable when seen in relation to a comprehensive doctrine of revelation.

Biblical religion affirms revelation. God is a Personal God, and He makes Himself known. Revelation takes many forms, for instance in God's creation and sustaining of the world. It is in the perspective of this total Biblical worldview that inspiration is understandable. Unless we share the Bible's supernaturalism we are debarred from the conviction of its authors as to what happened in redemptive history.

Chiefly revelation has taken place in the acts of God and their interpretation. God does things and so makes Himself known. Furthermore, He reveals the significance of those deeds. Revelation is God communicating Himself. To persons (human beings) He communicates Himself as a Person. Language is the highest and most effective form of

communication known to us. So the revelation must be put into language. In communication the end justifies the means. Hence, we have the particularity and specificity of revelation which seems to be a problem to many. The revelation had to be made known in human language, and that the language of a particular people at a particular time. Again, for communication to take place the revelation had to be expressed in the thought forms and within the framework of the experience of the people receiving the revelation. Consequently there is a progressiveness of revelation as God prepared men to receive new truth.

If a revelation is given, it is reasonable to expect that provision would be made for its preservation in some permanent and authoritative form. The record of the revelation would be made by the original recipients of the revelation or by those who stand in the circle of the revelation, that is by those who possess in an eminent degree the spirit of the revelation.

Inscription does nothing to modify the essential character of revelation. Writing serves to record, interpret, and apply the revelation. Here is where inspiration enters the picture. Therefore, inspiration is closely related to the whole process of revelation—in showing its meaning and putting it in a form capable of preservation. These activities also are the work of God.

Thus inspiration partakes of the nature of revelation and becomes part of the fullness of the revelation *for us*. And for this reason in Christian history often no distinction has been made between revelation and inspiration, and

"inspiration" has been used to stand for the whole process of revelation—the giving, interpreting, and preserving of revelation.

### *Biblical Doctrine of Inspiration*

The Bible claims inspiration in principle for prophecy and Scripture (2 Peter 1:20f and 2 Timothy 3:16f). Unless the inspiration is first in the person it cannot be in his writing. But the inspiration of the written record is a corollary of the doctrine of revelation.

The Scriptural claim has a right to be heard. Some truths about people would never be known unless they speak for themselves. To mention here only the New Testament claim, notice should be taken of the Jewish context in which the claim is made. The Palestinian Jews of the New Testament era had such a high regard for their Scriptures that there were prohibitions against writing out the paraphrases of Scripture which were read in worship and the interpretations of Scripture which were contained in the oral law. These prohibitions were to keep the paraphrases and interpretations from being given the same status as the Bible itself. In such an atmosphere the New Testament authors write with the calm assurance that the Lord speaks through them (e.g., I Corinthians 14:37). Moreover, there is the expectation that these writings will be read (as the Old Testament Scriptures were) in the worship assembly (e.g., I Thessalonians 5:27).

Inspiration has been the historic doctrine of Christian believers. One cannot go back in Christian history to a time when there was any other conviction about the New Testament than that which is expressed by New Testament writers about the Old Testament.

In the efforts to formulate a doctrine of inspiration there has been a recognition of two elements—the divine and the human; the origin, initiative, and guidance on one hand, and the channel, means, and instrument on the other. Efforts to relate the two more precisely have tended to lead to trouble. About many things the Bible tells us the "what" (in this case inspiration) without telling us the "how."

In determining the Biblical doctrine of inspiration we must pay attention to both the teaching and the phenomena of Scripture. Only in this way can we learn what inspiration means and how it works. Most doctrines of inspiration are dogmatic—that is, they start with a doctrinal premise or philosophical position instead of being based on Biblical statements and materials. For instance, the question of the possibility of errors in the Bible is usually decided in advance on the basis of assumptions, and then the contents of the Bible are interpreted accordingly. We must allow the nature of the Biblical materials themselves to decide the characteristics of inspiration. Certainly we are not in a position to say what sort of book God should have left us. We must base our doctrine of inspiration on the kind of historical study which we in the church have insisted upon. When we consider the plan of salvation, we have said that we must not start with some doctrinal view-point, but we must look to the examples of conversion themselves and see what

people believed and did in becoming Christians. This sound historical approach must be used in determining any doctrine from Scripture.

I may mention two characteristics of the Biblical record which may help us. (1) God has spoken through human beings. That means the writers continue to use their own idiom and personality. It also means that for the "fact" materials with which the inspired individuals work there is dependence on the ordinary channels of information (Luke 1:1f) or on special revelation from God (Revelation 1:1). (2) God has spoken in concrete historical situations. That means that inspiration does not transcend the existing stage of revelation. For illustration, one does not expect to find the Trinity or the plan of salvation in the Old Testament. In order to interpret a passage for today we must know what it meant to its author and his contemporaries.

### *Functions and Purposes of Inspiration*

In keeping with these guidelines we may note some of the different ways in which inspiration operated. Sometimes it involved a revelation of what no human being could know—as in the account of creation—or a portrayal of what was to come to pass—as in the prophecies of Christ. Sometimes it guided in the proclamation of important moral truth—as in the preaching of the prophets. Sometimes it helped in practical matter—as in the organizing of the nation of Israel. Sometimes it aided in the preservation of historical narratives. Sometimes it brought to remembrance words previ-

ously heard—as in the apostles' recalling the teachings of Jesus. Sometimes it selected for record out of many which were available and known by experience to the author—as in some of Luke's narratives. You can add extensively to this list.

The words of Scripture are not an end in themselves—they have a purpose. They point to God's revelatory and redemptive activity. Their purpose is Christological—they bear witness to Christ (John 5:39)—and soteriological—they instruct us for salvation (2 Timothy 3:15).

Even so the purpose of inspiration is to convey a trustworthy record of God's revelation to men, to lead us to humble submission to Christ, and to teach us how to live in response to this Saviour.

In the light of these purposes we can affirm the significance of plenary, verbal inspiration. Inspiration is plenary—that is extending to all parts of the Scriptures and sufficient for that part's function in God's redemptive activity. This inspiration extends to the words, which is a necessity for the adequate expression of thought (I Corinthians 2:13). This guarantees that there is no error which could nullify the utility of Scripture for the ends intended.

### *Inspiration and Today*

The Bible continues to wield a good influence, and the Scriptures continue to be used by the Spirit to produce sav-

ing faith in Jesus. These results are indicative of the sufficiency of the inspiration of the Scriptures for their intended purposes and of the trustworthiness of the Scriptures we have.

The ground of our faith is testimony, not the ability to demonstrate in any final sense this faith as true. Nevertheless the preaching of the gospel found in Scripture still produces faith (I Corinthians 1:18, 21). To those of today who want to keep the Biblical gospel and Biblical doctrine without the Biblical view of itself, we might ask, "How can an experience based on Scripture be trustworthy if the Scriptures themselves are not?" The Scriptures have the qualities of inspiration, and only inspiration could impart those qualities. There is a life-giving effect.

#### *Inspiration and the Canon*

The inspired books were authoritative when written. Canonization did not confer, but recognized the authority inherent from the beginning. But the boundaries of the canon are not the same as the boundaries of inspiration. The New Testament mentions other authoritative writings (e.g., I Corinthians 5:9 and Colossians 4:16) which were presumably inspired. The activity of the Holy Spirit among apostles, prophets, and teachers of New Testament times is hardly represented in extent by our present New Testament. The canon therefore represented a deliberate selection out of inspired materials available.

The apostles were witnesses in an unrepeatable and unique way to God's revelation in Christ. Their testimony

concerning salvation in Christ is therefore a closed unity. It would be impossible to extend the canon to writings beyond the apostolic age.

### *The Canon of the Old Testament*

Christ, the apostles, and the early church simply accepted the Old Testament of the Jews. It was the Christian's sacred book and Bible. The Jewish Bible is identical in contents with our Old Testament.

In the early centuries of the church, it is true, there was some fluctuation on the fringes. Some Apocryphal books were used, but there was never any general agreement on which ones. No two writers or lists of Scriptures including Apocryphal books agree on which ones to include and which ones to exclude. Of the canonical books, Esther is most frequently omitted in the lists given by early church writers, a book also not represented in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Apparently Christians sometimes omitted this book as not having significance for Christianity, whereas the Jews included it for its information on the feast of Purim, information significant for their religious calendar.

But on the principle that "the Jews are entrusted with the oracles of God" (Romans 3:2) non-Catholic churches have adhered to the Jewish Books. These are the only ones about which there is a high degree of historical unanimity. Not even Philo, the leading representative of Alexandrian Judaism, which supposedly had a larger canon, acknowledges the Apocrypha.

*The Canon of the New Testament*

Inherent in a new revelation and a new covenant was a new canon of writings to enshrine and perpetuate the new covenant brought by the new revelation. There was never a time in Christian history when the principle of canon was not recognized.

The canon is for us, practically speaking, a closed question. The determination of our present twenty-seven books was a historical development and we are too far removed in time to reverse the ancient judgments. However, as we compare the canon with other existing Christian literature we can only be reassured. No one today would seriously urge the enlargement of the canon. It is instructive for certain historical purposes to see the New Testament in continuity with other literature, and for the accurate interpretation of the New Testament this must be done. Our faith has nothing to fear, rather is confirmed by a reverent historical criticism. On the other hand, one does not have to have great discernment to see the great spiritual gap between the canon and later Christian writings.

Although there were doubts expressed about certain books now contained in the canon before unanimity was reached in the ancient church, there is a "core canon" revealed by history that was beyond dispute, certainly by 200 and I would say earlier. The Four Gospels, Acts, the Pauline Epistles, and variable numbers of the general epistles form this "core canon." If the disputed books should be dropped, probably no significant modification would be required in our understanding of New Testament Christianity. One

historian points out that 566 out of the 657 pages in the Greek text, or 5/6 of the whole, and that, as he says, "the most important Scriptures of the New Testament" belong in this undisputed list accepted throughout the church by the end of the second century. When one considers the historical circumstances that occasioned misgivings about Hebrews and Revelation and takes into account the brevity and lack of need to circulate the shorter epistles, adequate explanation is found for the slowness in their universal acceptance. We must presuppose the control of the providence of God working through the Holy Spirit in the actual result.

In establishing the canon the church authorities of the second and succeeding centuries only subsequently ratified the decisions already reached by the Christian communities, or more exactly the individual believers. The organized church as such did not create the canon; it only recognized it. Only from the latter part of the fourth century in connection with the closing of the canon did church authorities have any effect. And then their role was in giving a final ratification to a process already in all essentials complete.

The church, therefore, functioned as a witness to the canon. The standards applied in the second century were clearly arguments after the fact, arguments to justify already accepted results in regard to the books that were received as authoritative. The three main standards applied in determining canonicity in the second century were apostolicity, accordance with the received teaching, and wide usage in the church. The latter point perhaps deserves special attention as explaining why the canon represents a selection out of

available inspired writings. The relevance for the entire church was a significant factor.

### *Implications of the Idea of Canon*

Basically it was just a part of accepting Christianity to accept its sacred books. But the very idea of having a canon of Scripture indicates certain points of doctrinal importance. The specifying and clarifying in regard to the books of the canon which took place in the second century occurred at a time when the church was aware of losing direct contact with the apostles. So a barrier was set up between true and false teaching. This was in opposition to Marcion's reduction and the Montanist and Gnostic extensions of inspired authority. The **church** had never wished to live by anything other than that which had been delivered by Christ. To continue to do so the **church** had to set up a Scripturally fixed tradition. A canon would have been senseless if an unlimited oral tradition was to be authoritative. As one New Testament scholar points out, unless the fixing of the canon means that the **church** itself drew a clear line of demarcation between apostolic teaching and later traditions then that event has no meaning. So the principle of canon established the principle of authority; it was the act of the **church** submitting itself to a Scriptural norm.

Further, contrary to some recent liberal writing on the canon, the canon is a basis for the unity of the **church**. These writings were valid for the universal church. We are obligated to take them all, and construct our doctrinal position on the basis of the whole, rather than to work only

with selected segments of the canon. The canon does include diversity of emphases and approaches, and there is place for these in the church. But the canon also offers a unity out of this diversity.

Many of the New Testament writings are quite particular—written to very specific situations in a local church. Nonetheless the principle of canon bids us find the universal in the particular. Once more the historical nature of God's revelation and its application to human life is seen. The living vitality and perennial applicability of this revelation shows that although the revelation is historical it is not dated.

### *Conclusion*

We need to give the Bible a chance. The more the Bible is studied, that is all for the good. If it is read with receptiveness it will accomplish the purposes God has for his living word. It will produce faith and call forth an obedient response.

Charles Spurgeon is quoted as saying on one occasion about defending the Bible, "What, defend the Bible! I'd sooner defend a lion." Our need is to proclaim the gospel without human additions or interpretations. God's truth is well able to take care of itself. It will strike the right chords in the human heart.

# TEXT AND TRANSMISSION

## BILLY WILBANKS

William Lee (Billy) Wilbanks was born in Temple, Texas, on May 30, 1940. He moved to Belton, Texas, at the age of one and graduated from Belton High School in 1958. It was in Belton that he preached his first sermon in 1959.

Wilbanks attended Texas Tech for one year as an engineering student before transferring to Abilene Christian College in the fall of 1959. While an undergraduate he was a three-year varsity letterman in basketball. He graduated summa cum laude and fourth in his class in the spring of 1963.

While attending college he has held preaching appointments at Salado, Nolanville, and Blackwell. He was the associate minister for the church in Gladewater, Texas, in the summer of 1962 and in

the summer of 1963 held four meetings in the state of Washington and British Columbia, Canada. Also in the summer of 1963 he was a participant in the McGarvey Fellowship Program at Abilene Christian College.



He has now finished his classwork for the M.A. degree and is presently writing his thesis which deals with the problem of fellowship. He is serving his second year both as a graduate assistant in the Bible Department of the college and as supervisor of McDonald Hall. He plans to begin local work upon his graduation from ACC in May of this year.

The New Testament books were written in Greek within about seventy years after the death and resurrection of Christ. The original documents were probably written on papyrus in ink. These two writing materials are explicitly mentioned in II John 12. Papyrus was very widely used in this day but had the disadvantage of being a very fragile writing material. All these autographs have been lost as it is only in exceptional conditions that papyrus survives for any length of time. We do not know when or how the first copies of the autographs were made, but we do know that collections were made of the four canonical Gospels and of the letters of Paul by the end of the first century A.D. These collections must have involved a considerable amount of copying and recopying.

This discussion deals with the transmission of the Greek New Testament from the autographs to our present editions. Emphasis will be placed on the kind and number of variants that are present in the many copies of our New Testament and especially as these affect the reliability of our present editions.

Since the fifteenth century the copying of the New Testament has been done by means of the printing press, but before this it was done by the hand of copyists. It is difficult to copy any document without making errors and even the printing press is susceptible. Even after being proofread by several men, errors do occur. One curious misprint in an English edition of the Bible omitted the word "not" from the Seventh Commandment.

If misprints can occur in a printed text in spite of the various efforts to avoid them, it should not be thought unusual that errors were made by scribes who copied by hand. Until the early Middle Ages it was customary for scribes either to stand or to sit on a stool or bench holding their scroll or codex on their knees. Thus the posture and long hours that copyists spent every day at their jobs made their job even more laborious and difficult. Something of the drudgery of copying manuscripts can be learned from the colophons (notes) which are found at the close of many manuscripts. One said, "He who does not know how to write supposes it to be no labour; but though only three fingers write, the whole body labours." Another says, "The end of the book; thanks be to God!"<sup>1</sup>

It is important to understand that these copyists were not protected from error by God as they copied their manuscripts. Although the Scriptures are divine they have been handed down through the centuries by means of copyists who were susceptible to the slips of human hands. "A failure to recognize this would make it necessary for God to perform a miracle every time a scribe picked up pen and ink. And this assumption is almost inconceivable!"<sup>2</sup>

Just as a physician must diagnose a disease before he can attempt a cure, so the textual critic (one who seeks to restore the original text) must be aware of the different kinds of injuries or errors to which a handwritten Greek copy is liable. These errors may be classified under two large headings: (1) Unintentional changes (2) Intentional changes.

The unintentional errors may arbitrarily be divided into four classifications. The first type results from faulty eyesight.

Scribes would sometimes fail to differentiate between the Greek letters or skip a line or a phrase due to similar endings. Evidence also shows that copyists would pick up the same word or phrase a second time and, as a result, copied twice what should have appeared only once.

Errors resulting from faulty hearing compose the second classification of unintentional errors. When scribes copied by dictation (or even when a solitary scribe pronounced to himself the words which he was transcribing) confusion would sometimes arise over words having the same pronunciation as others, but differing in spelling (as the English words "there" and "their" or "grate" and "great"). During the early Christian centuries certain Greek vowels and diphthongs lost their distinctive sounds and were thus confused by the copyists, giving rise to several variants. For example, in Rev. 1:5 the King James version followed a text which read: "Unto him that loved us, and *washed (lousanti)* us from our sins." Since the better Greek text used by modern translators has the verb *lusanti* ("freed"), it is supposed that *lousanti* is an error caused by a confusion of a vowel and diphthong. Even certain consonants were sometimes confused and resulted in variants.

A third category of errors was caused by the scribe's holding a clause or a sequence of letters in his memory between the glance at the manuscript to be copied and the writing down of what he saw there. This practice accounts for the origin of a multitude of changes involving the substitution of synonyms, variation in the order of words, and the transposition of letters. The assimilation of the wording of one passage to the slightly different wording in a parallel passage (which the scribe knew better) accounts for many variants of this type in the Gospels.

Errors of judgment compose the fourth category of unintentional errors. Most of these are due to the scribe copying into his copy the words and notes standing in the margin of the exemplar. Sometimes copyists used the margin for corrections so it was difficult for a scribe to decide what to do with a marginal note. This is the common explanation for the addition of John 5:3b-4 (which speaks of the angel troubling the waters) to the King James version. This passage was probably originally a marginal comment explaining the moving of the water in the pool at Bethesda as mentioned in verse seven.

Most of the intentional changes were introduced in good faith by copyists who believed they were correcting an error which had crept into a previous text. Thus the scribes who thought were more dangerous than those who wished merely to be faithful in copying what lay before them. Many changes are the result of scribes making changes to bring the spelling and grammar of the exemplar into harmony with their own day. This was deemed necessary as the Greek language, like all languages, was undergoing constant change in spelling and syntax.

Other changes are the result of the copyist's familiarity with other passages of the Bible. Scribes usually knew by memory extensive portions of the Scriptures and the temptation to harmonize discordant parallels or quotations would be strong in proportion to the degree of the copyist's familiarity with other passages. For example, the shorter form of the Lord's prayer in Luke 11:2-4 was assimilated in many copies of Luke to agree with the longer form in Matthew 6:9-13. Frequently Old Testament quotations were enlarged from the Old Testament context or were made to conform more closely to the Septuagint wording.

The work of copyists in the rounding off of phrases is apparent in many passages. For example, many copyists found it hard to copy the phrase, "Your Father who sees in secret will reward you" without adding the word "openly" at the end.

Another type of intentional change was introduced to clear up historical and geographical difficulties. For example, a few scribes attempted to harmonize John's account of the chronology of the crucifixion with that in Mark by changing "sixth hour" of John 19:14 to "third hour" which appears in Mark 15:25. Also in the earlier manuscripts of Mark 1:2 the composite quotation from Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3 is introduced by the words, "As it is written in Isaiah the prophet." Later scribes, seeing this difficulty, replaced the aforementioned introduction with the words, "in the prophets."

Sometimes a scribe as he copied would have two or more manuscripts before him as exemplars. When he found two or more different readings in his exemplars, he would often copy both or all of them so as to remove the possibility of omitting the genuine reading. This type of reading is called a conflated reading and is characteristic of the text that lies behind the King James version. In some early manuscripts Luke 24:53 says that the disciples "were continually in the temple *blessing* God." (RSV). Others read, "were continually in the temple *praising* God." Rather than choose between the two, later scribes took the safest route and combined the readings. Thus the King James version, which is based on later Greek manuscripts, reads: "were continually in the temple *praising and blessing* God."

There is some evidence of deliberate alterations made in the interests of doctrine. Some scribes seeing the apparent discrepancy between Jesus' declaration in John 7:8 ("I am not going up to the feast") and John's statement in 7:10 ("But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up"), changed 7:8 so as to read, "I am not *yet* going up." Also, due to the increasing emphasis on asceticism in the early church and the corresponding insistence upon fasting, several additions to the text mention fasting (as in Mark 9:29 and Acts 10:30).

However, lest the foregoing examples of alterations should leave the impression that copyists were negligent and thought nothing of deliberately changing the text, it ought to be noted that other evidence points to the careful and painstaking work on the part of many faithful copyists. There are, for example, instances of difficult readings which have been transmitted with scrupulous fidelity. This evidence should serve to counterbalance the impression which the discussion of variants might otherwise leave.

Some critics have made the claim that there are 200,000 errors in the New Testament text and that, therefore, we can never be sure that we have the original New Testament message. This large number is gained by counting all the variations in all of the manuscripts (now about 5,000). For example, if one word is misspelled in 4,000 different manuscripts, it is counted as 4,000 errors. Out of the many variants there arises the problem as to how the correct reading may be determined.

The science of Textual Criticism seeks to counteract inevitable scribal errors and recover the true form of the text. Its

basic maxim is: "Choose the reading which best explains the origin of the others." This basic criterion involves three leading principles which guide the textual critic as he seeks to restore the text of the New Testament.

- (1) The quality of the external evidence is more important than the quantity. For example 4,000 later manuscripts are not counted as heavily as even two or three of the very oldest.
- (2) The more difficult reading is to be preferred. Scribes tended to smooth over the rough places, so the most difficult reading best explains the origin of the others.
- (3) The different reading in parallel passages is usually the reliable one.<sup>3</sup>

The modern Greek texts which underlie our modern English translations are reconstructed or restored texts. In other words, our Greek text today is not based on only one manuscript, but on all of the manuscripts, early versions, quotations of the church fathers, and some early fragmentary papyri. This text has been reconstructed using basically the three previously mentioned principles of textual criticism. Sometimes the evidence is very conclusive, but at other times the evidence is divided. For example, the evidence is strongly against I John 5:7, Acts 8:37, John 5:3b-4, and John 7:53-8:11 as original readings even though all these passages are found in the King James version.

There are other cases in which the evidence is divided and thus a positive declaration cannot be made. Mark 16:9-20 con-

stitutes one of these disputed passages. The evidence against the genuineness of this passage rests primarily on its exclusion from the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts. These two manuscripts of the fourth century are our very best manuscripts and thus their witness counts heavily with textual critics. Almost all of the other evidence supports the passage.

The variant readings in the manuscripts are not of such a nature that they threaten to overthrow our faith. The teaching contained in Mark 16:9-20 can be found elsewhere in the Gospels.

Some might be disturbed by the large number of variants present in the New Testament manuscripts. However, this large number of variants exists due to the large number of manuscripts which we possess. If we had only ten New Testament manuscripts, the total number of variants would be small. But then the New Testament text would not stand on as sound a ground as it otherwise does. Thus even though the large number of manuscripts increases the total number of variants, it provides at the same time the means of checking them.

In conclusion, the question naturally arises as to how well textual critics have restored the words of the New Testament as they were written in the autographs. The following quotations taken from outstanding authorities in the field of Textual Criticism should calm the doubts of Christians.

Ira M. Price says: "Only 400 or so of the 150,000 variants materially affect the sense, and of these perhaps 50 are of real significance. But no essential teaching of the New Testament is greatly affected by them."<sup>4</sup>

Westcott and Hort say: "The proportion of words virtually accepted on all hands as raised above doubt is very great, not less, on a rough computation, than seven-eighths of the whole. The remaining eighth, therefore, formed in great part by changes of order and other comparative trivialities, constitutes the whole area of criticism . . . the amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation is but a small fraction of the whole residuary variation, and can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text. Since there is reason to suspect that an exaggerated impression prevails as to the extent of possible textual corruption in the New Testament . . . we desire to make it clearly understood beforehand how much of the New Testament stands in no need of a textual critic's labours."<sup>5</sup>

F. G. Kenyon said: "The interval then between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the *authenticity* and the *general integrity* of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established."<sup>6</sup>

And finally, lest some Christian be concerned about the changes in the Revised Standard version from the more commonly read and accepted King James version, F. C. Grant says: "It will be obvious to the careful reader that still in 1946, as in 1881 and 1901, no doctrine of the Christian faith has been affected by the revision, for the simple reason that, out of the thousands of variant readings in the manuscripts, none has turned up thus far that requires a revision of Christian doctrine."<sup>7</sup>

## FOOTNOTES

1. Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 17-18.
2. Neil R. Lightfoot, *How We Got the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1963), p. 53.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
4. Ira Maurice Price, *The Ancestry of Our English Bible* (New York: Harper & Bros. Publishers, 1956), p. 222.
5. B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek. Introduction and Appendix* (Cambridge: University Press, 1881), p. 2-3.
6. F. G. Kenyon, *The Bible and Archaeology* (London: George G. Harrap & Co. 1940), p. 228f.
7. F. C. Grant, *An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament* (Chicago: International Council of Religious Education, 1946), p. 42.