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THE THREAT TO AMERICA

BY W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

In the land of the giant redwoods there lies a fallen forest monarch. Once it stood stately and erect, reaching huge arms toward the friendly sun. It withstood successfully the stabbing fingers of lightning from the lowering storm clouds. The raging infernos which swept over the ground crumbling lesser trees in a red maw of flame could do no more than halt it for a few decades. Through the centuries it remained verdant and growing, one of earth's oldest living things. But now the mighty king lies prostrate and dead. What the lashing elements could not do was done by tiny insects working in the dark, gnawing at the heart, rotting the core. No mighty power from without wrought the devastation. It was the stealthy, creeping destruction of the inner fibers which brought the crash.

Let this be a warning to America! Her proud head is lifted among the nations of the earth. Her planes fill the sky, her ships go unchallenged across the heaving oceans, her armies echo their tread in many parts of the earth. But America is in grave danger! She is falling apart at the seams—the moral seams. This is not the ranting of a religious fanatic, nor the raving of a morbid pessimist. What I'm saying is blunt truth substantiated by men of the highest caliber in our national life.

J. Edgar Hoover, famous director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, testified before the Senate Appropriations Committee, on August 22. He attributed college athletic scandals and youthful hoodlumism in large cities to "a breakdown of the moral fiber of the country." He declared that the tendency of youths to "more or less break away from controls and from discipline" also extends into colleges, citing the atrocious crimes committed in the name of victory at athletic events. He designated certain fraternity initiations as "sadistic."

On the following day, Reiman Morin, of New York, in a syndicated article declared: "The broken home where it involves children or young adults has become a national disaster. It is the largest single factor today in the background of youthful crime, narcotics addiction, sex aberrations and all the

thousand-and-one different instances of behavior by young people that crowd police files."

The author says that 25 years ago criminologists listed "bad companions" as the major cause of juvenile delinquency. Now the notation "broken home" has far surpassed all other elements. Broken homes are producing broken lives and broken minds. Young adults are the largest single group receiving mental and psychiatric assistance in America today. At the Austin Riggs Foundation in Massachusetts, an official said the majority there were between 20 and 29 years of age. In New York's Morisania Hospital the same bracket obtains.

"Probation officers call the broken home a tragedy, and find it the chief element in the background of youthful law-breaking. Irving W. Halpern, a New York officer, listed a series of causes for the troubles of young people, among them bad housing, lurid news reporting, lurid movies, comic books, etc." It is interesting to note thus the effect of radio, movies and the comics on the problem, and saddening to see members of the church allow their children to sit under the spell of all three uncensored. Those who are careful to put physical poison out of the reach of their children, place mental poison in their grasp.

In Lancaster county, Penn., Edgar R. Barnes, a veteran of 21 years in probation work, said: "Most of these youngsters are basically all right. They will take discipline if they get it. There is still an awful lot of child psychology in the end of a razor strap held by a strong father or mother."

What is responsible for so many broken homes? On the same day the above article was released, the United Press carried this dispatch: "The South African Dutch Reformed Church said today that 75 per cent of today's divorces begin on the dance floor. The memorandum blamed 'sex stimulation' in modern dances for causing divorces. Among unmarried persons, it said, dancing degrades man to the level of animals and stands condemned in the light of Christian ethics."

What can we do to stem the tide of dissolution which threatens us? That we cannot sit idly by with hands folded in supine surrender and ignorant indolence must certainly be admitted by every serious person. We submit very humbly a few suggestions, and ask your earnest consideration of them.

1. Fathers and mothers must assume their Christian obligation to "Provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." This entails a revival of discipline. Parents must assert their authority and make it stick. They must first conduct themselves in a manner deserving respect, and then demand it. The idea of letting a six-year-old boy tell his father he is not going to do a thing when told to do it is ridiculous. Both parents must learn to work together and not at cross-purposes. When one parent chastises a child, the other must not sympathize with the child. To do so is subversive of all training.

2. The word of God must be taught to children until they learn to love it and desire it. An appreciation of good literature can be instilled in youthful hearts as easily as a taste for the lurid. I know a little five-year-old girl whose major diet consists of candy bars and soda pop. It's a morbid appetite which will undermine her physical health, but her indulgent mama says, "We always have let her have what she wanted." How silly and senseless. As if a mere infant can choose a well-proportioned diet. Just so, parents should guard and guide the mental cravings of their offspring. Most members of the church want their children to know the Bible, but they want someone else to teach them. It's silly to think that a little two-week Vacation Bible Study or a brief session each Sunday will fortify your child against disease of the heart. Besides, God didn't authorize you to shift the responsibility for the welfare of your offspring to Sunday school teachers.

3. The church has to crack down on sin, and reveal it in all of its hideousness. Most of the talks today are watered down pap which any sectarian could preach. Little peanut-sized capsules of practical psychology will not save humanity. There's been a noticeable tendency to dress sin up until it sparkles, and cool hell off until it no longer sears and singes. These pussy-footing, worldly-minded, "goosey, goosey gander, whither dost thou wander," half-converted church members need to be given the shock treatment until the fear of God raises goose pimples on their thick hides and their teeth rattle! We need less thunder and more lightning on the speaker's platform. Why carry along a batch of excess baggage in the form of fence-straddling hypocrites who aren't going to be saved anyway? You cannot defeat Satan by firing a load of Super-X cream puffs in his general direction! God



doesn't use "high society talk" when he levels down on backsliding with the "dog returning to his own vomit" comparison.

There are too many fuddy-duddies trying to preach by prescribing sugar-coated pills of their own compounding. But sin is not pleasant. It isn't scented with lilac cologne nor perfumed with attar of roses. It stinks! And cleaning sewers isn't a job to go at dressed up in kid gloves—not even moral sewers! The church is getting powerless because it doesn't stand for anything, and

falls for about everything! Time is running out for our nation. It may be later than you think. Let's meet the challenge of this hour. Let's get back to God—in our hearts, our homes and our hopes. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts" (Jer. 2: 19). God hasn't changed his attitude toward sin.

EXTENDING OUR HORIZONS

BY ROY LONEY

It is doubtful if our Savior ever made a statement less understood or more deliberately ignored by his professed disciples than the five simple words "The field is the world" (Matt. 13: 38). He had just taught the parable of the tares. When his disciples asked an explanation, he first mentioned the good seed, the word of God, then told them where that seed was to be sown, throughout the whole world, among all tribes and races of men. His was, and still is, a universal gospel, applicable alike to red, brown, black, white and yellow men. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." He, who made of one blood all nations of men, has just one gospel. It is for all mankind! The crude, naked savage in equatorial Africa and the cultured college professor have exactly the same value in the eyes of him who died for all.



God so loved the world—the whole world—that he gave the Son of his love as a redemption for all. The whole world needs Christ's glorious message. That message needs the whole world in which to operate effectively and gloriously. Truly, the field is the world! This statement was made to the Twelve who were Jews by birth and religion, and the Jews were an exclusive people. They regarded themselves as the only ones chosen of God and all Gentiles as dogs—the untouchable, the unclean. They would not enter their houses, eat with them, nor touch them. The Twelve shared that national exclusiveness, regardless of the world-wide commission to "Go into all the world and make disciples of all nations." They could not, or would not, understand that the gospel applied to Gentiles as well as Jews. Their horizon was limited to the physical seed of Abraham, and to that seed only. It required a miracle to convince

Peter at Joppa that Christ's love recognized no racial barriers or national boundaries.

When Peter was thus convinced that he should call no man common or unclean, he was ready to "open the door of faith to the Gentiles." His Jewish brethren condemned him for entering the home of one uncircumcised, and it required the joint testimony of Peter and his companions as to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles to convince these Jewish Christians that God had also granted the Gentiles repentance unto life.

Eight hundred years prior to this Hosea had predicted, "I will call them my people which were not my people; and her beloved which was not beloved," but Jewish prejudices blinded their eyes to the great truth that "where it was said unto them, ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of God." From this time onward the Twelve had an unlimited horizon as to their work for the Master; and when Paul was called to the apostleship he was sent to the Gentiles, to "open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." Then follows the most thrilling moral and spiritual phenomena the world has ever known. The gospel spread from Judea to Samaria and Galilee. Leaping across the sea it gained a foothold in Asia and from there to Europe and anon the world was afire with the glorious news, "Jesus is risen!" Ephesus, the citadel of Diana; Athens, the capital of Grecian philosophy; Corinth, the licentious city of commerce, all fell before the invading hosts of heaven's armies, because these men had a world-wide vision of the tremendous power of Christ's gospel. Preaching it to the remotest bounds of the earth, they "loved not their lives unto the death," and literally "suffered the loss of all things" that they might preach Christ! Paul triumphantly declared that the gospel had been preached to the whole creation (Col. 1: 23). He offered thanks to God "which causeth us always to triumph in Christ and makes manifest the savor of his knowledge."

The Jerusalem church grew with amazing rapidity, but it was not until the persecution by Saul drove them from that city that "they went everywhere preaching the word." Persecution enlarged their horizon and resulted in the emancipation of countless thousands of precious souls who otherwise would never have learned of him who is "mighty to save."

I suppose some of you are ready to say, "That's all true and we thank God that we have a broader horizon than the prejudiced Jews . . . our gospel is to the whole world." But is it? Why are we not taking it to the whole world? Are we even trying to carry it as we should to our own communities? There are many congregations which have existed for fifty years and have never sent the gospel ten miles from their own meeting house. There are many communities within easy driving distance of the majority of our congregations that have never heard of the church of Christ. I wish I might find just one community in which it could be said that every soul had been contacted and solicited to give himself to Christ. All too often our spiritual horizon is limited to the four walls of our own meeting house. Many members have no interest in having the gospel preached anywhere but in that building. True, any building needs walls, but dare we put walls around Christ's gospel?

Only a soul warped with selfishness could feel that only those whom they can get in their own meeting house are worth saving. We put meat in cold storage for preservation, but the gospel of God's love needs no preservative except hearts on fire with fervent love for the unsaved. I do not believe in canning the gospel and sealing it up in one little place. It thrives and grows in beauty "from Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strands." It can preserve its freshness amidst Africa's burning deserts or the steaming jungles of Brazil. It can also thrive in your community without the protecting walls of a material church building to keep it from corrupting.

A church building is erected primarily as a place of worship, not as the one and only place where the gospel can be preached. Halls, tents, schoolhouses, or brush arbors can be used in which to sound out the Word. But when someone suggests such work, a dozen will join the hammer chorus and knock, knock, knock! If all the chronic knockers were suddenly transformed into gospel preachers kindled with love for the unsaved, what a revolution would take place in our brotherhood! When an experienced driver hears a knock in his motor, he knows it needs some expert mechanical work. A good dose of real consecration is the best cure for knockers among us. It is God's anti-knock gasoline.

For every zealous worker who wishes to spread the saving knowledge of the Bible, there are a dozen dyspeptics whose peptic

ulcers ever exude the green pus of objectionitis, while souls are going to hell as fast as the devil can send them. That's why he is still king-pin of the world. He will remain so until God's people wake up to their terrific responsibility. God did not save you for your own good, but that you might save others. If you fail to live up to his purpose as a soul-saver, the doom awaiting you is shuddering to contemplate. I never knew a real worker who was a knocker. He doesn't have time. Like Paul, he knows the terror of the Lord, and persuades men. If these chronic knockers would only lift UP their eyes on the fields now ready for harvest, and heed the call for more reapers, their vision would be enlarged and their horizon expanded. Instead they keep their eyes on the few energetic workers for fear they'll save so many souls a new meeting house will need to be built. You know, "the old house that was good enough for grandfather is good enough for me!" I notice that such characters ride in modern cars instead of grandpa's oxcart. In religion they are actually more out of date than their grandsires.

Another thing which contracts our religious vision and horizon is the insistence of so many they will not support a gospel effort unless conducted by their "favorite preacher." The Paulites and Apollosites constitute a mighty army among us today. Their name is Legion! It is an undeniable fact that many will not support any attempt to save a soul from hell unless done by someone of "reputation." To suggest local workers, or a preacher living in the area be used for the effort, brings a snort of scorn which tickles Satan. Paul said our treasure is in earthen vessels. Those vessels are men. If they preach the same message, what difference will it make in eternity? If we really believe there is a hell for the lost we'll not be squeamish about who saves a sinner from it. If you believe that your loved ones, neighbors, and bosom friends are in eternal danger, you'll use any means at hand to rescue them from a fate worse than death.

Then we have those who think they have fulfilled the divine requirements when they support a pitiable little meeting of two short weeks. What are you supposed to do the other fifty weeks? When the annual big-meeting rolls around these slumberous souls arouse temporarily and really become alive for a fortnight, but with the close of the meeting, they lapse into a repose that rivals a fat hibernating bear. I'm not trying to be witty or sarcastic. Precious souls are in danger. It's high time for the church to arouse. Does Satan close his houses of sin when you close your annual meeting? Does sin cease to be sin and hell cease to be hell when the preacher packs his bags and heads for home? We must face the bare fact that we are not doing one per cent of what we could do if we really tried. If souls are lost

through your neglect, will God save you?

Now let me mention another class who restrict their horizon. There has grown up among us a bunch of lazy, ease-loving churches insisting that the preachers leave the evangelistic field and confine their preaching to them. "We must have a minister." "We must have a beautiful sermon at the hour of worship to help us worship more spiritually." What kind of worship is it that demands the evangelist leave the work of soul-saving to minister to an indolent bunch of lazy-bodies too indifferent to minister to their own needs?

This is the degrading worship of self, be-

cause they think of self and not God. If they thought of God they'd send those preachers out where God intended for preachers to go—seeking and saving the lost. Jesus said "Go." The modern church says "Come." I read in Revelation of a great throng redeemed unto God out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation to the number of ten thousand times ten thousand. But brethren, such a throng was saved long before the lazy, blinded present day church appeared on the scene. The workers of God then lived on the mountain tops of faith and could see afar. Their horizon encompassed the whole world.

TESTING SOME ARGUMENTS

BY W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

I am opposed to the use of instrumental music in connection with the public praise service of God. I am also opposed to some of the arguments which my brethren use to condemn it. Truth requires no misapplication or wresting of scriptures to sustain it. Many arguments are hoary with tradition and are utilized in glib fashion by those who have never tested them by the sacred writings. To misuse a quotation from God's Book without thought of its contextual setting, and merely to vanquish an opponent, is a sectarian practice to be deplored by every earnest seeker after righteousness. There was once a debater of reputation who presented an argument on a verse. He was asked if he really thought the passage taught what he was affirming. His reply was, "I never saw a sectarian who could meet it!" But the mere fact that an opponent cannot meet an argument does not necessarily prove the strength or validity of the argument. It may prove the ignorance and weakness of the opposer.

Many preachers try to meet the Christian Church argument that instrumental music is justifiable in our services, because David used it in the Old Testament worship, by going to Amos 6: 5. They attempt to prove that since God pronounced a woe upon those "who invent to themselves instruments of music as did David" he thereby condemned the use of such instruments even in the Jewish worship service. But 2 Chronicles 6: 13, 14 seems to imply otherwise, for at the dedication of the temple, "When they lifted up their voice with the trumpets, and cymbals, and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever; that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God."

This indicates God's approval of the proceedings. He was quick to manifest his

displeasure when David contrived a new oxcart for carrying the sacred coffer containing the covenant, but his glory was present to crown this temple service. Moreover, during the service "fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices" (2 Chron. 7: 1), another method by which Jehovah registered his approbation in public fashion (Cp. 1 Kings 18: 38).

To what did Amos refer in his famous statement? This country preacher, who had been a simple herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit, was sent to the city to condemn its religious hypocrisy in the days of Uzziah. These were times of social corruption, luxury and idleness. The religious foundation of the populace was being undermined by materialism, drinking, entertainment, and immorality. The stern denunciation of God was voiced against the insincerity of those who paraded their false reverence. The woe pronounced in Amos 6 was against those who were at ease in Zion (verse 1). They lay upon soft beds of idleness, stretched upon couches of indolence, ate the most expensive meats, entertained themselves with songs and music, drank wine from costly goblets, and rubbed their bodies with chief unguents, but they were "not grieved for the affliction of Joseph" (verses 4-6).

They were feasting when they should have been fasting, laughing when they should have been mourning, perfuming their bodies when they should have poured dust and ashes upon their heads. In the context, the invention of instruments of music is placed in the same category as stretching upon a couch, eating veal and beefsteak, or anointing the body with ointment. If one is a sinner, the others are, for the woe is with equal force against all. But Amos is dealing with the times in which, and the circumstances under which, these things were done. The very ones who reclined in luxury, feasting and playing, had "sold the righteous for sil-

ver, and the poor for a pair of shoes" (2: 6). And they were sealing the fate of their nation.

It is enough for us to show that the church is not under the law of Moses, and that "the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change of the law." We must look to Jesus who now has all authority in heaven and earth to specify the worship which meets the requirements of Him who is a Spirit, and seeketh worshippers "in spirit and in truth." The fact that instrumental music was used under the law in the shadowy age preceding the gospel, no more obligates us to use it in the church, than we are obligated to burn incense or offer animal sacrifices. It is not requisite that we lift an obscure passage from Amos and bend it into a club. Bent clubs sometimes become boomerangs.

Another quotation commonly misapplied in Romans 14: 23, "For whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The argument generally runs thus: Instrumental music in worship is not commanded in the New Testament, so is not of faith, because faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, and since whatsoever is not of faith is sin, therefore, instrumental music in worship is a sin."

We must observe that this chapter (Rom. 14) was written to regulate Christians in their conduct toward each other in matters of personal liberty regarding things upon which God has not regulated. One of these was the eating of meats (verse 2). Some brethren had conscientious scruples against

eating certain kinds of meats, whereas, others with full cognizance of their liberty in Christ, could unhesitatingly eat any kind. God received both, and neither was to judge or despise the other.

No meat was actually unclean of itself (verse 14). But if a man counted any meat as unclean, and his conscience condemned his eating of it, it became unclean to him. If a man has a serious doubt as to the propriety of a course, he will condemn himself if he persists in pursuing it while the doubt remains, for in so doing he acts against the promptings of his own conscience. Thus "he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith (i. e., personal conviction that it is right); for whatsoever is not of faith (done with a clear conscience) is sin." This we believe to be a fair construction of the meaning of this passage.

Please observe that the subject is the eating of meats, and the apostle proves that this is proper and justifiable, provided the one indulging can do so without any personal doubts. The condition of his being received of God in this matter is merely the approval of his own conscience, and when his conscience does not condemn him, he is at liberty to proceed. I wonder if our brethren who use this passage against instrumental music in worship are prepared to concede the full import of their argument? We need to learn how to "handle aright the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2: 15). If any brother questions what we have said in this article, our columns are open to him to discuss or refute it!

body to know it; and what is more want everybody to be doing precisely what they are doing, and fail to see work of another nature but of equal importance that is being done quite as efficiently and often with a lot less noise by somebody else.

In 1 Corinthians 12: 28-31 and in Ephesians 4: 11, 12 we see that in Christ's body, the church, there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit to actuate and control them (1 Cor. 12: 4). We should be a monstrosity if our bodies were all mouth and ears, with no eyes and nose. But God, in his infinite wisdom, has given us bodies composed of separate parts, limbs and organs, all performing their separate functions in the service of the body. So it is with Christ's body, the church.

There is another aspect of the question of a "good workman." The noblest tasks are often those out of sight (1 Cor. 1: 26-28). This scripture sets forth a divine principle where God deliberately chooses the "weak things of the world to confound the mighty," and "things that are not to bring to nought the things that are." Many of us, even today, are too fond of the "chief seats in the synagogue" where we can be seen of men. Whilst necessity demands that many of God's workmen, by reason of the nature of their spiritual calling are often before the public eye, it does not follow that other, or less spectacular work is not equally important in God's sight.

I knew a man on a housing estate years ago who had to dig sewers. It was noticed by many, that this man was always chosen as the leading man when a new sewer trench was dug. According to the foreman he was the best man available to follow a straight line. At the end of the day, this workman, dubbed a "sewer rat" by those who ought to have known better, would straighten his back, and look down a line of trench as straight as an arrow, and take justifiable pride in a job well and truly done.

There is certainly something to be said for a workman who can take pride in such a backbreaking, mundane task as trench digging, nevertheless he did, and if a man like him of such an humble calling can so give his mind to such a lowly task, how much more ought we to give our minds to our "high calling in Christ."

TALKS ON TIMOTHY

BY HAROLD BAINES, MORLEY, ENGLAND

The Good Workman (2 Tim. 2: 15)

Our subject today, brother, transfers our thoughts to a completely new angle of Christian service, from the student, to the workman, from the abstract to the concrete. In our last talk we learned the attributes of study. Now we must apply our minds to God's Word. Today we must see how to translate these into action. The attributes of a good student are an ability to apply the mind to the task at hand, to master facts.



A good workman has also certain characteristics by which he stands out from other workmen not quite so good. A good workman (a) Is punctual at his work; (b) Is proficient and efficient at his work; (c) Requires a minimum of supervision over his work. He is at his place at the proper time,

he is skillful in his work, and competent and careful in how he does it. He can be left with confidence to do the tasks allotted him without requiring the "boss" to be perpetually hanging around.

Now God requires workmen in his service of that caliber, men who will be prompt in all things, skillful in all they do, albeit not using their skill for their own advancement, but willing to be used in the service of others. Most factories have a punch clock or time recorder, at which workmen "clock in" or "clock out" and these faithfully record what time workers arrive and when they depart. One wonders what would happen if God placed a "time recorder" in our church buildings, and what sort of attendance would be recorded against our names.

A good workman gets on with his job and doesn't worry too much about what the other fellow is doing. Unfortunately, in church life we have those individuals, who, if they are doing a certain job want every-

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Dedicated to the task of arousing churches in this state and elsewhere to a greater zeal in mission work, and assist in developing the talents of all to be used to the glory of God.

Our text suggests, my young brother, that a good workman "needeth not to be ashamed" and no good workman has need to be ashamed of his work. We live in a day of shoddy workmanship. The dressing up of goods to appear what they are not has been reduced to a very fine art and often the expert can be deceived, so clever has the art of reproduction become, but the test of time reveals the good workman. He can confidently leave his work, knowing it will bear the test of time. All the ravages and storms

of life will only go to prove the trustworthiness of the workmanship of the man of God.

You see, brother, our work has to be good for it must not only survive the test of time but the test of eternity, so learn to be a good workman, and at the end of the day you'll be able to look back and see that you have dug a straight line and kept a true course. Remember that it is "fire that will try every man's work as to what sort it is (1 Cor. 3: 13) . . . and if any man's work abide he shall receive a reward."

MID PLEASURES AND PALACES

BY THE EDITOR

The hope of our survival as a nation depends upon our attitude toward God, and the formation of correct attitudes and the development of proper character lies chiefly within the scope of the home. The Duke of Wellington declared that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, and I affirm that the battle for our existence must be won in the *praying hearts* of fathers and mothers. It is not the smoke-filled hotel rooms where whiskey bottles clink against glasses while pasty-faced politicians swap and barter men for the presidential office, but it is the peace-filled living rooms where worn rugs attest the wear of children's feet, and where family prayers are said in the graying dusk, which make America great. We are not preserved because of the "five-percent chislers" in Washington who search the laws of men to betray their country, but because of the hundred percent Christians who search the laws of Him who was betrayed and died for this country and the whole world.

The salt of the earth may be found in a log cabin in the valley where a toil worn sire lifts the sacred volume with horny hands, at the close of a day spent plowing a rocky hillside field, and gathering his little brood about him, reads the sacred pages penned by the fingers of inspiration. Or it may be found in the ill-equipped tenement, whose dingy walls are brightened by the angel smile of a Christian mother, as she pats the golden head of the little child kneeling before her to lisp out her nightly petition to Him whose angels always behold the faces of such little ones.

If you would return peace to a frustrated, fuming, fighting world, you must first restore reverence for the word of God to the homes of this earth. This will not be an easy task, even in the homes of professed Christians. Things have changed! No more do families gather on Saturday night to read the Lord's Day Bible lesson. Now they sit tense before the television set watching the grimacing and torture of the big time wrestlers. The Roman Coliseum with its thirst

for gore, and its mad shouts for red blood running from human veins, has moved into a Christian environment. Once the aliens screamed for the death of Christians in the arena; now the Christians yell for the pummeling of aliens in the boxing arena. What a preparation for being "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day!" The day before the sabbath used to be a preparation day among the Jews; the evening before the Lord's Day is an excess of riot for Christians!

Once children were sent to bed with a vision of the babe of Bethlehem crowning their thoughts; now they go to a troubled slumber filled with the phantoms of weird mysteries, or the picture of smoking six-guns held in the hands of western outlaws. The shame and disgrace of Hollywood are piped into our living rooms, the pot-bellied brewers of bottled death flash their wares before the wide eyes of our children; the packaged coffin nails of the tobacco trust march across the screen. The home has become a billboard for the theater, the whiskey saloon and the corner cigar store. Open sewers belch their stinking contents into our luxurious homes. And the Bible lies closed and forsaken, and juvenile delinquency increases, and the Lord's Day service is conducted by sleepy, listless communicants, and if men go to hell—who cares?

Close your eyes! Stop your ears! Get angry, quit reading, discontinue your subscription! But let me tell you before you do, that unless we open the doors of our homes and let Jesus back in, we are going to be destitute, doomed and damned! Parents have forsaken their responsibility. They have shoved off on "the Sunday school" the obligation of the homes. They expect a group of men and women to make up in thirty minutes, one day per week, their dereliction for seven. They *take* their children to the show and *send* them to the meeting of the church; they lock their chickens up at night and turn their children loose. Get down on your knees, you whose children grow up and trample on your hearts, and confess your fearful neglect to God, whose

word you trampled underfoot. You are reaping what you have sown. You have not sowed to the Spirit, you must of the flesh reap sadness and corruption!

How can you expect your sons to be near to God in the foxholes of Korea if they never saw your heads bowed in prayer in your homes in America? How can you expect your daughters to be consecrated when you have lived in an ivory tower aloof from them and their problems during their formative years? It isn't enough to talk about family life, we must practice it in wholesome, honest fashion. We must speak to God about each other, and speak to each other about God.

We do not need to be child psychologists, we need to be dads and mothers. I know an old sister, now gone to her grave, who used to chide me for familiarly referring to my beloved father as "Dad." She refused to allow her son to use the term. It sounded disrespectful. She was going to rear her boy by the books and keep him at arm's length. He grew up to be a whiskey drinker and a woman chaser. The last I heard of him he was married to his third wife. He made a success in business, but a failure in life. But his father never was a "buddy" to him. He couldn't sit down and talk over his problems with his father. They never camped together, never fished together, never knew the intimacy which belongs to a boy and his dad as they sit huddled in a duck blind listening for whirring wings. The father knew all the answers in the Bible class on Sunday, but had no time to answer the questions of a growing lad. He sat on the front seat nearest the Lord's table; the boy sat on the back seat nearest the door. They were apart in life—and in the church!

What good will it do to memorize the passage, "Husbands love your wives," if there's no real affection in the home? How can our children select proper companions, or know the joy of blissful companionship if they are ever aware of coldness between those who bore them, and have no real example of conjugal affection? The Bible must come alive in our lives. Its pages must be animated in our careers. The precious moments when we are all together must not be ruined by nagging, petty quarreling or aloofness. At the very best, we cannot be together long. Let us arrange our lives so that whoever goes first, those who remain will have cherished memories of unforgettable moments spent in the family circle. Let us not be polite abroad and churlish at home.

It isn't necessary that we work to have good furnishings, but it is vitally essential that our hearts be furnished unto every good work. Better to have soft words to cushion the shock of life, than soft rugs into which our feet may sink. Many a boy away from home may forget that the kitchen stove

was old and the grates cracked, but he will not forget the warm glow of a mother's love which kindled a responsive fire in his own heart. The wind may blow through the crevices in the walls, yet the storms of life cannot affect the souls of boys and girls who learned to respect their parents because they respected God. It is pleasant to have beautiful floor lamps sending soft light to every corner of the room, but it is far more needful to have the light of the gospel send its rays into every corner of the heart.

More than we need price control, we need

life control; more than stabilized wages we need stabilized convictions. We do not need modern houses so much as we need old-fashioned homes; we do not need to turn over a new leaf, but we need to turn up with new lives. We must put our hearts into the Bible and the Bible into our hearts. We must pray more and play less at home; we must bring our children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, not bring them up and then try to get them into it. God help us to have Christian homes! This is our last hope as a nation!

THE MEASURE OF A MAN

BY ROY LONEY

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

Man was created only a little lower than angels, and was pure and sinless as he came from the hand of his creator, but sin has sullied his character and rolled him in the muck and mire of iniquity. Created to be ruler of the world, he has become a groveling slave of Satan whose chains hold him in galling bondage. But Jesus came to set the captive free and restore man to his original purity. This is accomplished by the truth. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

To remain free we must live as Christ did. He is the example and his life the pattern by which every life is to be measured and judged. "For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in his steps." His was the only life absolutely without sin to show us how to live a life that will meet God's approval. We are to measure our lives by his, and he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Tempted in all points as we are, no taint of sin touched his character. Pilate said of him, "I find in him no fault at all." That has been the verdict of all who have studied his life. He never retraced a step nor retracted a word.

The Bible is a mirror. We look into it and behold our imperfections, errors and shortcomings. It shows man as he is—sinful, unworthy and lost! But alongside of his imperfections is revealed the glorious character of the "Rose of Sharon, the fairest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." The highest aspiration of the human heart is to be like him.

O to be like thee, blessed Redeemer,

This is my constant longing and prayer;

Gladly I'll forfeit all of earth's treasures

Jesus thy perfect likeness to wear.

To reach that highest moral and spiritual

ideal requires a lifetime of effort, struggle and climbing upward and onward. To become satisfied with what we are, is to lose sight of all that is best and happiest in life. Paul commands: "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves, know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates?" That examination can be conducted only by comparing yourself with Jesus Christ. No one has a right to be satisfied with what he is, unless his life perfectly corresponds with the life of our Lord. The measuring rod is his life. Who of us can say he is as pure and holy as Jesus?

The noted Chinese, Wu Ting Fang, when in America years ago, criticized Christianity in comparing it with Confucianism. In his judgment it was an advantage that the ideals of Confucius were human attainments. He thought Christianity made a stupendous blunder in presenting to men an impractical ideal. The difference between a Confucianist and a Christian is that the former easily reaches his goal and goes no further. The other, ever climbing, aspiring and struggling upward, growing more righteous with each step, always sees the goal still far beyond his reach. This is probably the secret of why China has always been so backward, and America so progressive.

Christianity never leaves a man satisfied with what he is. The apostle Paul, perhaps the greatest of all Christians, made no claims of perfection, but still unsatisfied, struggling upward, said, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but this one thing I do . . . I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." How fitting that our prayer should be, "Lord, plant my feet on higher ground." New heights are gained but still in the sunlight some higher peaks glow, And strong in my Savior still upward I go. I'm climbing the mountains, but soon I'll arise,

To reach the last peak for my home in the skies.

The glory of Christianity is that it ever prods and stimulates to higher and greater attainments. Jesus ever beckons, saying, "Follow me!" A life that is "hid with Christ in God" sees its highest fulfillment only in Him. Never in this life can we reach the goal. Here there can be no perfect living, but there can be perfect striving to be like him who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and give his life a ransom for all. The poet Browning has well said, "A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?" Again, "Better to have failed in the high aim as I, than vulgarly in the low aim succeed."

But it is a distressing fact that many are far less concerned about measuring their own lives than those of other men. Like tailors, they are always taking the other man's measure. They are eagle-eyed in detecting the ill-fitting clothes worn by their brethren, hence have no time to discover their own disarray. Parading our own virtues like the Pharisee, while deploring the moral or spiritual lack of the publican, is not the divine method recommended for attaining unto "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." A doctor does not cure his own ills by diagnosing those of his patients. And we cannot elevate ourselves spiritually by discovering the low things in a brother's life.

Many a professed Christian has failed to achieve a major accomplishment in righteousness because overly annoyed by the shortcomings of his brethren. Paul said he looked on the things not seen rather than those that are seen. It is quite the reverse today. Many wholly employ their time looking for the faults of those whom they dislike. Despising the weeds in a neighbor's garden will not improve your crop. When ill-feeling and malice creep in, the things not seen, are the many fine qualities in the lives of others, not revealed to a jaundiced eye. If a brother has really fallen, we cannot lift him up by pushing him further in the muck. There are too many who err in human blindness and forget that they are dust. Thus "oft they miss the law of kindness in the struggle to be just."

The Pharisees were so avid in searching for the mote in a brother's eye, they became unmindful of the great beam ruining their own vision. Improving their own eyesight would have enabled them to understand their brother's need. Comparing ourselves with some that commend themselves and measuring ourselves with others to our own advantage is a futile and senseless occupation in the sight of God, for it does nothing toward developing us as Christians. A squirrel expends a lot of energy in a revolving cage but gets nowhere fast. Neither can I get any distance in attaining to the high calling of God by perpetual personal attacks on others. Many times the mails are

(Continued on page 9)

REBUILDING THE WALLS

An Analysis of the Book of Nehemiah

V. Protection and Persistence

By way of preparing your hearts for this section of our analysis, please read Nehemiah 4: 13-23. As Nehemiah took a preliminary midnight survey of the area which required reconstruction, so you should carefully proceed over each section of the book upon which we purpose to build these lessons.

1. *Confirmation.* The duty of leaders in times of stress is to strengthen the arms of the people. Nehemiah kept the people "within the walls" (verse 13). Only there are we safe. If we go beyond the limits of God's truth we are exposed to the merciless fire of the enemy. They were placed "after their families." Nothing so encourages the work as to see whole families united in defence of truth and righteousness. Happy homes make happy churches.

The great leader said, "Be not afraid . . . remember the Lord" (verse 14). Fear comes from looking at self. We are weak, but He is strong. They were encouraged, not to fight for self, but to "fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses." Let us not forget that our fight for a pure church is not from a selfish motive, a desire to secure and enjoy the blessings of heaven alone, but to perpetuate these things unto our children, and our children's children. He fights in solitude who fights for self.

2. *Construction.* We must ever maintain a proper sense of values. We may wield the weapons but it is God who gives the victory. When the opposers are frustrated, it is God "who hath brought their counsel to nought" (verse 15). We should ever labor so close to God that men who conspire against us will "be found to fight against God" (Acts 5: 39). The enemies of God's people have always been seized with consternation when they realize that their secret plans have gone astray and returned upon them like a boomerang hurled from the hand. "He preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked" (Psalm 97: 10).

3. *Cooperation.* From this time on a constant guard was maintained. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." Half of the servants wrought in the work, the rest of them held the weapons of defence. Behind them were their rulers (verse 16). They did not go out looking for a fight. They did not dare and threaten. They built the wall, and held themselves in readiness in case of attack. Their work was constructive and defensive. With one hand they held a trowel, with the other a spear. They did not throw down the first to use the latter until circumstances forced them to do so.

Nehemiah knew that soldiers are needed where the fight is. The Jews were few in number and were separated upon the wall, one from another (verse 19). He kept the trumpeter constantly by his side. If the enemy attacked any given spot, the trumpet was to sound, and the command was to "Resort ye thither unto us" (verse 20). God's people are still few in number. The work is great and large. They are often separated one from another. The enemy attacks the weakest, not the strongest places in our ranks. Yet we keep the best trained soldiers in the strong centers. They need to be dispersed into the weak places to bolster the Cause. In time of attack we should rally round to the support of needy fields which are under direct fire. Too many are trying to fight in their tents. The battlefield is the place for soldiers. Army garb is not soft raiment for reclining in houses of royalty.

4. *Consecration.* God's work is full time work. There is no holiday period, no siesta time. "So we labored in the work from the rising of the sun until the stars appeared" (verse 21). The entire day of life must be consecrated to the task before us. From the time when the light of God's truth beams upon our minds until

Twilight and evening star

And one clear call for me,

And may there be no moaning of the bar

When I put out to sea.

The people were to dwell inside the city "in the night to be a guard and labor on the day" (verse 22). Watching and working, looking and laboring, seeing and doing, these mark the bounds of the Christian life. Neither can be neglected with any degree of safety.

The leaders of God's people were ever on the alert. Only for purposes of sanitation did they put off their garments. "Be ye also ready," was their motto, as it must be ours. They were vigilant, sober, temperate men. These have been the requirements of God's leaders in every age of the world.

VI. Exploitation and Vindication

Nehemiah 5 logically divides into 2 parts. Verses 1-13 deal with the oppression of the Jews by their brethren who exacted usury of them; Verses 14-19 are a justification of the conduct of Nehemiah in refusing to tax the people for his personal gain. As a basis for this study read the whole of chapter 5.

1. *Scandal.* The work of restoration is always hindered more by internal strife than by external opposition. Brethren who take undue advantage of the helplessness of their fellows to secure supremacy over them are traitors to the common good. The people are forced to appeal for food for their nu-

merous families (verse 2). Some had placed mortgages on every possession to secure sustenance during the period of hunger (verse 3). Others had borrowed money on their prospective crops to pay the tribute exacted by the Persian king (verse 14). The climax of the grief came with the fact that they had been forced to sell their sons into bondage to the rulers and had no power to redeem them because of their mortgaged possessions. The rulers made the common mistake of thinking that the congregation was created to serve them, rather than they to serve the congregation. This has been an evil in all ages crying to heaven for adjustment.

2. *Scolding.* Anger may be righteous when directed against gross abuse and injustice (verse 6). But under such emotional stress it is well to consult with yourself before speaking (verse 7). Rash statements work no good. The argument used by Nehemiah was invincible. He pointed out that he had taken his own money and purchased freedom of his brethren, whereas the rulers had taken the money of their brethren and forced them into bondage. When he asked if those redeemed from the heathen should be sold unto their brethren they had no answer (v. 8).

The reason why we ought not to mistreat our brethren as given in verse 9, needs to be taught in every church today. "Ought we not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of our enemies?" How many bitter "church fights" have been aired before the world? How often have men sought to play up casual statements which they could use to down one of whom they were jealous, the while they ignored all that was favorable to him! Few men could be trusted to state correctly an opponent's position. No wonder thinking men turn disgusted from religion. No wonder the church is reviled by her enemies! What sins of schism are committed in the name of "loyalty."

3. *Satisfaction.* When Nehemiah urged the rulers to restore what they had taken (v. 11), they promised to do it and to require no payment from them. Even the priests had been involved in this serious defection (v. 12). It often occurs today that the restoration movement is most seriously handicapped by our leading brethren. The common people would gladly serve God in humility, but we have become so accustomed to exalting men, instead of Jesus, that factions are built around talented servants who ought to labor together. Each man secures a following, and becomes the oracle for that group which idolizes him. It he has a paper at his disposal (and he generally does) his influence is extended. By keeping out all that is unfavorable to his position and reporting only what agrees with him, he can propagandize for his faction, and keep his duped followers in subjection, until some

other talented man arises who threatens his domination. Then comes another split and the ignorant align themselves with one or the other as their special heroes. In Nehemiah's day it was the leaders who exploited the poor. Thank God they became penitent under rebuke.

4. *Self-defence.* Nehemiah was in a position where he had the authority to demand support for himself and his retinue. He also had a right to do it, and a precedent to follow. But he chose to forego his privileges. For 12 years he supported himself and did not eat "the bread of the governor" (v. 14). The former governors had exacted full toll, and even their servants had borne rule over the people. But the fear of God had kept Nehemiah from this (v. 15) and meanwhile he had continued to bear his full share of labor on the wall (v. 16). During this time his hospitality had not decreased, and he had to purchase from his own funds the daily supplies for the large and generous table he supplied (v. 17, 18). Needless to point out, God's work never prospers in the hands of the greedy and covetous. It is only those who are willing to spend and be spent for the Cause, who will give up the pleasures and comforts of home to share the great truths of the gospel with others, who can truthfully be said to be the vanguards of restoration. The walls of Zion will not be built by men who labor for so much per hour or week, but by those who count earthly gain as dross.

VII. Intimidation and Indignation

Nehemiah 6, reveals the further attempts of the enemy to frighten the builders of the wall. It is a revealing exposition of the trickery and chicanery of those who hate God's work. Read the entire chapter and ponder it well!

1. *Treachery.* The enemies who first laughed in derision, then scoffed at the Jews' feebleness, then wanted to fight, now seek for a conference (v. 1, 2). But their purpose was to get the work to cease, while they did mischief to its leader. Sectarianism always follows this same procedure. When taunts, jeers, and scoffing will not stop God's work, the next thing is to fight. Then when the prayer is made to God, and a guard is set, they lose their bravery. After this they become very kind and gentle, masking their evil purposes as did the wolf in "Little Red Riding Hood." No one can be so courtly, or fawn so much as the enemy of the church with one hand extended, and the other holding a dagger behind his back. Nehemiah's remark is a classic, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it and come down to you?" (verse 3). The enemy, being persistent sent 4 invitations. But in each instance the answer was the same. Then the bared fangs were exposed behind the hypocritical smile.

2. *Threats.* The next thing was an open letter with the old familiar statement, "They say!" "It is reported," Nehemiah was informed, "that you and the Jews think to rebel and it is for this reason you are building the wall" (verses 5, 6). Now it is common when a man seeks to rebuild the walls for his enemies to accuse him of wanting to be a king. Often, the most earnest endeavors may be construed by jealous hearts as indicative of a desire to control the brotherhood. Moses was accused of "taking too much on himself." Nehemiah was accused of wanting to be a king. Christ was accused of wanting to displace Caesar. Perhaps there has not been a godly elder who has not at some time been called a pope, nor a faithful evangelist who has not been called an archbishop. But always these aspersions are cast by malicious enemies who are thwarted in their ambitious schemes to overthrow the building of the walls. We should not be deterred from the work by such slanders, for the disciple is not above his lord, nor the servant above his master. Nehemiah replied, "There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart." Often men *suppose* in others what is really the secret conditions in their own inner consciousness.

3. *Traitors.* There are always men who sell out to the enemy. One of them besought Nehemiah to leave the work and seek shelter in the temple, locking the doors to keep the enemy from coming in to slay him at night (verse 10). Nehemiah refused, asking, "Should such a man as I flee?" Then he learned this prophet had not been sent of God, but had been hired by Sanballat and Tobiah (verses 12, 13). The church is not a sanctuary for cowards. It is not a monastery for retreat behind closed doors. There are squeamish souls who will help on the walls as long as there is no danger, but want to retreat behind their religious protection when dangers threaten. Often there are those who are hired to frighten the faithful. The church has never been free of Benedict Arnolds.

4. *Triumph.* Behind the builders lay 52 days of hard, back-breaking toil. But all this was forgotten in the rejoicing of accomplishment. The simple declaration, "So the wall was finished" (verse 52) cannot begin to portray the great thrill which must have flooded the whole group of artisans. Now the enemies and the heathen were much cast down in their own eyes, for they perceived that this work was of God. How wonderful in this moment of triumph to see the praise and glory accorded unto Him, who alone deserves it.

5. *Trickery.* Yet we are never free from assault. When Jesus gained the victory over Satan, the latter only left him for "a little season." If Satan cannot stop the work of building, he seeks to stop the building of the work. In the case of Nehemiah, the

nobles (who had not put their necks to the work, ch. 3: 5) wrote many letters to Tobiah, who answered with many of his own (verse 17). One reason for this contact was his relationship as son-in-law to Shechaniah, and father-in-law to the daughter of Meshullam (verse 19). Some today who have ungodly relation out of the church, want to soften the gospel and take the fire out of hell, so as to make it easier on them. The church is often hindered by nosy relatives who have no interest except to see the overthrow of the gospel. Some came and reported the good deeds of Tobiah before Nehemiah, then ran immediately and gave Nehemiah's reply to the enemy (verse 19). These double-tongued scandal mongers have been the bane of the church in all ages. It still has its share of them!

VIII. Hearing and Doing

To set up the form of religion without instruction in the Word of God, is to institute a vain worship. In Nehemiah 8 is found an account of the spirit of true restoration, which means to seek the will of the Lord, then enforce it as discovered.

1. *Reading.* The unity of purpose in investigation of God's truth is disclosed (in 8: 1) when we see the people gathered together "as one man." For years a great many of these had not heard the law of God read and expounded. They were hungry for the revelation, and on this Civil New Year's Day, they plan to start aright. What a wonderful thing it is to see God's people begin the work of restoring His truth by assembling as one man to hear it read.

Men and women, and "all that could hear with understanding" assembled at the water gate (verse 2). Incidentally, we find here a catalogue of those who are responsible for obedience to God's law. Ezra stood upon a raised wooden platform (verse 4) and read from morning until midday. The interest of his auditors is reflected in the statement "The ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law" (verse 3). Here is the source of spiritual strength. There was no whispering, no silly chatter, no mind-wandering, but grave attention to heaven's message to earth.

2. *Responding.* When Ezra publicly praised the Lord, the whole congregation responded audibly, making the blessing their own by pronouncing, "Amen, Amen!" (verse 6). Once before in the announcement of disciplinary action, "All the congregation said, Amen, and praised the Lord" (6: 13). Here is one feature of aggregate worship we need to restore. It was a part of the public devotions of the apostolic church. When "the whole church be come together in one place" (1 Cor. 14: 23) edification of the body demanded that the speaking be intelligible. "Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of

thanks, seeing he understandest not what thou sayest?" (1 Cor. 14: 16). The "unlearned" here mentioned was the one without spiritual gifts. Although not qualified to edify, perhaps such a one could give his unqualified assent to the ministrations of his brethren.

In his notes on 1 Corinthians, T. Teignmouth Shore, M.A., Canon of Worcester and Chaplain-in-Ordinary to the King, says, "It would seem from this verse that from the earliest apostolic times the practice has been for the congregation to join in the thanksgiving by uttering 'Amen' (the Hebrew 'So be it') at the conclusion."

On this passage, McGarvey and Pendleton state, "If the speaker did not do this (i. e., speak intelligibly) how could one who was not gifted to interpret say Amen to the petition offered, seeing that he knew not what it was? Thus no matter how ably the gifted one might pray, the ungifted one would not be edified. Amen was then, as now, the word of ratification or assent to an expression of prayer or praise, of blessing or cursing. Justin Martyr (Ap., c. 65, 67) describes the use of the Amen, after the prayer at the communion service. It is to that or similar use that Paul refers. . . . It shows that prayer is not a vicarious duty done for us by others. We must join in it."

The quotation from Justin Martyr alluded to is as follows: "After this, bread and a cup of wine mixed with water are brought to the president; and he taking them gives praise and glory to the Father of the Universe, through the Name of the Son and the Holy Ghost, and offers thanksgiving at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive those blessings at his hands. And when he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all the people express their assent by saying Amen."

We quote from one more of the so-called church fathers, not to establish a practice in the church, for in this they are non-authoritative, but to show a practice established in the church. Chrysostom says, "And what he saith is this: If thou shalt bless in a barbarian tongue, not knowing what thou sayest, nor able to interpret, the layman cannot respond the Amen. For not hearing the words 'forever and ever' which are at the end, he saith not the Amen."

The word "Amen" is with the definite article in 1 Corinthians 14: 16, not Amen, but *the* Amen, in the Greek. This shows that it was a specific item in the worship. We will never restore the New Testament worship in its fulness, until we restore the full participation of every member. Many have never worshipped in their lives. They have only listened as others did so. Let us instruct the men and women and all who "can hear with understanding" to join in the Amen.

3. *Receiving*. It must be remembered that

by virtue of their capacity and exposure to foreign languages a great many of the Israelites could not understand the law in the ancient tongue of their fathers. However, the priests and Levites, being bilingual, could interpret it for them. Thus as Ezra read, certain of the priests "caused the people to understand the law" (verse 7). "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly (margin, 'with an interpretation') and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading" (verse 8). One of the first essentials to restoration is to get God's law into the vernacular of the people. A cunning priestcraft always seeks to veil the meaning of scripture in a tongue the people cannot understand. One of the greatest gifts of the Reformation was the translation from a dead to a living (and understandable) tongue. Sound doctrine can never be restored until sound speech is restored. Our task is to translate, then explain (give the sense), and cause the people to understand (grasp the meaning of the original writer).

4. *Rejoicing*. The testimony of God was received with sorrow and weeping (verse 9). No doubt their shortcomings and failures filled them with grief. Certainly we should be greatly sobered by the thought of the long journey we must make "back to Jerusalem." But Nehemiah told the people not to be sorry, for it should be a day of rejoicing, of feasting, and of charity for the poor for whom nothing was prepared. He declared "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (verse 10). So the people went their way "to make great mirth, because they had understood the words which were declared unto them" (verse 12). There is "a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance" (Eccl. 3: 4). Nothing is more incongruous than to see the times reversed. Godly rejoicing is often the fruit of godly sorrow.

5. *Restoring*. On the second day of the new year (civil) the priests and Levites gathered unto Ezra to understand the words of the law (verse 13). They "found written in the law" instructions to Israel to celebrate the feast of tabernacles by construction of booths and dwelling in the same. They learned it was to be done in the very month then upon them. Accordingly they gave instruction unto the people to do "as it is written" (verse 15). When they had obeyed the command "there was very great gladness" (verse 17). This is always the result among honest servants of God.

Please observe that they did not invent or borrow from the pagans a festal day. Instead they found "written in the law" the days to celebrate. You cannot *restore* a pure worship by adding something that was not there originally. Such is transformation, not restoration. A true restorationist must be a strict conformationist insofar as the

revelation of God is concerned. He first finds what is written and adds it because it is written, rather than first adding it, and then seeking to find if it is written. To encumber a movement with borrowed trappery is to hinder the work by adding to the much rubbish which must be cleared away. The inauguration of Christmas, Easter, Lent, together with numerous other days of special observance in religion, has greatly hindered the return to the pure gospel. We must follow the example of Ezra. "Day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God" (verse 18).

(Continued from page 6)

flooded, to the shame and sorrow of the church, with personal diatribes against brethren in the Lord. Such documents are supposed to be very revealing in uncovering a brother's errors, but more often than not such documents reveal far more than is intended by the writers, that is, the real character of the writers themselves.

If you find a fallen brother, and turn to spit on him because he has fallen, you will lose precious time in your climb to the "Grand Mesa" of holy living. I cannot bless mankind by holding up to them the sins of others. I can only help people by holding up before them the grand example of Him who died that they might live. We lose sight of Christ if we are always looking for the faults of others. With the world faced with war more terrible than human tongue can describe, and the church in danger of being swallowed up in a maelstrom of contention and strife, surely it is time to give the world a renewed vision of Christ and Him crucified. With wars, famine and floods bringing heartbreak and sorrow to thousands of homes, may the Heavenly Father give to each of us a greater incentive to reveal to mankind the glory of His redeeming love. The best revelation of him is in our daily lives. Paul preached not himself but Christ crucified and saved thousands from eternal ruin. May the grace of our loving Father and the inexpressible love of his holy Son, stimulate us to do more constructive work in behalf of the world's salvation, and may we strive to perfect ourselves in holiness, without which no man can see the Lord.

SAINT LOUIS STUDY

All persons who plan to attend the Saint Louis Bible Study this year are urged to write at once for reservation of rooms. We suggest that you do not come without first contacting the brethren and notifying them of your plans as it is very difficult to handle those who just make up their minds and drop in without previous notice. The study starts on November 5 to continue six weeks. Write to: The Deacons, Church of Christ, 7121 Manchester Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri.

What Does That Mean? . . . by E. M. ZERR

1 Corinthians 11: 34

In this passage Paul is continuing the line of thought that he was teaching in the preceding verse, which was considered in this column last issue.

But my reason for citing it now is because of the misuse that is made of it. Paul says "if any man hunger, let him eat at home." This is interpreted to mean that it is wrong to have food brought to the place of worship. Because of such a notion, some disciples will refuse to be present when the congregation has a "basket dinner," saying it is wrong to have a meal in such a place. Yet they will fellowship the church otherwise and thus be guilty of inconsistency. When a man is inconsistent, he is bound to be wrong in one place or the other, for truth is always in harmony with itself. If the congregation does wrong in having these meals in the church property, then it is wrong to fellowship the congregation at all. Moreover, such a theory would



condemn the feasts of charity mentioned without criticism by inspired writers, for they were the same as our basket dinners. (See Jude 12; 2 Peter 2: 13.)

Paul was dealing with the situation at Corinth where the disciples were mixing their feasts of charity with the Lord's Supper. "One is hungry and another is drunken" indicates that some were becoming disorderly and allowing their hunger to take their mind from the spiritual matters that were supposed to have brought them together. They could not wait until the group was all ready for the love feast, but would rush into the eating in this disrespectful way. Paul meant that if any man was actually such a slave to his appetite that he could not wait for the group to eat, he would better take some food at home before going to the assembly. Had he been condemning the eating of a common meal in the church building, he would have told all of them to eat at home. If brethren would be more careful in reading the scripture, they would not take it out of its connection so frequently. They would rightly divide it. Think on these things!

TOO-WEAK MEETINGS

BY BOB L. DUNCAN

I am convinced that the two weeks' meeting in some localities is just *too weak*. I do not consider such meetings to be unscriptural or sinful or I would not be engaged in conducting one. However, I do believe that some congregations have ridden this old horse to death and there's time for a change. You would think that this is practically the only scriptural method of spreading the gospel by the actions of some. I read nothing in the Bible about two weeks' meetings, and certainly there are more expedient ways of sowing the word in some places.

All preachers know of congregations where the two weeks meeting system has been used for years yet it is very difficult to get non-members to attend when the preacher is there for his thirteen or four-



teen day stint. Certainly such meetings may be beneficial for the membership, but if you are using the preacher primarily to teach the church why not derive the maximum amount of benefit from his stay and have a Bible study? In such localities where the gospel has been preached year after year for decades, people have had numerous opportunities to hear the truth, and yet there are places where they've never heard the gospel in its purity. One writer has well said that one man has more right to hear the gospel once than another has to hear it twice. A preacher comes to conduct a meeting and stays for two weeks reaching very few, if any, non-members. If that same time and effort had been expended in another locality, souls might have been saved or at least those who have not heard the truth would have had an opportunity to obey the gospel. Why shouldn't that congregation support the preacher where more good can be accomplished? It's possible that the meeting could be conducted in a place which would be close enough for the con-

gregation supporting the meeting to attend. This would be excellent as it would guarantee the preacher of their attendance each night if they would really support the effort.

The congregation at Thessalonica "sounded out the word." Too many congregations today are content to sound in the word. The same people hear the same gospel year after year or have opportunity to hear it. Let's give somebody else an opportunity to obey the Lord. There are still good and honest hearts in the world if we will just find them.

There are other methods which could be used by the local congregation in their own area. A hall might be rented or a tent set up in another part of town or in an adjacent area. Some brethren seem to be fearful of trying anything new or different. If one method doesn't work try another, within the bounds of Scripture, of course. Bible studies can be arranged in private homes each night for a week or every other night for a period of time, then the preacher can be called to conduct those studies if his services are needed. The early church took the gospel to the world. They met to worship and went out to convert. We meet to worship and call people in to convert them, and if they don't come they aren't converted in most instances. "They know where we meet, let them come to us." Where would the church be today if early Christians had taken this slothful attitude? They certainly wouldn't have ameliorated the Roman Empire with the principles of Christ and dethroned paganism. Christianity of the first century was a militant religion and Christianity of the twentieth century must needs be a militant religion in order to function and grow properly.

NIXA, MISSOURI

Meeting at Nixa, Missouri, Oct. 7-21, conducted by W. Carl Ketcherside, with Jim Baysinger directing singing. All day meeting and basket dinner, on Sunday, Oct. 21. Arrangements will be made to accommodate those who wish to be present over Saturday night. Contact Thelma Bussard, Nixa, Missouri, for room reservations.—Frank W. Dunbar.

WIDE MARGIN BIBLES

We have left but a very few wide margin Oxford Bibles. These are especially designed to take notes in waterproof India ink, on the pages, and opposite the verses on which you desire the notes. Additional note paper in front and back of the Bible is provided for more extensive notes. The price of these imported Bibles with leather binding and leather lining is \$25. If you expect to secure one, we urge you to order at once!

Please hand this paper to a friend who needs the teaching.

CRUMBLING DIKES

BY W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

When the destructive floods came tumbling down the Missouri valley from the north, the surging, tossing water licked with greedy yellow tongues at the dikes which protected the richest farms of the valley. Men were summoned from their homes to toil unremittingly to strengthen the barricades which had been erected in bygone days. What a terrifying sight it was to see one of those dikes begin to crumble, to stand helplessly by and view the brown earth beginning to slip into the boiling whirlpools which had undermined the foundation from beneath. What a devastating picture was presented when deserted homes stood mute and helpless, devoid of all life, in the midst of a muddy sea.

Today, a flood of alien isms is sweeping toward the land we hold dear. The cherished ideals, the fond hopes, and the favored plans of yesteryear are threatened by a destructive deluge of atheistic materialism. There are dikes which stand against the overflowing flood, but they are being weakened by the constant battering. We must summon all available manpower to strengthen the defences of our nation.

One of the greatest protective forces of the past has been the home life of our nation. Today it is beginning to crumble. Insidious forces are at work gnawing away at its foundations. They must be identified and eliminated. Perhaps one of the most prevalent, and certainly one of the most aggravating of these causes, is the pernicious habit of nagging. Yet numerous women who profess to be Christians, who wouldn't think of missing a church service, and whose moral purity is unquestioned, indulge in this destructive pastime. They are as dangerous to home life as saboteurs are to national safety.

To some men, home is not a haven of refuge, but a blinding storm. They dread to leave the store or office with the polite atmosphere of respect, knowing that they will be subjected to a barrage of whining, complaining and disputing! Their days off provide no peace, their nights are a virtual hell. Why is it that women can give their bodies in marriage, reluctant though it may be, and not give their hearts to sanctify the home created by such a marriage?

If I were called upon to assess the one factor that has broken up more homes than any other, I would without hesitancy name "nagging." It hinders the work of the Lord, too. I know a preacher in the south who is not in the field today because of a nagging wife. He might not realize it, and she would deny it to high heaven (and keep on denying it incessantly) but it is true. Homes that exude the pure air of heaven's bliss,

where the soft word and kindly smile, the sympathetic tone and friendly gesture reign supreme, do not want the disturbing element of harsh, unfeeling criticism, never tempered with a generous compliment. And when a preacher's wife goes into such a home and sows the seed of discontent, she will reap a crop of repudiation. Never mind whether she is justified. To such a person anything she does is always justified. No use of arguing with her. She will win the argument because she never stops nagging long enough to listen. No one wants a person to come to his home and pull up all of the flowers and plant thorns. Just as the body builds up a wall of tissue around an irritant, so the spiritual body does the same. Isolation is the inevitable result.

Constant bickering drives more husbands and wives into immorality and extramarital intimacy than any other cause. Not long ago I listened to a sobbing wife blurt out a story about "another woman." She had just learned that the nights her husband had been spending catching up on things "at the office" had really been spent in the home of one of the women from the place where he worked. With that naive pride, so characteristic of the "fairer sex" the wife asserted, "I can't understand what he sees in her!" But I understood. He saw understanding and friendliness, thoughtfulness and generosity. He saw one who gave everything and demanded nothing. It was the exact opposite to what he had experienced! Of course I am not justifying his action. Don't be absurd! I'm not assessing the moral nature of results, but I'm dealing with cold-blooded facts as to causes.

I made an appointment with the man and talked to him. He told me that he had loved his wife intensely at first. But after their child came, they could not go places as before. She resented it and began to find fault with everything. She would start on him as soon as he entered the door in the evening. Before he even kissed her, she would want to know if he had gone to the laundry, or if he had checked the car battery, or purchased the diapers for the baby. By the time the quiz program was over, he didn't care whether he kissed her or not. When he sat down after his meal and picked up the evening paper, she would declare that he had no time for that—the lawn had to be mowed, or the shubbery had to be trimmed, or the basement cleaned out. She deliberately searched for things to disturb his peace. She resented him reclining or resting.

The woman at the office was sympathetic. She did part of his work so he could have a little respite. She brought a special maga-

zine article or two for him to read and discussed the contents thereof with him in intelligent fashion. She brought him a piece of cake which she had baked. She complimented his choice of neckties. He fell for the bait. And what was his wife's reaction? She really had something now, and she worked it overtime. She increased the tempo of her criticism, including remarks about the "blond hussy" her husband was chasing around with, the while his wife stayed home and cleaned house and cared for *his* baby! All I could say was of no avail. It ended in a broken home—a sordid divorce case—lost souls for eternity! It could have been different!

Nagging warps the personality of children. I know a man who writes a lot about the influence of Christian homes. But the products of his own home show that most of what he knows is written for public consumption. There is a grave possibility that a cleavage among the churches may stem from the psychological influence of a nagging home. It's amazing how many major events in history have been shaped by the stomach ulcer, gout or cantankerous disposition of one man!

Children unconsciously absorb their environmental tendencies. One of our brethren worked in a chemical plant. He was perfectly healthy the day he began. Ten years later he was discharged on a pension as being unable longer to carry on his normal task. He had unconsciously breathed in the fumes, until his whole system was affected. Our children enter our homes with healthy minds. But if they grow up amidst hostility and criticism, petulance and pouting, they are going to be ill-equipped to face the battering of life. I know a boy who is a moral derelict. His parents cannot understand why, because they never missed taking him to meeting on Lord's Day as he grew up. But I can understand why, for I know something about their home life!

Yes, the dikes are crumbling. And nagging is like a pick-axe digging away at the moving sand and soil. It is like a rat gnawing at a frayed anchor rope, like the termites chewing on the foundation sills in the dark, like a parasite sapping the strength of its host and giving nothing in return. When this nation goes down, as go it must unless we bolster our moral and spiritual bulwarks, it will be because our home life disintegrated, betrayed by those who should have been its friends, destroyed by those who would have received its greatest blessings. More to be feared than an atom bomb in the hands of the Russians, is the spiritual weakness in the hearts of Americans!

Johnson's People's New Testament with Notes, \$5 for two volumes; Lard's Commentary on Romans, \$2.50; Milligan's Commentary on Hebrews, \$2.50. Order today!

THE PURPOSEFUL LIFE

BY ROBERT LILES, WINDSOR, CANADA

Everyone in this life should have a true and continual purpose. Such a person will stand out individually strong and be an inspiration to all with whom he comes in contact. One of the most beautiful statements outside of God's Word regarding the purpose of life is summed up by a woman who wrote under the pen name of Michael Fairless in the little book "The Road-mender." Said she, "After all, what do we ask of life here or indeed hereafter, but leave to serve, to live, to commune with our fellowmen and with ourselves; and from the lap of the earth to look up into the face of God?"



One who knows that he is on the right road looks forward to arrival at his destination. Similarly, he who has a purpose in life looks ahead to its fulfillment. In spite of temporary failures, discouragements, and times when everything looks dark, he knows that all will clear in time and so he faces all, be it good or ill, and carries on with faith.

The inspired James said, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (James 1: 2, 3). I believe James realized we would encounter trials and tribulations, some possibly more than others, that God would permit them to burden us in this life to try our faith, to work patience. He who does not have patience in this life cannot hope to be an approved character in the sight of God. As hardships, losses, and tribulations are encountered it should be with the realization that "to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for honor and glory and immortality," God will grant eternal life.

No one can quite measure the power behind an ever-increasing purpose. It has proved the one secret to useful achievement in endless cases in all walks of life. I believe Paul realized the value of an increasing purpose in life as he drew near the time of his departure. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4: 7, 8). To look forward to the appearing of the Lord Jesus is to realize that we have purposed in our hearts to subject our will unto his. If we can truly say we have obeyed

his will, we can certainly look forward to arrival at our destination where there will be no more sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain. This is what Paul realized. He had built up an increasing purpose to know nothing but Christ and him crucified, and such purpose was an evidence of growth. Purpose keeps enriching and enlarging one's entire character.

Let us from this day forward take the word of God into our hearts with meekness that it may be the means of our salvation. Let us truly base our purpose in life upon the foundation that will stand the test of time—the truth of Jesus Christ. He de-

clared, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9: 23). Why not purpose in our hearts to do this very thing? Let us daily live for and obey Jesus. The harvest truly is great but the laborers are few. Perhaps we have been living for self and pleasure, why not live for Jesus now before it is too late? Remember the words of Annie Johnson Flint:

God hath not promised skies always blue,
Flower-strewn pathways, all our lives through;

God hath not promised sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, peace without pain.
But God hath promised strength for the day,
Rest for the labor, light for the way,
Grace for the trials, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.

MODERN CIRCUIT RIDERS

A lot of men these days are commercializing the gospel! It is a question as to whether some love the Almighty, or the almighty dollar. These accusations are blunt and plain. They will produce a host of pious protestations and perhaps a few impious accusations. But that there is a noticeable abuse of the gospel, and a flagrant misuse of the Lord's money, can easily be proven. Some men carry credentials as evangelists who do not now do the work of an evangelist, and never intended to do so. In some cases the term "evangelist" is used as a bait to hunt churches with which to fill monthly appointments and siphon off the accumulated shekels which have been cast into the treasury. Such brethren ought to have been issued "hunting licenses."

Most of my readers have heard that I advocate the use of every man's talent. I also believe in helping weak churches and relieving them—but not of their money! I know of some men who hold down good jobs in the city, and receive a regular wage far in excess of what most gospel preachers would get. But on Lord's Day they climb into large automobiles, drive to a little rural or small town congregation, give a little discourse, visit around with the brethren or listen to a baseball broadcast in the afternoon, do another little preaching stint at night, collect the check, and head back for the big town filled with satisfaction and fried chicken. Some of our brethren are "Methodist circuit riders!" They have a method, they have a circuit, and they ride it! Some of them will ride me about this article—you watch and see! I imagine I can take care of the situation. If you are in doubt, try us out!

The church has about arrived at the place where no one does anything for the love of God. We've become a little selfish. If John works, it is for the love of John,

and if Pete works, it is for the love of Pete! The work of the Lord is on a C.O.D. basis. We have to pay someone to mow the lawn around the meetinghouse. We have to pay someone to launder the cloths for the Lord's Table. We have to pay the local brother who leads the singing in our annual two weeks attempt to convert any sinners who may accidentally wander in. We have to pay for our monthly ration of de-vitaminized spiritual food. It's going to keep on until we have to pay people for being good, or will they still be *good for nothing*?

I know of a place which has a very genial brother hired to feed them. There are several elders who are mostly figureheads. But at least one of them has a fairly good head for figures, and a job through courtesy of our beloved relative—Uncle Sam! Not being allowed to feed his own flock, this elder conceived the idea of going out and getting some other flocks to *fleece*—pardon the typographical error, that should read "feed." So he arranged for four appointments. I do not know what he does with the fifth Sunday—probably gives it to the orphan home! But this brother with an eye for business, informed the churches, that his regular charge would be fifteen dollars per trip. When the minister of the church over which he is one of the bishops, had to be away, the traveling elder was asked to speak before his sheep. He informed them that he would be pleased to throw down the fodder—at fifteen dollars per throw—the amount he would lose by not filling his regular appointment. This monthly preaching proposition is generally a "one-fourth pastor" scheme, with "preaching Sunday" the big day of the month. The other three Sundays just Jesus and the church are present.

Is it wrong for a man who has a good paying job to do what he can to help the Lord's Cause on the weekend? Indeed not!

It is right for him to do it! Let him go on Saturday night, if possible, and gather the brethren together and teach them. Let him have a training class on Lord's Day afternoon. Much can be accomplished in this fashion. It is "mere monthly preaching" which is both nonedifying and unprofitable (except to the preacher). Under this system brethren grow weaker instead of stronger, dependent rather than independent, helpless instead of helpful. The preacher should always work himself out of the church in-

I heard of a boy who wanted to "go to college to make a preacher" down in Arkan-

sas. That's the way you get to be one there. All chickens must come from a licensed hatchery. A brother came around and wanted to know if the church would "preach him one Sunday a month" to help him through school. This meant they would furnish him someone to practice on, then pay him to practice on them! In practicing any other "trade" you generally have to support yourself, but in the preaching profession, you now get full pay as an "apprentice." J. D. Tant used to say, "We are drifting!" I believe we are further along now—we have drifted!—*W. Carl Ketcherside.*

DEATH IS SO PERMANENT

BY M/SGT. M. A. VAN DEUSEN, U. S. AIR FORCE

Safety drives made during the past several years have headlined this much-quoted phrase: "Drive carefully . . . the life you save might be your own. Death is so permanent!"

At first glance there would seem to be little connection between a safety-drive slogan and the Christian life. Take another look, please; then try some serious meditating. The result might very well be a revelation of Christian teaching.

In applying the lesson you have perceived to your own life, you will soon discover that death is only permanent for the unenlightened . . . the unredeemed.

Paul said: "The trumpet will sound and the dead shall be raised beyond the reach of corruption, and we who are still alive shall be utterly changed. For this perishable nature of ours must be wrapped in imperishability, these bodies which are mortal must be wrapped in immortality. So when the perishable is lost in the imperishable, the mortal lost in the immortal, this saying will come true:

'Death is swallowed up in Victory.'

"For where now, O Death, is your power to hurt us? Where now, O Grave, is the victory you hoped to win? It is sin which gives death its power, and it is the Law which gives sin its strength. All thanks to God, then, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ; for He has delivered us from the fear of death, the power of sin and the condemnation of the Law."

The Apostle is referring, of course, to the condition of the righteous . . . those called from their sleep in the grave and the living saints . . . on Judgment Day. The sinner can never wear a coat of immortality; for, the term implies perfection, a condition directly opposed to the state of the sinner. What a day of rejoicing that will be for the righteous . . . trust repaid in full measure. The grave will have been conquered . . . death overcome . . . eternal life received.

As the end of life's path comes into view, there is no trembling of the limb, no palpi-

tations of the heart, no hesitation for the Christian. There's only a sincere desire to complete the trip and head for the home of the Spirit. The true child of God has prepared himself for this journey. For him the end of mortality is but the beginning of immortality. He knows there will be a pause for a season in the ante-room of Heaven's abode . . . midst the green pastures of Paradise. He also knows Christ will come again to claim His own. When that Great Day dawns the Christian will receive his reward. He believes that the physical must be destroyed and replaced by the immortal in order for him to enter the Heavenly portals. But destruction of the physical does not mean the ending of LIFE for him. He has lived for Spiritual things . . . therein lies his strength, his LIFE. He has walked carefully up the Christian pathway . . . the road to LIFE.

The sinner, however, has lived for mortality; satisfying his physical appetites with the corruptible fruits of this life. He has not walked carefully and spiritually, but has pursued blindly a course of pleasure-seeking. Since he has sought the mortal . . . the perishable . . . that will be his reward. He will not put on immortality. To believe the sinner becomes immortal is to make mockery of the basic teachings of Christianity. While he lives there is hope of his repenting and obeying; but, failing this, the grave is the end of life for him . . . physical and spiritual . . . and the beginning of eternal death . . . separation forever from the Father, the Son, the Spirit and that countless host of the redeemed. A separation that includes the torments of Hell, his spirit fully conscious of the continuing pain of the invisible flames of retribution . . . not being consumed but reserved for further torture throughout eternity. **SPIRITUAL DEATH IS SO PERMANENT!**

Will you not listen, then, to this plea today: "Walk carefully . . . the life you save will be YOUR OWN! **DEATH IS SO PERMANENT!**"

Not by Constraint

"... feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly. . . ."

I believe there is a meaning here which is not always perceived nor accepted. It seems to be accepted or assumed that if a man does not desire or is unwilling to accept the responsibility of the eldership he is excused from serving by this passage. But, to my mind, such an interpretation is against the common usage and understanding of language. The Holy Spirit here commands that every man who is qualified for the office of bishop, when he is called for the work by the congregation, should accept the responsibility and the work willingly. It should not be necessary to constrain him to accept it.

In other words, I am saying that it is time that we cease to excuse ourselves from work and responsibility which we are capable of bearing for no better reason than that we are unwilling to bear it. To be unwilling to accept a responsibility which we are capable of bearing is a violation of an explicit commandment. This is equally true of every station of Christian service. We should be willing to do any work for which we are qualified. We should show a willingness to try, a willingness to accept responsibility. We should be diligent, responsible servants, laboring to the extent, as well as within the limits, of our abilities. This is our duty.

Sometimes it is urged that a man may know his qualifications and limitations better than others know them. This may be true, particularly as to his moral character. But it is also true that we sometimes fall into certain interpretations of the Scriptures because of wishful thinking, it seems to me. And it is such a misuse of the Scriptures for a man to excuse his unwillingness to bear responsibility by the above given passage. We will here cite two examples to show that a man cannot always evaluate his own abilities.

When the Lord called Moses to go into Egypt and lead Israel out of bondage, Moses placed a number of objections as to his being unqualified. Yet he was answered on every point. He, with God's help, was capable, if he was willing. God did not improve Moses' mind or body, he took him as he was—and that Moses was pre-eminently qualified, none can deny.

Again, in the Parable of the Talents, when sums of money were distributed to various servants, a certain one received but one talent. Evidently his lord knew that he was incapable of handling the money. The servant was afraid of his ability. You'll remember—he hid the money entrusted to him that he might keep it safely until his lord's return. But the lord had instructed the servants to use the money, as he would, to build up his estate; while he was absent.

When the certain servant came to give account, and plead his inability, his fear, and his care that the lord's money be preserved—the lord of that servant did not acknowledge his plea as legitimate, but rather rebuked him as a wicked and slothful servant. He attributed the negligence of the man to laziness rather than humility. And I think it time that we consider whether our unwillingness to serve, to accept the responsibility and work of a greater charge, is due to laziness or to a true understanding of our limitations and to true humility.

Brethren, let us strive to implant in the heart of every Christian a deep desire to serve zealously, patiently, willingly, at all times, wherever he is called. Remember—"When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." And, "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant."—*Kenneth Morgan, Box 530, Klamath Falls, Oregon.*

About Elders

That every congregation of the church should have elders (bishops) I am sure every sensible Christian will admit. What is an elder? The word primarily means *older*, and that is the first qualification of a bishop. God does not leave it to man to decide what the qualifications consist of, but specifies them in two places.

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, no lover of money, patient, no brawler, not covetous. One that ruleth well his own house, having his children under subjection, for if a man cannot rule his own house, how can he take care of the church of God? Not a new member, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of those who are without" (1 Tim. 3: 1-7).

Most all editors say we cannot now find men to fill these conditions. Seventy-five years ago they were plentiful. What is wrong with the church that there are so few of them to be found now? The terribly solemn fact is that the church has gone into sin and mixed itself with worldliness until it is lost, and the "Bible Schools" are to blame before God.

The church must choose her own bishops and deacons. No man or set of men outside the local church, under the will of God, has any right to dictate to any congregation who may govern or control its destiny. I have known preachers to go to a congregation and select elders for them without even consulting the congregation. One of those he chose was a young man. I went to this place to hold a meeting and this man took me home with him for dinner to get my

help. He said, "I know as much Bible as the two old men combined, and I should be the leading elder." That stumped me for a moment, and I asked him to define a "leading elder." His palaver was sickening, for he had no Bible for his idea. I gave him a good raking over and thought he was all right when I left him. But later on he left the church and went to the devil.

When men have been tried, proven and selected, they should be appointed by an evangelist (Acts 14: 23; 6: 3). Their duties are revealed in Acts 20: 28; Titus 1: 9; 1 Peter 5: 2, 3. The ordaining is done by fasting, prayers and laying on of hands as the Scriptural precedent shows. Notice that the choosing and appointing is done by different persons. The first is by the church, the latter by the evangelists.

A foolish and unscriptural system has now been devised, in which the choosing and appointing are done by the pastor and a few of his cronies. The preacher and a select few of his chums will meet at the home of one of them and choose a few more favorites who will "go along" and they will then announce to the church who has been selected and ask them to accept it. That is the end of it until the next time rolls around. It is shameful and rotten, a disgrace to a Bible-professing people. What a crime to have above the door of the meeting place of such a group "Church of Christ."

If there is a place in the United States having tried and ordained elders who teach, lead and guide the members, raise up and train young men for the gospel field, feed the hungry, visit and minister to the sick, and send out evangelists to preach the gospel, that place is worthy of the name above its door.—*E. A. Lowry, 4923 15th Ave., Chattanooga 7, Tenn.*

DUSTWEBS

These wonders usually have small beginnings and we are puzzled as to how they are formed. They seemingly come from nowhere but appear overnight. They build and grow. The housewife in the spring and fall begins her cleaning, and sweeps down all of these filmy webs. She does it in a very meticulous manner, laboring long and hard until the task is completed. At the conclusion she has a satisfied feeling that all is "well done."

There are mental dustwebs too. Sometimes we have them clouding our minds as we come to the Lord's Table. There are those temporal affairs which do not leave our thoughts as we partake of the emblems. Often only small things distract our attention. Our thoughts being divided, we miss the solemnity which should surround the feast. The Bible says, "Let a man examine himself—discerning the Lord's body." We review our lives, determining whether we are eating in loving remembrance of the death of Christ and keeping in mind that these are memorials of Him.

It is necessary for us to sweep out our thoughts which do not belong to this occasion. We may be hard put to erase them at times, but must do so in order to realize the full benefit as we partake of the bread and fruit of the vine.—*Edward L. Albright, 21 East Orange St., Shippensburg, Penn.*

Tobacco Vitamins

Men who like to turn their noses into inverted smokestacks with down-draft nostrils, will now have another excuse to justify their hurtful habit. The American Chemical Society has just been informed that tobacco contains four B vitamins. They are nicotinic acid, thiamine, riboflavin and pantothenic acid. This no doubt explains why most tobacco worms are so fat and have a healthy look and uniform green appearance. Researchers claim to have isolated and identified more than 50 chemicals in tobacco, some of which are distinctly harmful.

Dr. Evarts A. Graham, one of the most eminent lung specialists in the world, recently said in a speech that he believed the present incidence in lung cancer is directly attributable to the increase of cigarette smoking. Still other specialists of renown believe that the use of tobacco is positively harmful to the heart and kidneys. In view of this we suggest that it will be safer to get your vitamins in capsule form, or by eating Wheaties, "the breakfast of champions." If you stay with cereals, one advantage is that you can drop a few crumbs of Shredded Wheat in your lap without burning a hole in the trousers of your best suit. The spoon if carelessly deposited on the table will not scar the varnish with a smoke-encircled fire brand. Under ordinary circumstances breakfast cereal will not give you a rotten breath, nor pollute the atmosphere for non-vitamin seekers. Neither will you get yellow, discolored fingers from Quaker Puffed Rice.

Tobacco is a great blessing. It is one of the best bug killers on the market for certain insect pests—and would you believe it, is also the basis for some perfumes? But, so is skunk musk. With the world so full of thiamine and riboflavin it is hardly necessary to get them in smoked form. We trust that none of the brethren who are slaves to the noxious weed, and who offer burnt offerings at the shrine of the goddess Nicotinia, will come up with the gag that they smoke cigarettes to offset pernicious anemia or pellagra, by increasing their vitamin intake. That's not the real reason, boys!

W. Carl Ketcherside

MIDLAND, TEXAS

The church here recently completed 2 weeks of Bible study with Fred Killebrew and Carol Bailey. The latter taught a children's class each evening. Bro. Killebrew gave 10 fifteen minute talks on Station

KJBC. He was viciously attacked by Floyd Stanley, "the minister" of Southside Church of Christ, who called Bro. Killebrew an infidel, accused him of making a fool of himself, and called us "parasites." Bro. Killebrew ignored the personal thrusts and taught God's Word with the result that several were deeply impressed. One was restored who will be valuable in the work. We invite all who desire a change of location to give consideration to Midland.—*Ellis Rotan.*

IOWA REPORT

Ivan L. Dennis reports the following aid received by the church at Mount Ayr, Iowa, since last report: Kansas City, Missouri (26th and Spruce) \$50; Tent Chapel (Iowa) \$30; Scotland Church (Missouri) \$25; Bethany (Mo.) \$16 and 2 gasoline lamps; Gallatin (Missouri) 24 seats. Members of Mount Ayr congregation are deeply grateful.

LECTURES ON PROPHECY

E. M. Zerr will deliver 3 lectures on fulfilled prophecies in the Saint Louis area, November 13, 14, 15. His subjects will be: "Universal Blessing Through Abraham's Seed"; "Divinely Enforced Idolatry"; and "Daniel's Seventy Weeks." Brother Zerr will also speak in St. Louis November 11, and at Hartford, Illinois, November 18.

APPEAL FROM KANSAS CITY

A fifth congregation was recently established in the Kansas City area as a result of a mission meeting sponsored by other Kansas City churches together with the congregations at Gallatin and Excelsior Springs, with the writer doing the preaching. Thirty souls were added to the sixteen already numbered among the brethren residing in the area, and one more has been immersed

since the meeting. Brethren have secured a lot in the heart of Claycoma, on U. S. Route 69, and would like to start building at once. They are appealing to faithful churches to donate to this worthy effort. Contributions may be sent to Ed Minster, Rfd 5, North Kansas City, Mo. Regular reports will be made in recognition of this help. The present meeting place is 5115 North Brighton, (Clay County), Kansas City, Mo.—*Kenneth Van Deusen.*

BIBLE CASES

Arthur Freeman, 1034 E. Monroe, Mexico, Missouri, is now entering production on a beautiful leather Bible case, made of first grade genuine elk. This is an outstanding zipper case which will protect your Bible for years. Write to Bro. Freeman for details. Use these cases as outstanding gifts.

LABOR DAY MEETING

The annual Hammond, Illinois meeting attracted an attendance of 2184 for the six sessions held in 3 days. Attendance increased at each successive service with 517 present for the last. There were 11 states represented in the audience with 71 congregations reporting. Although it had previously been reported that this might be the last annual meeting, Hammond brethren announced another for next year and issued an invitation to all to spend the Labor Day weekend with them.

POMONA MEETING

The congregation at Pomona, California, took advantage of the Labor Day respite for spiritual benefits with a two-day meeting. A full program was provided on Sept. 2, with a basket dinner at Ganesha Park to take care of those who attended from elsewhere. Brethren gathered at San Dimas

Park, on Monday, for breakfast, following which a program of short talks was presented. Previous to the occasion, Ray Webb, Raymond Keeth and Luther Turner were installed as deacons.

BOOK OF POEMS

"Some Thoughts in Verse" is the title of a book of poems by Nellie C. Honn, Box 34, Kemp, Illinois. The price of the book is \$1, and those who are interested should contact Sister Honn at the address given.

OUR NEXT ISSUE

In our next issue we will feature a story by the editor against racial discrimination. Roy Loney comes up with a good article on responsibility, and other writers will present excellent material.

The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America is looking for a city in which to establish headquarters. That was taken care of for the church of Christ by the King of kings.

We suggest that you send this paper to your children who are starting homes of their own.

Why is it that Christians will have papers in their own homes dealing with every subject except Christianity? Is religion just for Sundays?

We ran into a brother the other day who is opposed to religious journals. He wanted us to mimeograph a sermon so he could hand it to friends.

An inconsistent man is always wrong. If he is not wrong here, he is wrong there, but he must be wrong somewhere.

THIS and THAT from HERE and THERE

A. W. Harvey was in a meeting with Jerusalem church, near Bluffton (Ohio) the last of August. . . . Ray Hyatt informs us that the church at 6305 Blue Ridge Blvd. (Kansas City) has a new address: Box 133, Raytown, Missouri. Please remember this. . . . C. R. Turner reports 1 immersed and 1 added by membership transfer at Anderson (Ind.), from whence he went to New Castle for a meeting, to be followed by another at Bogard (Mo.). . . . Bob Liles reports another recently immersed by himself at Windsor (Ont.) Canada. . . . We are indebted to Mr. Adam Loughridge, Clerk of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland, for a great deal of material on psalm singing in the churches. The Reformed Presbyterians in Ireland use only psalms in their worship services and repudiate instrumental music. Mr. Loughridge occupies Glenmanus Manse, at Portrush, County Antrim. . . . We urge all of the brethren in Christ to subscribe for and read "Western States' News" published by our brother in the Lord, Kenneth Morgan, Box 530, Klamath Falls, Oregon. Send a dollar now for a year, and you'll be blessed by the investment. . . . We deeply regret to hear of the death of Bro. Harry Loney, of Cottonwood Falls (Kans.) and we send our sympathy to the family. He was a brother of Roy Loney. . . . John O'Donnell, Moline (Mich.) says he is a subscriber to the MISSION MESSENGER, and that it is a good magazine. Thanks! . . . The Sullivan (Ill.) Bible Study with E. M. Zerr conducting starts this year on Nov. 19. . . . A. W. Harvey reports 1 baptized and 2 added by membership transfer in the meeting at Jerusalem church (Ohio); and tells us that a railway engineer was immersed and his wife took membership with the Indiana Avenue Church, Bloomington (Ind.) Aug. 26. . . . We have received a very inspiring letter from Jerry Minton, who now lives at Baton Rouge (La.). . . . David Dougall labored with the church at Wallacestone (Scotland) during May and August, where 1 was immersed and 2 restored. His mission with the church at Slamannan began on September 2. . . . Edna Shearer reports the brethren at Reedley (Calif.) as showing wonderful growth in their development of ability to edify. . . . W. Carl Ketcherside spoke at Farmington (Mo.) Sept. 2. . . . Congratulations to Reginald Spence and Helen Watts who were married at Flat River (Mo.) Sept. 2. . . . Five women were immersed at the close of the midweek meeting, on August 22, in Belfast. (Ireland). . . . Thanks to Charles Powell, Martinsville (Ind.) for seven subscriptions sent in. . . . Thomas Dennis conducted open air meetings at Union Star

(Mo.) the first half of September using a public address system on his car. The last half of the month he held a series of meetings in a public park in Council Bluffs (Iowa) and is now at Martinsdale (Iowa). . . . Velma Nighthart tells us the meeting with Robert Brumback and Lawrence Swearingin, held at Antioch, near Bethany (Mo.) was very edifying. . . . Congratulations to Bert Carter and wife, Webster Groves (Mo.) on the birth of a fine baby boy. . . . We regret to hear of the passing of Sister Kidd, of Belfast (Ireland). She obeyed the gospel during the editor's labors abroad. . . . Thanks to Vearla Foltz for financial assistance in sending papers to brethren overseas. . . . Harold Shasteen concluded a meeting with good attendance at Old Scotland (Mo.) Sept. 14, in spite of rains which hindered much. Richard Riggins assisted. Harold began a meeting at Pollock (Mo.) Sept. 16. . . . The church at Gallatin (Mo.) sold their meeting-house and plan to build another starting soon. . . . The new meeting place at Chilli-cothe (Mo.) is fast nearing completion. It is in an excellent location. . . . Ellis Crum will work at Green Mound (Kans.) for 3 weeks, starting October 12. . . . Lloyd Riggins who recently closed a series of meetings at Cowgill (Mo.) is now in a work at Gallatin. . . . Jim Campbell recently concluded a meeting at Rock Hill, near Bogard (Mo.). . . . The church at Saint Joseph (Mo.) held a young people's meeting on Sept. 23. The church at Topeka (Kans.) held a like meeting Sept. 29, 30. Ellis Crum immersed 2 at Independence (Mo.) Sept. 16. . . . William Smith reports growth at Kirksville (Mo.). . . . Winford Lee had a good meeting with wonderful fellowship near Ludington (Mich.). He concluded a meeting at Ethel (Mo.) Sept. 2 and began at Clarinda (Iowa) on Sept. 10. . . . Congratulations to Bonnie Fiscus and Waldo Flory, Riverside (Calif.) who were married Sept. 8, with Clarence Cassell officiating. . . . Luther A. Gorham, Elmira (Mo.) says the last issue was worth a year's subscription. . . . Majoria Lee Shetler sends an invitation for all vacationers to worship with the congregation at 3514 West McDowell Road, Phoenix, Arizona. Lloyd Riggins spoke there on August 5. . . . We're sorry to learn of the death of John Fields, Riverside (Calif.). . . . Bob Duncan reports excellent attendance in his meeting at Holli-day (Ill.) with Loren McCord assisting. . . . Chas. Simms reports an attendance of 77 at Festus, Sept. 9. . . . Six families from the Jay Street Church, in Denver (Colo.) have started a new congregation at Golden (Colo.) with Roy Harris in charge. . . . George Shull, Mattoon (Ill.) says the paper is worth much more than the dollar it costs.

. . . Congratulations to Walter and Evelyn Henry on the birth of their baby girl; and to Bob and Rosemary Fraser on the birth of their baby boy. Both couples live in Saint Louis (Mo.). . . . Mrs. Ray Hyatt reports a good meeting at 6305 Blue Ridge Blvd., Kansas City, with Harold Shasteen preaching. Officers newly appointed there include Victor Gibson and Guy Gastineau, elders; Chad Freeman and Daryl Lancaster, deacons. Don't forget their young people's meeting, October 27, 28. . . . Congratulations to Charlene Roller of Kansas City (Mo.) and David Carpenter, of Indianapolis (Ind.) who were married at Kansas City, with Voris Carpenter officiating. . . . Thomas Dennis reports a new congregation of 7 members meeting at King City (Mo.). . . . One was immersed recently at Mount Ayr (Iowa). . . . Gerald Noffke, Sullivan (Ill.) thanks all who aided him in prayers and otherwise during his recent illness. . . . Bro. Robert Brumback reports good interest in his work at Dean Avenue Church, Des Moines (Iowa). . . . Leland King is to labor with the church at Cottonwood Falls (Kans.) for some time and needs a song leader to aid in a meeting at once. . . . C. R. Turner reports 2 added and 2 restored at New Castle (Ind.) where attendance was best in recent years. His next meeting was at Bogard (Mo.), closing with an all day meeting Sept. 30. He is now at Wakenda (Mo.) where he will close Oct. 21. There will be an all day meeting Oct. 14. . . . The Compton (Calif.) church held its 26th anniversary meeting on Sept. 23. . . . Fred B. Hale, Hawthorne (Calif.) says the paper is so informative he does not want to miss a copy. . . . John Patrick and Loren McCord started a meeting at Agra (Kans.) Sept. 26. . . . Charles Powell says 13 have been added at Martinsville (Ind.) this year. . . . Floy Kastning, Long Beach (Calif.) says they read the paper from cover to cover and it has helped them much. . . . Elizabeth Clapp, Canby (Minn.) says it has helped her much in understanding the Bible this past year. . . . Lloyd Riggins reports a good meeting with Sulphur Springs church, near Fontanet, Indiana. He began at Cowgill (Mo.) Sept. 9. . . . Wilford Landes will conduct a Bible Study for students of high school age and older, at Farmington (N. Mex.) from Dec. 24-31. . . . Our article "To Every Honest Soul" appearing in March 1951, may be reproduced in tract form in Australia. . . . Norma Jean Landers reports 1 added and 2 restored in the meeting at Canolou (Mo.) with James Mabery. . . . Brother and Sister Daniel A. LaRose, Crystal City (Mo.) will celebrate their golden wedding anniversary on October 6. . . . Thanks to Ruth Cassell, Pomona (Calif.) for 5 subscriptions.