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WHY YOU NEED THE CHURCH

BY ROBERT H. BRUMBACK

Through all of the centuries of the Christian era, the church has been the one organization given for the salvation of mankind. It alone has carried aloft the light of God's love for humanity. It is often criticized and sometimes blamed for the very ills it came to cure. It is even blamed for the breakdown in present-day civilization. Cautious charges are brought against it for its impotence and helplessness in certain spheres. Many individuals get a wrong view of the purpose of Christ's Church and think that it should control politics, settle wars and dictate to peace conferences.



This was not its purpose in the beginning, neither is this its purpose now. It exists alone for the salvation of the soul. Learning can blaze new trails of thought, new ideas can be promulgated through academic halls, but we must not expect the church to fall in line. It exists, not for the advancement of science and learning, but for the welfare of the souls of men.

I am ready to admit that various groups of religious people suggest that its old truths, its old beliefs and its old worship must be discarded for the sake of progress. May I state that God is not interested in progress. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. So with the church established by His Son. Christ said of those who would be in it, "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." He left no plans for its improvement, for it is God's creation and we cannot improve upon it. It does not exist to provide entertainment for the world, but for spiritual needs of those who are its members.

Christians are always interested in the welfare of the community, supporting all civic improvements, but these things are not the purpose for which the Lord's Church exists.

Its purpose is not to promote cooking classes, to sell hamburgers, oyster stews or mid-week dinners. There are organizations that meet the needs of the human family along these lines. The church exists for

something higher. It is set for the salvation of mankind. Its work is to feed men with the bread of spiritual truth from heaven and to satisfy their thirst with the water of life. It exists only to proclaim the plan of redemption. Christ came to seek and save that which was lost. When I speak of the church, I have in mind the One Body of Christ, which He purchased with His blood.

We are surrounded today by religious confusion. Scores of religious institutions make up Christendom. Amid this confusion I would direct your minds back to God's word. In it there must be the pattern of the church as it was established by the Savior of man. From that pattern we dare not deviate.

Even as Moses was commanded of God to make all things according to the pattern shown in the mount, so must we, if we would be the Lord's church, have all things shown in the pattern, the New Testament. That church, Christ's Church, was made as He wanted it, for the Spirit-guided apostles taught all things commanded by Christ.

If we follow the teaching of the New Testament as a guide we will be able to reproduce the church in faith and practice. Why should we not do today exactly what the church did in the beginning? It was established by the Apostles, in the city of Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost. Under their guidance the disciples continued to sing, pray, teach, commune and contribute. What more does the church need today? They were known as Christians. Why should we not be so named today? This organization was known simply as the church of Christ. Why should we not continue to thus honor Him?

They were guided by the Apostles' doctrine, the teachings of the New Testament. Isn't it just as profitable today as when first given for the guidance of God's children? This body of believers was under the guidance of the overseers, the bishops, the elders, for these names all refer to the same men. Each congregation was ruled by a plurality of elders, scripturally qualified, selected by the church.

Why should it not so be today? On the first day of the week they met to remember Him, to sing psalms, and hymns. That simple worship was not accompanied by musical instruments for these were left out of the worship of the Lord's church. Why, then, should we use them today?

The plea of the church of Christ today is for these same things, for that love that prompted their work and worship and for that unity that conquered the world. Only those connected with that church were saved, for He is the Savior of the body. Religious teachers sometimes tell us that the church is not necessary for salvation. To teach that it is not, is to teach that you can spend your life out of the church, and still go to heaven after the judgment. This teaching strikes at the very purpose for which the church exists. If I can be saved out of the church then Christ died in vain, for He bought it with His blood.

Those depending upon morality alone for salvation cannot be interested in church life, so with a heart that is hardened against the divine word there is no chance for it to save their souls. Morality alone will keep you out of jail but it won't keep you out of hell. All who believe it will are lost, because the saved are in the church. "The Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved." This scripture clearly shows the saved are in the church. The Scriptures are an infallible guide upon this subject. *They answer the question as to why we need the church.*

When Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus, he said this, "The Gentiles are fellow heirs and of the same body and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel" (Eph. 3: 6). When Paul spoke of the body he referred to the church. Here the fellow-heirs, members of the body and partakers of the promise refer to Jew and Gentile as subjects of the gospel, because they became members of the body through it.

Notice Paul declares they are fellow heirs. Of what? Of the promise of God. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made, He saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3: 16). Paul explains, "If you are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

In the letter Paul wrote to both Jews and Gentiles at Rome he said "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ if so be that we suffer with him that we may be glorified with Him." Notice the phrase "children of God" and the promise that they are to be glorified with Him. Here Paul clearly indicates that the ones to be glorified are God's children or family. Again Paul said "Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in Him-

self one new man, so making peace, and that He might reconcile both (Jew and Gentile) unto God in *one body*, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph. 2: 15, 16). Reconciliation takes place in the one body,

and that is the Church. "For He is the head of the body, the Church." So if you want to be reconciled to God, you must be in the church, for that is where reconciliation exists between man and God.

AN APPEAL TO SINCERE THINKERS

BY W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

The New Testament church provides the only hope of salvation in the world. Religious organizations established by men, creeds written by the hands of men — these have no power to save eternally. The works of man are limited. Man can invent nothing which will extend beyond this world. The earth and all of its works are destined to be burned. Only that which has been provided by the eternal, immortal and invisible God can endure. The earth will pass away; the word of God endureth forever.



Jesus established but one church. He provided but one way from earth to heaven. It is not enough to be in a way that is better than some others, or in one that is nearer right. We cannot afford to be concerned about the comparative values of human systems. One might spend a lifetime in seeking to know the various creeds, and in comparing them one with another, and still such a career would be unprofitable and a total loss. It is rather our task to ascertain the true way and walk in it. It is not essential for the pilot to know where all the snags and shoals are located. It is enough if he knows where the clear channel flows.

God has either revealed the way of salvation, or he has not. If he has not, then we are all lost, and hopelessly so. If he has done so, then we must walk in the light of that revelation or be rejected as rebellious. We contend that he has revealed unto us a system that is right—rather, *the* right system. Now that system has either been revealed in language that can be understood, or in a manner which cannot be understood. If the latter, we are not responsible, and need not concern ourselves in an attempt to grasp its requirements. If the former, then we must study that language, inform ourselves of its demands, and fulfill the obligations imposed thereby. No one would be so ridiculous as to charge that God would reveal his will in language that was not comprehensible, then damn those who do not comprehend it. Such a system would not be a revelation, but a concealment!

If one person by the use of reason can comprehend that will, every person by the same use of reason, or by use of the same

reason, can do so. Moreover, if one gains an understanding of it, then everyone else who understands it will agree with him in that understanding. You may misunderstand a thing in a dozen ways, but a dozen men can only *understand* a thing in *one* way. If they disagree, both may be wrong, but they cannot both be right. They may both misunderstand and differ but they cannot differ and both understand!

The difference between churches of Christ and the rest of the religious world is not about what the Bible says, but about what it does not say. We do not differ on what is contained in the revelation but over what is not contained therein. We contend that since there was but one gospel of salvation given to mankind, that the same gospel must be preached today as was preached by the apostles. We contend that it can be understood now, and when understood will demand the same things in obedience that it demanded when first declared. We must do the same things to be saved from our sins as those who first heard it. After remission of past sins, we must live the same life, perform the same ordinances, observe the same acts of worship as first century Christians. This should not require proof. It should be admitted by all sincere thinkers.

Bible things can be described by Bible terms. Anything that is scriptural can be defined in scriptural language. Anything which cannot be described in scriptural terms is not scriptural. The people of God can be described in the language of the Holy Spirit. Thus they can be called disciples of the Lord, saints, holy brethren, children of

God, or Christians. Anyone who sustains a relationship which cannot be so described is either more or less than what God requires. The terms Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Congregationalist, and a host of others, are not in the Bible. They divide believers in Christ, not because Christ has ordained any of them, but because he ordained none of them.

The assembly of saints can be referred to as the church of God, temple of God, bride of Christ, church of the firstborn, church of Christ, etc. When we speak of a Roman Catholic Church, an Episcopalian Church, a Methodist Church, we are speaking of something that is not in the Bible. Therefore, no Bible language can be found to describe these organizations. It is impossible to describe any sectarian body properly with scriptural language. The church which is described in the New Testament is not only non-sectarian, but is inimical to all sectarianism. If proclaimed and universally accepted it would destroy all sectarianism. That which makes a Christian does not make a sectarian!

Infant baptism, sprinkling and pouring for baptism, observation of special holy days—these are not Bible things. No Bible terms can be used to describe them. Popes, archbishops, cardinals, presiding elders—all of these are foreign to the Bible. We are contending for Bible doctrine in Bible language, for Bible things in Bible terms. Everything which the Bible teaches we accept. We stand for everything for which the Bible stands, we stand against everything for which it does not stand. That which is not revealed is not a part of God's system for man, unless that system has been imperfectly revealed. This latter is unthinkable to Bible believers. Let us take on only what the Bible requires. Let us divest ourselves of everything that it does not require. Let us respect what God's Book says. Let us respect what it does not say. Then we shall be together. This shall we "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." May God hasten the day!

THE STORY OF A BACKSLIDER

BY ROY HARRIS

"For Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world." (2 Tim. 4: 10).

When anyone goes astray from the truth, leaves the church, we are made to wonder why. Just why would anyone turn away from the gospel of Christ, the only hope of salvation? Has he never had an opportunity to know the truth? Does he not realize the seriousness of his step?

Had Demas always been weak? Was he one who never had taken much interest, never had been active, never had been associated with strong brethren? Apparently the answer to all these questions is "No." Demas

had been associated with the apostle Paul. (Col. 4: 14.) He sent his greetings to the Colossian brethren, indicating his interest in them. Paul called him one of his fellow-laborers, (Phil. 24), indicating Demas had been active in the church. In spite of all this, when Paul wrote to Timothy, perhaps a year or so later, he had to say, "Demas has forsaken me."

What caused this change? The answer, "Having loved this present world." Demas had failed to set his affection on things above, rather than on things on the earth. (Col. 3: 2.)

Are you a potential Demas? An outwardly faithful worker today, a deserter tomorrow? Or were you faithful yesterday, but indifferent today? Why? We are prone to blame circumstances or some other person. Instead, let us look within ourselves. Just so long as Christians love this present world,

fail to set their affection on things above, the road of life will continually be littered with the spiritual carcasses of back-sliding Christians who have forsaken the fellowship of Christ and their brethren for the glittering attractions of this perishing world. Let us watch and pray.

or funeral services . . . just call him and see. He does much . . . yet, he does NOTHING. How strong are the congregations where he visits? Not in numbers . . . but spiritually? Too bad that eventually they must die out. The Spirit is being stifled . . . instead of being permitted to grow in the believer's hearts, He is smothered in ignorance. So you can see, my friend, this marvel of Satan's trickery is a fully-qualified murderer, whose misdeeds will face him on Judgment Day. Moreover, such a person is guilty of undermining the whole structure of Christianity. What a terrible indictment!

WEAK - END PREACHERS

BY MILLARD A. VAN DEUSEN

The legitimate work of an evangelist, of which preaching is but a small part, brings to mind the great responsibilities assumed by one who gives his whole life and effort to Christ. A soul-searching examination of spiritual qualifications, as well as human, makes most of us realize how inadequately we fill the role we have had the temerity to presume as ours.

Have you ever noticed, for instance, how smugly we are able to answer religious questions tossed our way by a skeptical world. We answer our brethren in the same manner. Glibness hides a lack of wisdom . . . that's our maxim. If it were not for the Book, tucked so confidently under our church-going arms, I'm afraid we would be left high and dry most of the time. Not that we give the Book, or its divine Author much credit . . . how could we . . . professing one thing, and doing another! Even the world isn't gullible enough to swallow that one.

I feel sure that old-time Christians, like Paul and Peter, would be astounded by the practices of Modern New-Testament Christianity. The doctrine wouldn't be hard to recognize . . . that hasn't been tampered with too much . . . but, the methods used to spread the doctrine would be hard to stomach. As well acquainted as they must be with the qualifications and work of an evangelist, they would be hard put to find any similarity between apostolic requirements and many of those found in the church today. Times have changed . . . how they have changed! Instead of men of God seeing to it that Satan's domain is flooded with experienced workers . . . messengers who can carry the Good News to unsaved sinners . . . the apostles would find sanctimonious fools posing as preachers . . . and elders. This doesn't mean that all evangelists or elders are sanctimonious fools . . . many of them are faithful servants in the Kingdom, laboring without thought of earthly reward. But there are so many more . . . in the overall picture . . . who are do-nothings. They refuse to preach the Truth. To commit that ERROR would be tantamount to cutting one's self off from easy support, through return engagements that would not be forthcoming, to fill vacations from secular work. Which is better, my PREACHING brother, . . . to preach the Word as it is, and enjoy the rewards of Heaven; or, to preach it as sinners would have it preached, and burn?

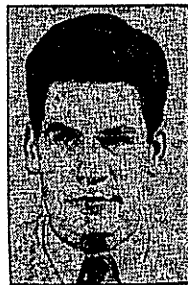
The prize exhibit . . . one guaranteed to floor the simple apostles . . . is our WEAK-END PREACHER. Perhaps the spelling seems wrong: it isn't, I assure you. For with it, we have a more accurate description . . . in one word . . . of a depicable character. This person demands squatter's rights in the Spiritual Kingdom. Mark well his habits! He bears the necessary credentials from his overseers. He is well-learned in Scriptural language; can even quote long passages with remarkable ease. He's always willing to PREACH for LARGE congregations regularly . . . which means monthly. His influence is strongest on PREACHING SUNDAY. What a DAY that is? We deride others for the feast-days they observe . . . as well as fast-days. What about ours! On this FEAST DAY . . . and THIS day only . . . you may become a Christian, you may be immersed, you may be taught, you may worship GOD with a FULL service and a FULL house. The other Sundays of the month . . . they're only fast-days. This "man of God" will also take care of any wedding

It's quite true that many small congregations cannot afford to have an evangelist work with them full-time. Therefore, they hire a WEAK-END PREACHER. Besides, to have a man work with them exclusively is a most unpopular idea . . . sounds too much like pastoring. Certain responsibilities have been delegated to the evangelist who is endeavoring to set a congregation in order. If you disagree, I suggest you study Titus a little more carefully. If you deny the authority of Paul's language, then you deny the authority of God, Himself. It's quite scriptural for strong congregations to help new and unsettled congregations to become qualified to be set in order. This can best be done by supporting an evangelist to do the necessary work. Sometimes, it is necessary for the weak congregations to band together in a concerted effort to overcome the causes of their weakness. By striving to be scripturally correct, they can remove this weekend parasite from our midst . . . the WEAK-END PREACHER.

THE RESURRECTION

BY ROBERT LILES, WINDSOR, CANADA

There is probably no sorrow or sadness more common in this world than that which we experience when a loved one is taken



from us by death. Each of us has been, or shall be, called upon to face this stark reality of life. Since the day when man transgressed God's law in the garden of Eden, God decreed that man should be punished by physical death. Adam represented all mankind when he sinned—that is to say, the transgression of God's law in that day was a representative sin, and therefore we, even today, must answer to the punishment decreed "thou shalt surely die." Like the heavy black pall of impending disaster, the threat of death is with us from the first breath of air we draw at birth. Perhaps in the early years of our lives we are wholly unconscious of the burden, but as the days

and seasons roll by, we indeed feel the increasing weight of its ominous portent. One by one we see our friends and loved ones succumb to the judgment of the Almighty. We see their wisdom, beauty, and strength lost to us within the confines of the grave. All our tears and prayers cannot bring one word from their silent lips.

In spite of this, we may surely realize and be thankful that every sorrow and tragedy on this old earth has its compensations. We see about us continually, testimony of the saying, "every waste may be repaired." After the cold dreary winter, the earth breaks forth in all the fresh loveliness of a God-given nature. We notice how true is the Psalmist as he declared in Psalm 19:1, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." Man must surely acknowledge this in the spring-time as the God of heaven brings to life an apparently cold and dead earth. Out of the dry bulbs and withered branches come forth the fresh young flowers; the dry brown grass

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THE BOOK OF JONAH

BY BOB L. DUNCAN

The book of Jonah contains four chapters and forty-eight verses and can be read in less than five minutes. "For centuries, verbal battles have raged over Jonah and his whale; Fundamentalists, philosophers, theologians, scientists, fought the fight" (*Literary Digest*, June 27, 1936). It is probably criticized more than any other book in the entire Bible; yet we are told that not ten per-cent of the American populace has read the book through at one sitting. In order to be a competent critic, one must not only read the book but study it thoroughly. No doubt, many of the people who have criticized it the most bitterly have never taken the time to read it.



Jonah was a prophet of Gath-hepher who prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II. There can be little doubt that he is the prophet of the book of Jonah as his father's name is given in both 2 Kings and the book of Jonah. One author informs us that Jeroboam II reigned from 825-774 B. C. Jonah's prophecy regarding Jeroboam was that the borders of Israel would be extended from Hamath to the Dead Sea during his reign. The book of Jonah is a marvelous example of God's universal love and fore-casted a better day when God's love for all nations would be manifested by the gift of His son. At just what period Jonah was told to go preach to the city of Nineveh I can't say. It may have been before or after his prophecy concerning the enlarging of the borders of the ten-tribe kingdom. Jonah sought to evade his responsibility by fleeing to the distant city of Tarshish, Spain. Embarking from the port of Joppa, he began his long voyage westward on the Mediterranean. A great storm arose upon the sea which was so severe that the destruction of the ship seemed imminent. The mariners began to cry to their gods for deliverance. The captain, finding Jonah asleep inside the ship, critically admonished him to implore his God for the safety of the vessel. Thinking the storm was the result of misdemeanor on the part of someone aboard, they cast lots to determine the guilty party. The lot fell upon Jonah. Jonah confessed that he was trying to flee from the presence of God; yet, he apparently contradicts his actions by saying that God made the sea and the dry land (Jonah 1: 9, 10). If he realized that God was the universal Creator, why should he have sought to flee from his presence? It's possible that Jonah thought before he embarked that God's influence was limited to the borders of Palestine but was convinced

of his mistake by the raging storm which arose upon the waters. However, it would appear that he should have known better being a Hebrew prophet and apparently acquainted with the sacred scriptures as evidenced by his quotations from various portions of the Psalms contained in Chapter II. Such, however, is the folly of man in striving to escape responsibility. As the storm gave no indications of subsiding, the sailors were compelled to cast Jonah overboard, having been instructed by him that this was the method by which the seas could be calmed. "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." Convinced of his folly, Jonah prayed from the stomach of the fish and was vomited out upon dry land. We are not told at what place Jonah disembarked from his strange journey, but he went from this point to the city of Nineveh and began his dirge of doom, "... Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." The most amazing miracle of the narrative then occurred; the entire city repented! From the king upon his throne to the lowly beasts of burden, all wore sackcloth and fasted. If I were to read in this evening's paper that a man had been preserved in the stomach of an enormous fish for three days and nights, I would not be nearly so surprised as I would be should I read that everyone in the city of Indianapolis had repented and turned to serve God. The greatest miracle of this book is often overlooked. Was Jonah overjoyed at the successful results which attended his preaching?

"But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. And he prayed unto the Lord and said; I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil."

Jonah then went out upon the east side of the city to wait till he might observe what would be the fate of the city. The Lord prepared a gourd, which we are told is the castor-oil plant, and this gourd plant springing up provided welcome shade for Jonah. God then caused a worm to destroy the gourd; then an east wind was sent and the sun beat down fiercely upon Jonah's head. Once more he became angry.

"And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night; And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein

are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"

Some things in this book have been appropriated by infidels and used as ammunition to fire against the stronghold of faith. These criticisms have caused men of professed Christian belief to engage in inventions. Some of these inventions are that the book is moral fiction; that it is symbolical or parabolical; or that it is merely a dream. One author has advanced the opinion that it was an initiatory rite symbolizing a new birth and that it came to be regarded as historical in process of time. A Mr. Lamsa contends that, according to the interpretation of dreams in the East, fish or whale means trouble or indecision and that Jonah in the whale is the same as an American saying, "He's in the hole." Those who accept the inerrancy of Jesus and deny the historicity of the account of Jonah advance the following arguments:

1. Christ spoke according to the ideas of the people when he said, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." In other words, Jesus wasn't confirming the historicity of these events but was just speaking according to the understanding of the people. If this argument is correct, then why does He refer to the Queen of Sheba in the next verse with the same terminology that he used in speaking of the men of Nineveh? Was her visit to the court of Solomon as recorded for us in 1 Kings 10: 1 a mere fairy tale? If Jonah's stay in the fish's stomach was mere fiction, then was Christ's stay in the tomb the same? If the men of Nineveh never really heard Jonah preach then they won't arise in judgment and condemn the Jews, and Jesus falsified when He said they would. We see the dilemma in which one places himself by such an argument. Jesus was contrasting fact with fact, not fact with fancy nor fancy with fancy. He places the same historical value on the book of Jonah as on the book of 1 Kings. He didn't mean that he was greater than a fancy formed man when he

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said, "... behold, a greater than Jonas is here."

2. Another of their arguments is that the story couldn't be historical because there are so many details omitted, such as the place where Jonah landed when the fish vomited him forth, the particular sins of the Ninevites, the specific type of calamity which was to come upon them if they failed to repent, the name of the Assyrians king, etc. All this proves is that the book wasn't written according to present standards of historical criticism and not that it wasn't historical. It suited the purpose of the writer as it was a story of glory to the God of Israel.

I accept the historicity of the book of Jonah because I have complete confidence in the integrity and ability of Jesus. Yes, I accept it on faith. It is ridiculous to seek to relegate faith to the realm of antiquity, for even in these modern times faith is a necessity. The marriage contract is based on faith in one's companion. It's faith in the government that causes people to accept pieces of paper with little intrinsic value in payment for debts. We never saw George Washington; yet we believe he lived because there are competent historians to tell us about him. When Jesus spoke of Jonah, He was testifying of a man whom He had known personally, for Jesus was the pre-incarnate as well as the incarnate Word (John 1: 1, 2, 14). "... I believed, and therefore have I spoken ..." (2 Cor. 4: 13). When we know that a historian is competent and honest, then we have confidence in what he records. I have complete confidence in the character and divine ability of Christ; therefore I accept what He says as true. It's as simple as that.

Concerning the authorship of the book, Jewish tradition accepts Jonah. However, most modern scholars assign the writings of the book to the fifth century B. C. Nothing is said in the book of Jonah itself relative to the authorship. "... Bleek supposes that from Nineveh being mentioned in chap. iii. 3, apparently as a city of the past, the composition could not have been before B. C. 626-606." If this be true, Jonah would be eliminated as the author of the book on the grounds of the dating of the reign of Jeroboam as mentioned earlier in this dissertation. It is within the bounds of reason to suppose that an author of a later date could have recorded the events just as any historian might do. However, it is my conviction that this historian was inspired by God so that his record of events regarding Jonah was not subject to human error.

The most commonly discussed miracle of the book is that of the prophet being swallowed by a sea monster and being preserved in the stomach of the great fish for three days and three nights. The hackneyed argument used by the ordinary skeptic is that it is impossible for a whale to swallow a man. The Bible doesn't say that he was swallowed by a whale! In the book of Jonah the He-

brew word translated "fish" is *dag*. It appears nineteen times in the Old Testament and each time it is translated "fish." The whale is not a fish but a mammal. It follows the order of viviparous birth and suckles its young. It is warm blooded. A misleading translation in the New Testament has produced the idea that Jonah's host was a whale. Jesus did not necessarily say that Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly as the translators have rendered it (Matt. 12: 40). The Greek word translated "whale" in the New Testament is *ketos* and is defined by Thayer in his famous Greek lexicon as, "a sea monster, whale, huge fish." "In the first place it is necessary to observe that the Greek word *ketos*, used by St. Matthew, is not restricted in its meaning to 'a whale,' or any *Cetacean*; like the Latin *cete* or *cetus*, it may denote any sea-monster, either 'a whale,' or 'a shark,' or 'a seal,' or 'tunny of enormous size.'" (William Smith, *A Dictionary of the Bible*). It is translated "sea-monster" in the *Twentieth Century New Testament* and "great fish" in *A New New Testament* and *The Living Oracles*. The Hebrew word for whale is *tannin*. The Old Testament Hebrew says that Jonah was swallowed by a great *dag* (fish)—Jonah 1: 17. The New Testament says that he was engulfed by a *ketos*, (Matt. 12: 40), and nowhere does the Bible necessarily imply that he was swallowed by a whale. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament agree, however, that Jonah was plunged into the capacious maw of a great fish or monster of the deep.

The question that now confronts us is as follows: Is there a fish or sea monster which is capable of swallowing a man and retaining him in its stomach for three days and three nights? There is a shark which is known as the Rhinodon Typicus, called variously the "bone-shark," the "Indo-Pacific shark," and the "whale-shark." It is more commonly known by the latter name. This creature sometimes attains a length of fifty feet; and one account tells of the largest specimen captured, seventy feet in length. It could easily swallow a man and has done so. We are told that there are multiplied occasions of this, but I shall consider only two. The first comes to us from the shark-infested waters of the Hawaiian Islands. A soldier from Schofield Barracks on the Island of Oahu was reported missing without leave. Thirty days after the man had disappeared a group of Japanese fishermen set out to sea and later were annoyed by the presence of a Rhinodon basking on the surface of the water in the vicinity where they wanted to spread their nets. The feeding habits of this monster make it particularly destructive to the nets of fisherman. It will lie on the surface apparently asleep until it becomes hungry, then it suddenly opens its enormous mouth and goes rushing through the water at full speed picking up whatever may get in its path. On this occasion the men went back to port and obtained

a high-powered rifle and their harpoons. After they had subdued the creature they towed the body back to the beach and cutting it open to examine the contents of the stomach they found the skeleton of a six-foot male human being. Every bone was undamaged and undisturbed indicating that the man was swallowed whole. These were identified as the remains of the missing soldier. We have indicated this much then, that *there is a monster which swims the deep which is capable of swallowing a man*.

The next question we ask ourselves is this: Are there any cases on record where a man has been swallowed by the Rhinodon and preserved alive within its stomach for any length of time? Sometime ago a magazine devoted to current events contained an article telling of an English sailor being swallowed by a Rhinodon. The account stated how the man had fallen overboard in an attempt to harpoon the monster, and the great shark, feeding, turned and engulfed him. Frightened by the outcry of the onlookers, the fish sounded and disappeared. The entire trawler fleet put out in search for the creature, and forty-eight hours after the accident the Rhinodon was sighted and slain with a one-pound deck gun. They towed the carcass to shore thinking that they would give the body of their friend a decent burial. However, when the shark was opened they were amazed to find the man alive! He was unconscious and suffering from shock but was discharged from the hospital a few hours later as being physically fit. The account closed by stating that the man was on display in a London museum advertised as "The Jonah of the Twentieth Century." His entire body was devoid of hair, and his skin was covered by patches of a yellowish-brown color.

If this account be true, we have here a case where a man was preserved for two days and two nights in the stomach of a great fish without any hint of divine intervention. It is quite possible that Jonah spent no more time than this, if as much, within his marine host! Jesus said that as Jonah was three days and three nights in the sea-monster's stomach so He would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. "... The Hebrew form of expression for *three days and three nights* was likewise used generally and indefinitely for *three days* simply." "... The Jews were accustomed to call parts of a day as a whole day" (Butler, *The Bible-Work*). Hence, though Jesus was actually in the tomb only part of Friday, all of Saturday, and part of the Lord's day; yet, it is spoken of as a period of three days and three nights. If you say Jesus was buried on Thursday you will have Him in the tomb four days according to the language usage of the Jews who counted part of a day as a whole day. Assuming that Jesus was placed in the tomb late Friday afternoon, he spent approximately thirty-six hours in the sepulcher of Joseph of Arimathea. If this period of

time could be spoken of as three days and three nights, the same period of time might be spoken of in the case of Jonah as three days and three nights! If this be true, he could have had eleven more hours and still have come one hour short of the time the English sailor was in the stomach of the Rhinodon.

It is not necessary to explain this incident from the standpoint of a natural occurrence. However, it shows the weakness of the skeptic's argument even when you take his point of view. The whole matter revolves around the expression, "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." If all that I have said about the possibility of this happening from a natural standpoint were proven to be false—and maybe it can be done—I would still believe the story of Jonah because my conviction is that it was a miracle. One writer who lived in an earlier day had this to say,

"That the preservation of JONAH in the bowels of the fish was an impossibility according to the course and nature of things, as they now exist, is quite evident; but it was no greater reversion of nature than the parting of the Red Sea, or the dividing of the streams of Jordan, or the sustentation of life in Moses during his stay on the Mount for forty days. The laws of nature were equally suspended in all these instances; and to deny to Him, who made these laws to be what they are, the power of changing them, is an inconsistency which no reason can justify." (Calvin—*Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets.*)

For all I know, the fish of the book of Jonah may have been the only one of its kind that ever existed as the Lord prepared it.

Outside of the incidents of the book which have given rise to controversy, there are some marvelous lessons to be observed. One of the most outstanding is God's love for all nations; also the impossibility of fleeing from responsibility. Many are seeking to, "flee . . . from the presence of the Lord . . ." (Jonah 1:3) today. That is, they seek to evade responsibility to God by making excuses. Some say it is impossible to know what God requires of them and so put forth no appreciable effort to determine His will. In many cases this excuse is nothing but a cloak to hide one's lethargy and giving him an opportunity to pursue a haphazard, devil-may-care course of life without any qualms of conscience. The very nature of the Bible should cause the individual to realize that it deserves his earnest consideration. Some set themselves up as critics of the Bible who have spent very little time in the study of it. This is highly unfair. If as much time was invested in the study of the Book as is expended in the study of some college textbooks, I'm sure there would be more believers. However, it deserves more earnest consideration than this. We have a responsibility to this Book of books, and to the humble Galilean it reveals. We shall either meet that responsibility now or face it in Judgment. "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here" (Matt. 12:41). Let us think on these things.

the old journals show. Today the fate of the restoration movement hinges principally upon one congregation meeting at the corner of Paris and Berlin Streets, in the Shankill Road area of Belfast. It is difficult to determine the actual membership, but I would say there are about 45 male members in the church.

Northern Ireland is intensely religious. Small gospel halls dot the countryside and are well filled on the Lord's Days. Many of these are maintained by the Plymouth Brethren, and the membership is often composed of dissenters from the larger sectarian groups, such as the Presbyterian and Church of Ireland. Even in Belfast, a city of 500,000, the Lord's Day is rigidly observed, and many of the large church buildings are filled to capacity both morning and evening. Many of the larger factories and works have Bible classes at noon each day, and there is always opportunity for a religious discussion.

In such an atmosphere the New Testament church should thrive, and no doubt would, if the brethren could always dwell together in peace and unity. As it is, the church in Belfast will get more non-members at one gospel meeting, than some churches in other parts of the British Isles would get to attend during a whole year. The church regularly carries on a full schedule of services, especially during the winter season. In addition to the breaking of bread, a Bible school for children is conducted each Sunday afternoon with an excellent attendance of boys and girls. These seem to be well taught by a corps of some 10 teachers in as many classes. After the other classes are dismissed, one of the elders teaches a class for the older young people in the congregation. It seems quite thorough to me.

Gospel meetings are held on Sunday and Wednesday evenings, with various brethren sharing in the proclamation. On Tuesday evening a children's meeting is conducted by two sisters who render effective service to a group of boys and girls often numbering 130 or more. A ladies meeting is held on Friday nights, but it was not productive of any special spiritual good that I could determine. It is without any particular plan, and both attendance and participation are haphazard. Nothing of an edifying nature is accomplished, and the chief value seems to be the getting together of a very small group of women for tea and cakes, while they knit and talk. One cannot help but wish that such occasions could be used for the study of the Bible, and the improvement of the heart and mind in the service to our blessed Lord.

The congregation is like most at home and abroad. It has some who are possessed of much zeal and little knowledge, some of much knowledge and little zeal, a few with both, and others with neither. As a whole the congregation is not too well-informed in the practical teaching of God's revelation, and a few seem perfectly content to remain

THE BRITISH SCENE

BY W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

It has become a custom for those who visit America from England to write upon "The American Scene." Likewise, travellers who go from this land to Britain seem to feel that their trip is not complete without a report of their observations and discoveries. It is doubtful whether any permanent good is done by such reports. I have long debated whether I should set down my impressions, and even yet it is with some reluctance that I bow to the dictates of custom. I have just returned to my native land after 5 months of absence during which I was associated with disciples in many sections of the British Isles. I do not consider that such a stay makes me a competent authority upon the subject of the churches and their functions, and I set forth the following ideas purely as my own. They represent what I saw, or thought I saw.

Such a record as this can be produced in several ways, and from various angles. One could play up all of the good things and by blinding himself to adverse features, he

could stand in well with some British brethren. Or, by emphasizing the disagreeable tendencies in contrast with a few good things in our own land, he could keep in good with certain American brethren. The other alternative is to tell the actual facts regardless of prejudicial attitudes and be in bad with both. It is this latter course I shall pursue, since I've decided to write, for "with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of man's judgment." I shall divide the "scene" into four parts, with reflections upon the condition of the church in three different sections, plus a few general observations about the work in general.

1. North Ireland

Near Dungannon, which I thrice visited, the seeds of the restoration movement were first sown long before the days of Alexander Campbell. Even in the latter part of the nineteenth century there were congregations at Londonderry, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Belfast, and other places, as reports from

in that condition. Certain things are stressed by a few to the utter exclusion of others just as important. A systematic, consistent and persistent study of the Bible as an unfolding of God's plan is sadly needed by every one of the adult members, and indeed, all of the British churches lack at this point. But before such a thing can be accomplished the membership must be converted to a sense of responsibility.

The church in Belfast is made up of free-hearted, generous and humble people. There are no rich men among them. They labor hard and for long hours, and live simple lives in simple fashion. Herein lies their strength of character, and their hope for the future. They are in general non-sectarian in their outlook, seeking neither to paganize their religious neighbors, nor to minimize the good they accomplish. They have a fair concept of the restoration attitude, and are neither bigoted nor hypercritical. The disciples are sympathetic and reverent as becometh saints.

One serious handicap lies in the fact that the church is composed, insofar as oversight is concerned, principally of one family, or its connections. Out of the 5 members of the oversight, 3 are brothers in the flesh, and another is a brother-in-law to one of them. This provides an opportunity for critics to say that the affairs of the church are manipulated by a family clique, and such criticism throws an added burden upon the oversight, as they must strive to maintain impartiality whilst furthering the work.

As to future prospects for the advance of simple New Testament Christianity, it must be stated that some have a vision of great things for the days ahead. During my stay, brethren completed the negotiations for a site upon which to erect a Nissen hut in another part of the city. Here they will plant a part of their present membership to erect a new fort for Jesus. I am personally dubious about the success of the undertaking, in spite of the advantage of the location. I am not sure that the leadership has the necessary executive ability to weld the membership into a cohesive, cooperating working force, and I fear there will not be a sufficiently determined aggressiveness to go "over the top" with the project. The condition of the rear part of the present meeting hall demonstrates that the brethren have a greater will to start a task than to finish, and the excuse most commonly heard is that only a few will assist. I would like nothing better than to be proven wrong in my surmises relative to the new undertaking, and will be the first to doff my hat to the Irish brethren if they prove my pessimism to be unfounded.

My spirit is depressed by certain tendencies which are apparent. The church in the past has been troubled by outbreaks of personal jealousy. Sometimes it takes a different form in Ireland than in the United States. Over there brethren are afraid that

someone will do more than themselves; over here they are afraid that someone will not. Jealousy among brethren is a terrible seed, nurtured in hell, planted by Satan and encouraged by our own littleness. It is ever a sign of an inferiority complex and manifests itself in pulling down to one's own level those whose level we cannot aspire to reach. The love of God should so fill our hearts that brethren need not worry about babying and pampering us. You cannot do God's work efficiently while trying always to be careful not to give an imaginary slight to those who have cherished feelings put out like radar beams on every side, probing for something to pout about.

Fortunately, I possess nothing to create jealousy in the heart of anyone, so I found a good friend in every Christian heart in Ireland, without exception, insofar as I know. If I had any enemies before this article was written I do not know it. But even a cursory knowledge lets one see that the congregation is not free from this blight which hinders and holds back the work. Certain ones, with best intentions, but with little tact, add fuel to the fire, and by ill-chosen words stir up unnecessary conflict and animosity. My brethren, such things ought not to be!

I went to Ireland to work with the oversight in every scriptural endeavor. I had their perfect cooperation and the loyal support of the whole church. Not a single untoward incident marred our fellowship. Certain practices about which I had heard before going, and which might have been a grief of heart, were not carried out, though opportunity was afforded. I resolved to be made a servant to no clique, and to refuse to be made a cat's paw to pull anyone's political chestnuts out of a religious fire. I knew before I went that there had been some schism, and I knew that it was caused to a great extent by American influence. When I was issued the invitation to come and labor with the church, I went to preach unity and not division, peace and not discord. I regarded every member of the church in the same light, sought to be impartial and to encourage all to higher living. When the ship left the dock at Belfast, and slowly steamed out into the dusky harbor, I looked upon the faces of the throng of disciples on the pier, and tears came to my eyes, as I heard their song, "God be with you till we meet again!"

I love the church in Belfast. I love every member with a heart filled with gratitude for their kindness. Brethren, you have a great future if you'll but take advantage of it. Learn the blessing of united service for the precious Lord. Be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. I thank you for what you taught me, for your smiles, your tears, your prayers and sacrifices. I cannot forget our labors together for his blessed name's sake. May we all meet someday in his blessed favor.

2. Scotland

The "land of the thistle" has always had a fascination for me. With Scots blood in my veins, and a link by heritage to Glasgow in the generations past, my heart has ever thrilled to the stories of "old Scotia." It has always seemed quite appropriate that in this land of rugged beauty, Alexander Campbell should first catch a glimpse of the beauty of the gospel plan free of clerical modifications. I first heard of the Slamannan District churches a quarter of a century ago, and when I first went to Scotland in 1947 I expected to find congregations aggressively pressing the warfare against sectarianism with stalwart leadership in the van of the fight. I had conjured up in my mind a vision of working churches, each with its own plurality of qualified bishops, each a respected part of the neighborhood, and a power for good. How different was my actual view!

Make no mistake about it! This area has produced some noble defenders of the faith, men who were great students and exponents of the living Word. And there are still many who love the Lord and speak often of His name. In this account, however, I do not refer to individuals so much as to churches in general. The congregations (some of them) remind me of an aged man in senile helplessness, sitting in the shade of a tree and continually recounting the battles and victories of his youth. One hears repeatedly of the momentous accomplishments of James Anderson, more than half century ago. In some places there has been little since to boast about. And aged men sometimes have but little to which to look forward to but death. The same can be true of aged churches.

Time has taken its toll. It has been aided in some instances by the jealousy and petty bickering, the "feuding and fighting and fussing" of those who set out to show the divided religious world the way to unity and perfect peace. Over some meeting house doors could be written the word "Ichabod," and a monument in the yard might be inscribed "Sacred to the memory of a body stabbed to death by its own members." I have a deep feeling of sadness when I see once mighty forces for good, feebly treading the last mile of the road to community oblivion.

Naturally, other factors than those mentioned have contributed to decadence. There is the opposition of a state church with its organized power, pomp and political privilege. The General Assembly sat in session while I was near Edinburgh, and the pageantry was more befitting of Caesar than of Christ. The streets were filled with men of clerical dress, most of them puffing on cigarettes. It is difficult for humble disciples to compete with such display in the eyes of a worldly public. Yet the simple gospel once toppled the emperors of Rome from their despotic thrones.

Too, there is a general apathy and indifference toward eternal welfare which offers a stubborn resistance to the truth. The effect of our efforts is not enhanced, however, by a compromising membership, with worldly tendencies. I had expected to find in Scotland, of all places, a consecrated, sanctified and holy membership. But I had been too much under the spell and influence of Burn's description of "A Cotter's Saturday Night." I was not prepared to find that in some congregations there were cinema-going, pleasure-seeking, worldly-living members of the type which are all too frequent. Some of the congregations make no impression on the community at all, because "the salt has lost its savor." Perhaps the type of person we have described is not typical. Surely the majority are not like this, but "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Too, every church is not guilty of indifference, but many are, and in some cases they are aided and abetted by a leadership which through political manipulation has seized power and will not let scriptural discipline be exercised.

The picture is not all dark. There are bright spots. I am thinking of at least 2 congregations which have wonderful possibilities, if they can but consecrate their entire membership unto "a closer walk with God." But there will have to be humility, crucifixion of self, and fervent prayers even there. Another place shows signs of a spiritual revival. In Scotland I found a proclaimer of the Word who is growing in grace and knowledge, and who is unassuming and sincere. I believe that he has a grasp of the needs of the church and will labor to "set in order the things that are wanting." For him, and for all of our brethren in every congregation, I earnestly pray. But all efforts will be hampered, if not unavailing, until the churches in this area cease to live in the past and bask in the glory of former triumphs. Here, above all places I have been, churches should "forget those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling."

The Cause has been influenced in some localities by economic conditions. Mines which formed the sole means of sustenance have closed due to the exhaustion of the coal seams, and people have emigrated to other lands or moved to other portions of Britain. Thus the membership has depleted in communities and the church has been weakened. Often this process has been aided by a lack of interest upon the part of some who remained. It is a tragic commentary upon the church of the Living God that a throng will gather for an annual social with its food and entertainment, but it is impossible to secure cooperation for gospel proclamation in such an area.

There is also the grave danger that congregations may become frantic at their own condition and turn to any source which is

open for what appears to be a temporary increase of interest. Churches beholding the Boys' Brigades, the Youth Movements, etc., of the state church, may be tempted to embrace such worldly expedients to hold their young people who are lost simply because of the lack of constructive leadership, and due to an insufficient program of home training and indoctrination. The introduction of Christmas trees, secular youth programs, and other sectarian machinery is not only an admission of failure to accomplish spiritual aims through the gospel, but represents the beginning of the end of pure, wholesome New Testament Christianity. Yet some Scots churches have either taken such steps or gaze longingly at their possibilities.

However, the brethren of reputation amongst them, are resisting the pressure of outside influences, even those alluring influences from America which would undermine the fundamental principles upon which a complete return to Christianity must be based. The people of Scotia are independent thinkers, and have a determination unsurpassed by any other people. Conservative in tendency, unwilling to be driven about by any clerical caste; brethren will study carefully the fruits of any move before they make it. For this they merit commendation!

It is time for a great spirit of revival to strike the churches in this region. To achieve it, there must be strong, virile, uncompromising preaching. Someone with

courage which knows no fear, must condemn sin until men's hearts melt with fear before the Lord. The church must be set on fire for God. It is not enough to keep raking the cold ashes of yesterday. There must be a rekindling, and it must be done by someone who courts no favor, who is impartial toward saint and sinner. The church needs to be brought to its knees in humble confession of shortcomings, and inspired to rise and conquer for Him whose name is "Immanuel." If such preaching can be done, and if brethren will admit their need of a complete return to God, there may yet come out of this land of stalwart, sturdy sons, the dawn of a new day for the Restoration.

It is no time for soft-soaping, or for sob-sister emotionalism. Such preaching fills the church with half-converted members. It is rather a time for challenging, chastening declaration of the whole gospel, succeeded by careful, prayerful training and developing of every child of God. Christ needs to be brought to Scotland, and Scotland needs to be brought to Christ. What good will it do for us to oppose an unscriptural "Cooperation of Churches of Christ" if at the same time we do not manifest before the world a scriptural cooperation of the churches of Christ? Gird on the armor and carry the fight to the enemy. Truth has not lost its power; then let us not render it powerless.

(To be continued)

TALKS ON TIMOTHY

BY HAROLD BAINES, MORLEY, ENGLAND

"Instruction in Righteousness"

We now turn our attention, brother, to the more practical application of Christianity to our everyday lives. In this, the phrase above, taken from 2 Timothy 3: 16, is of importance to you, both in your capacity of a teacher of others, and in the equally important one of teaching yourself. The ability to impart knowledge to others is an important one in any sphere of life, as so much good or harm may be done, according to whether the instruction is good or bad. Information carelessly given is often completely misunderstood. The student gets a wrong understanding of the thing he is trying to learn, consequently never masters it, so can never attain full proficiency in the branch of industry or commerce in which he is training, until the deficiency is made good.

How much more so, when it comes to instruction in Christian living. The imparting of knowledge on this subject must first have

been taught, and know from personal experience what it means to be a Christian before he can give full force to the doctrine he is trying to teach. You will see then, brother, the full implication of our text. The Word of God is profitable for correction, reproof and instruction in righteousness. Not only is it profitable for reproving error or correcting mistakes, but shows us precisely what to do and how to do it.

Righteousness is right living. We can never attain here the sinless perfection of our heavenly Master, but we can attain a measure of righteousness by living according to the principles, precepts and examples of the New Testament. The Word is profitable for instruction in righteousness in three ways.

Firstly, in enunciating principles, i. e., foundation truths, not only the great facts of Christianity historically, but the basic facts of the moral laws of God without which the universe would not exist nor life continue. These are presented in both testaments. Take one example: "God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."



Secondly, the Word imparts instruction through precepts, that is, definite moral laws, for example, "Thou shalt not steal," "Love one another," "Overcome evil with good." These are moral principles, or precepts. Upon them and others like them, we mould our personal conduct before the world of men.

It is not sufficient to proclaim our faith in the resurrection of Christ, or that baptism is essential to salvation, or that we should not forsake attendance at the Lord's Table. These are important, but what the world looks for is some outward evidence of our faith in these things in our relationships with one another and the outside world. We reveal that evidence by our righteousness.

Finally, we get one or two classic examples of how these things were put into practice, particularly in the Acts of Apostles. One case in point will serve. In Acts 8: 26-40 the act of baptism is described in detail, as an example of how believers' immersion should be administered. We see just what took place at that immersion and countless thousands of immersions have been carried out since on the basis of the example shown here.

Your next step, young brother, is to learn how to impart that knowledge to others. It

is a task of great importance, particularly when there are those present well able to instruct you. Many years ago I was to address a certain church at the Lord's Table. It is a custom in our part of the world for the presiding brethren to announce a visiting speaker after this fashion: "The time has arrived for the edification of the church. I will call upon our visiting speaker, Bro. ——— to address us." This particular morning the president said, "The time has now arrived for the church to be *instructed in righteousness*. Bro. Baines of Morley will address us."

Those words seared into my brain like hot coals. I was expected to instruct the church here in righteousness. I couldn't do it. I had never before looked on my talks like that. I ascended the rostrum not a little confused. What I spoke of I shall never be able to recall, but in quiet, humbled tones delivered what I had to say, for among the sea of faces I saw several aged saints revered for their work's sake, and I was expected to instruct *them* in righteousness. My preaching took on a different meaning after that and I did a lot of soul-searching. We must get ourselves right first as far as we can, that our example may be a means of instruction. Without this anything we say will be of no avail.

The valley of Kadisha is one of the most spectacular sights in the world. It is a deep defile in the mountain cut by a sparkling stream of pure water that issues from a fabulous cave. Along the rim of this gorge many of the Crusaders who missed the last boat for Europe sought refuge from the Moslem conquerors, and have kept their faith and their blood for centuries in their mountain stronghold. Many are blonde or red-haired, and the children have names straight from England and Normandy.

The mountains of Lebanon, in which the earliest Christians found safety and which the Crusaders briefly wrested from Moslem rule, has been an island of Christianity ever since. The young republic of Lebanon is today the only nation of the Middle East with a Christian tradition and majority.

Perverted as the pure Gospel has been in some of its forms here, it is so superior to the faith that dominates most of this part of the world that the Christians stand out among their neighbors like shining lights. If the true Gospel could return to the lands of its beginning, they might once more flow with milk and honey.

J. H. MABERY DIES

The faithful churches sustained a great loss in the death of J. H. Mabery, Bonne Terre, Missouri, on July 8. Our brother, who had suffered several heart attacks had been removed to the hospital and given orders for complete rest, but the weakened heart could not recover its strength. Bro. Mabery has been responsible for starting several congregations in south Missouri which are monuments to his zeal. Up to the time of his death he was ever ready to go and teach the Word of Life wherever opportunity presented. For a number of years he was with the Saint Joseph Lead Company in a supervisory role, but upon his retirement several years ago, he devoted his entire energy to the church. Funeral services were conducted by the editor, who has sustained a tremendous personal loss in the passing of this intimate friend, counsellor and fellow-worker. Fred Killebrew assisted.

LABOR DAY MEETING

The annual Labor Day gathering will be held at Hammond, Illinois, on September 1-3, preceded by a series of meetings with Bernell Weems. The meeting on September 1, will feature talks by the young people who are present. Three young men from Windsor, Ontario, Canada, will speak at the Sunday night service. The meeting on Labor Day will be held at the Cecil Fleener home. You are urged to write for reservations at once, giving number expected in your party, specifying how many men and how many women will be in the group. Address correspondence on these matters to Verlin Bolin, Hammond, Illinois. Please write at once!

THE CEDARS OF LEBANON

BY ROBERT T. HARTMANN

Special to the Mission Messenger

(Bro. Hartmann, a member of the Compton (Calif.) congregation, is a Los Angeles newspaperman spending a year in the Middle East under a Reid Foundation fellowship award. He will report regularly on his travels in the Bible Lands—Ed.)



LES CEDRES, Lebanon. —Here in the shade of the Cedars of Lebanon, some of them 2500 years old, one cannot help but reflect on the brevity of human life and the eternity of Divine truth.

Not many of the ancient cedars are left, but perhaps a dozen remain that were growing in the time of Christ. They are clustered, together with a few "young" trees only 500 or 1000 years old, in a hillside hollow near the snowcapped summit of the 10,000-foot Lebanon range.

The cedars are not tall giants like the California redwoods. They are short and squat, their limbs hugging the barren mountainside for shelter. The cedar wood has a lovely fragrance, and is so durable that pieces of it excavated from 3000-year-old sites can still be planed and worked.

When Solomon was building the Temple, he had to make a deal with Hiram, King of Tyre, for the necessary timbers, as Judea is a treeless land. Cedars were hewn here by the skilled lumberjacks of Sidon and Tyre and floated down the Mediterranean coast to Judean ports, then hauled up the mountain road to Jerusalem (1 Kings 5).

It must be remembered that timber was more precious than gold to the ancient civilizations of the Middle East. Only on a few high mountain ranges, such as the Lebanon, do trees grow large enough to supply timbers for roofing and other heavy construction work. Most building in this region was then, and is now, of stone.

The Phoenicians, who once inhabited the coasts of Lebanon, became the world's first seafarers because they alone had timber to build seaworthy vessels. The little sailboats that ply these coasts today are not much different from their Phoenician prototypes.

Every conqueror of the Middle East, from the early Egyptian dynasties to the start of the Age of Steel, has coveted the Cedars of Lebanon. In the course of centuries the forests have been mostly cut down. But a remnant was saved high above the valley of Kadisha, and is now a sort of national park, where skiers go in winter.

THE HIRELING

BY D. J. WHITTEN

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This article which first appeared in "Firm Foundation," April 18, 1950, is herewith reproduced at the solicitation of a brother in Paragould, Ark.)

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep" (John 10: 11-13).

Jesus uses the good shepherd, the sheep, and the hireling to represent two kinds of preachers or teachers. The hireling represents the preacher or elder who preaches primarily for hire, while the good shepherd represents Christ and all feeders of God's people who are willing to suffer for the flock. Though the hireling is condemned, it is evident that those shepherds who are faithful are to be supported. Paul says, "God has ordained that they that preach the gospel shall live of the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9: 14). Every developed congregation should have a plurality of elders who are commanded to feed the flock of God. To the elders of the church at Ephesus Paul said, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20: 28). These shepherds were to be supported by the church. Bishops were not to be muzzled as was the ox that treaded out the corn (1 Tim. 5: 17, 18). However, they were not to feed and oversee the flock for filthy lucre, or money, but of a ready mind (1 Pet. 5: 1, 2). Elders were among the highest qualified members of the church. From 1 Tim. 3 and Titus 1, we may learn what qualifications elders must possess. Other scriptures also refer to the work, and duty of elders. There is not another office in the local congregation that requires as many high degrees of qualifications as is required of elders. It would be indeed strange that God would require such a high standard of qualifications for elders and then not expect them to do anything but act as figureheads.

The modern pastors (or ministers) as they are called by the churches of Christ, have just about supplanted the elders. The minister has become the indispensable man in the local congregation. The cry for a minister has gone out like the cry of Israel for a king. He is referred to as the minister as though none others in the congregation acted as ministers. Such speech reminds one of the elder. We should read the Bible enough to learn how the word minister is used. By the consent of the leaders, or so-called elders, the minister takes over the feeding of the flock. He does almost all the public feeding, and the leaders or elders,

have taken their seats to either rust out or die out. Wherever a congregation has this kind of set-up the whole congregation comes to have a feeling of ease, and sits by and watches the minister do almost all the work. He not only does nearly all of the public teaching, but he does most of the visiting of the sick, and seeing after delinquent members. He is expected to do almost all the personal work. Wherever a preacher has been given all the public teaching to do it is all but impossible to develop elders, preachers, and teachers in the local congregation, which is the duty of every congregation. In order for men to develop into elders they must be given an opportunity to speak often in public. The same is true of all others who wish to become public teachers in the church. Elders must be apt to teach—skillful teachers. They were to be able to convict the gainsayers (Titus 1: 9). Elders were commanded to feed the flock, and this cannot all be done in private. The modern pastor or minister has made elders obsolete—they have no work left for them to do. The elders have turned over all the work God has commanded them to do to their minister. The result is we have but few qualified elders, and the only way we have left to develop elders and preachers and teachers is to send them to a Bible college. In this way the church is pushed into the background and the Bible college is exalted above the church. I am not opposed to Bible colleges, neither am I opposed to a church using a preacher, but I do oppose the wrong use of either of them.

It may be asked, in what way, or ways, does the modern minister represent the hireling of John 10: 11-13? A hireling is one who works primarily for hire or money. Jesus describes the hireling so we need not be in doubt as to who he is. The hireling sees the wolf coming. The wolf represents anything that may endanger the church. The preacher or elder or any feeder of God's people who sees some evil teaching or practice that is liable to lead members into sin or worldliness and is afraid to put up an honest fight against this evil is certainly the hireling of John 10: 11-13. Jesus says, "He fleeth because he careth not for the sheep." The hireling is more interested in his job than he is in the souls of men, hence when there is any danger of his losing his job, by his fighting some worldliness, he will detour and let this evil devour the church. Anything that can endanger the church can be this wolf. The theater, the dance, skating-rink, card party, beer and other strong drinks, and other lustful things as tobacco smoking and such like. Such things have become the pack of wolves that are devouring the church members everywhere.

The church is to be a glorious church, not

having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but is to be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5: 26-27). The preacher who sees the church being led off after lustful and dangerous practices and fails to put up a real fight against such things is the hireling of John 10: 11-13. Such preachers generally become partakers of these bad things themselves, and the flock is dispersed. The church is cursed with these modern hirelings. When they apply for a job, or hear of a call for a preacher, the first thing they are interested in is, what is the salary? They care not for the sheep, but for the hire. They seek to please men and should not be recognized as servants of Christ (Gal. 1: 10).

It is evident that most congregations can use a preacher, and a large congregation should support several, and a few do. There is much preaching that should be done in most communities that elders do not have time to do. Besides this, there is always the need for mission meetings in towns or communities where there is no church of Christ. Let congregations use preachers to evangelize the surrounding country and when in the assembly take their turn in teaching the church, but they should never be used so as to supplant the public teaching of others who need to develop into teachers, or elders and preachers. Every male member who is faithful and has any ability to do public teaching should be encouraged to develop as much as possible. Such men are needed all over the world, and they may be called upon any time to do public work in the church, and if they are not prepared they cannot do it. Class teaching alone cannot prepare one for public teaching.

In the church at Corinth there were many spiritually gifted members, some had the gift to prophesy, some to speak in tongues, and some to teach. The apostle Paul gave instruction to the effect that all these different gifted teachers might assist in the public worship so as to edify the church. Two or three of the prophets were allowed to speak at each meeting. No one was allowed to use all the time (1 Cor. 14: 31). God could have revealed a complete message through one speaker, but he did not choose to do it in this way, and he had a reason. "Ye may all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all be comforted" (v. 31). God's way is the only right way, and for us to ignore this way is to set aside God's way for our ways. Brethren, can we ignore this plain unmistakable teaching on how to edify the church and expect God to judge us faithful? I am afraid he will not.

TENT MEETINGS

Winford Lee began a series of tent meetings at Hagerstown, Indiana, on July 8, closing on July 23.

Roy Loney and Loren McCord began the first meeting in the new tent provided by the churches, on August 1, at Hays, Kansas. Pray for these efforts.

AS I SEE THINGS

BY LAWRENCE THOMPSON

Recently I read again some articles by Bro. Ketcherside and Bro. Hurst in the February issue of the *MISSION MESSENGER*. I think they both come short of one of the main difficulties in the church today. There is a desire by many brethren to go back to Jerusalem, and knowing these two men personally, I know that they want to go all the way back, and get a model of the church as it was in the beginning. Any other pattern for the church would come short of the glory of God.

I may not be able to point the way clearly because I am troubled with the same traditions as everyone else. We have come out of sectarianism and perhaps our concept of the church was derived from that source rather than from the pattern laid down in the New Testament. That sounds bad, but much as we would like to deny it, we have but to look about us and observe the practice of the church at various places, and compare that with the New Testament.

Our practice generally is to meet on Lord's Day, observing the same routine each time. We sing two or three songs, have prayer, go to the classes, then listen to someone preach a sermon, after which we partake of the emblems at the Lord's Table, then dismiss and go home feeling we have done all that is required of us. And I have heard preachers remark that this is the church at work. Is this your idea of the church? If the one to which you belong follows this procedure with a midweek service I am afraid it got the pattern from the wrong source.

When Moses was about to make the tabernacle he was admonished to make it according to the pattern shown him in the mount. That tabernacle was but a temporary building for the time then present and was to be done away. Seeing that the church is to last for all time, how much more careful should we be to follow the pattern given for us. We seem to think that the only way the church can grow is to have a nice house in which we can meet (one to be proud of) and to which we can invite sinners to come and hear the gospel preached by our best speaker, hired for the occasion. We seem to forget that those who were scattered abroad were not apostles, but yet they went everywhere preaching the Word.

Some of them travelled as far as Phenice, Cypress and Antioch (Acts 11: 19, 20) and as they went, they preached the word of the Lord. As for houses, they met at the homes of disciples. When the church came together in one place, they were relaxed and at rest. The assembly was for the saints. It was not a gathering of sinners to have the gospel preached unto them. They did their preaching when they walked by the way, or when they stood on street corners,

or as they pursued daily tasks. But when they met on the first day of the week the purpose was to break bread and edify one another, "for ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all be comforted" (1 Cor. 14: 31). I would like to see a congregation where each and every member was a minister for the Lord, and where each member could and would preach the gospel to the world.

Bro. Hurst laments the fact that many congregations call the preachers rather than send them. So do I, but why send someone to do the work that the membership is supposed to do? It is true that there is a work in the church for evangelists, but I think if you will study instructions to Timothy and Titus you'll find they were to instruct the church, rather than preach to the world. Timothy was left at Ephesus to charge some that they teach no other doctrine (1 Tim. 1: 3). He was not to have the oversight. They had elders there. Titus was left in Crete to set in order the things that were wanting, to ordain elders in every city (Titus 1: 5). To appoint elders he had

to first teach them, so that they would be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convict the gainsayers (Titus 1: 9).

In Acts 20: 7 we learn that disciples met on the first day of the week to break bread. 1 Corinthians 16: 2 would indicate that it was a regular practice to meet on the first day of the week. 1 Corinthians 14: 26 sets a procedure for the meeting, and verse 31 says everyone may have a part in it. The evangelists today should be kept busy teaching the disciples that are made by the preaching of the individual members, so that they may grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: I do not quite follow the reasoning of my brother in the above. The very word "evangelist" means "a proclaimer of good news." The instruction of Paul to Timothy was to "Preach the word" and the term "preach" is from *kerusso*, which means "to cry out, or proclaim as a herald." This is distinct from the work of a teacher. Everything that has been said about teaching the church to function is correct, but it still remains that the apostolic example is "Daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5: 42). Philip was an evangelist. "He preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea" (Acts 8: 40).

IF ANY MAN MINISTER

BY WILLIAM J. HENSLEY

Those who really believe in New Testament Christianity are of the conviction that every Christian is a minister (servant) and thus has a duty to fulfill. This was true of the house of Stephanas (1 Cor. 16: 15) as they addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. This ministry of individual Christians cannot be discounted as a determining factor in the growth and expansion of the church of Christ.



The church is faced with a menace by reason of a subtle system which is fastening itself upon congregations throughout every part of the world. We stand on the threshold of an apostasy which can sweep the church into sectarianism. The "one man minister system" has not a single scripture to sustain it, nor an inspired example for precedent. It is foreign to the New Testament. I read of bishops and deacons in the local congregations, but nowhere do I find the office of "the minister" mentioned. All proclaimers of the gospel in the first century were evangelists.

The one man ministry system violates the principles of New Testament worship. The general practice of "the minister" is to de-

liver a formal sermon at the hour for public worship on Lord's Day morning, as well as to render professional services at other times. Under this arrangement, the individual saints have no opportunity to exhort the assembly. To employ "the minister" in this way is not only to create an unscriptural office, but to add a general practice in the worship, which was never ordained of God. In view of this, we then have a man-made arrangement inserted into the worship of the local congregation (see Matt. 15: 9).

Paul's visit to Troas (Acts 20: 7) constitutes no ground for the system we are opposing. The same is true of the year that Paul and Barnabas spent with the faithful in Antioch (Acts 11: 26). His labor, regardless of zeal, must be placed where it belongs. He is the "professional touch" produced by the theological schools to give the church a modern approach to the many in sin. But as followers of the Lord, we must not only be sure of obtaining results, but that they are obtained the Lord's way. To let our zeal, activity and accomplishments multiply by any other standard is to go down the long, sad roads which the denominations have travelled.

Let us guard against any addition to His Word. Let us seek to keep the worship of the local church in harmony with the New Testament. Let us uphold the Bible teaching that all saints have a ministry to perform

as servants of the Lord. Surely nothing can be lost by having this kind of faith and works.

In closing I wish to quote a statement from Mr. Stanley I. Stuber in his book, "How We Got Our Denominations." On page 27, under the chapter heading "The Church in Antioch" he says: "The worship was very

simple. There was singing and prayer, followed by a reading from the Old Testament. . . . An exhortation on the Old Testament passage followed. *There was no formal sermon.* The service was much like the prayer meeting of a generation ago. The Lord's Supper was celebrated with the bread and wine in memory of the Lord's Death."

THREE THOUSAND — TEN MINUTES

BY W. G. ROBERTS

Many make light of the idea of 3000 persons being immersed on Pentecost, and say they would have had to be sprinkled. I can immerse a person as quickly as they can sprinkle one. Who has ever claimed that 3000 were baptized in one day? In Acts 2 it says that 3000 were baptized but does not say they were all immersed in one day. There were plenty of pools in the city, and adequate places for immersion, so we need not worry about whether they had a place to immerse all who desired to obey God.



On that occasion there were 12 apostles present. Divide 3000 by 12, and we have 250 for each to immerse. Peter's speech began about 9 a. m. (Acts 2:15) and to give all the weight to the argument that could be asked, we will allow 3 hours for the preaching and arrangements for the baptizing. That will leave 6 hours in which to do the baptizing. Now 250 divided by 6, leaves less than 42 for each of the 12 to immerse each hour. But we must remember that there were 70 other preachers present (Luke 10:1; Acts 1:15). Thus we have 82 to do the baptizing. This would allow only 36 for each one to immerse in 6 hours, or about 6 per

person per hour. A man can immerse 6 persons in 10 minutes and do it with ease. Therefore, the three thousand could have been immersed in ten minutes. This spoils the so-called argument about it being impossible to baptize them all in one day. Those who claim such overlook the fact that there were 82 persons present to do the immersing instead of just the twelve.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Unquestionably our brother in the above has smitten "hip and thigh" those who claim that 3000 persons could not have been immersed on the day of Pentecost. Of course, we would have to assume that the seventy mentioned in Luke 10:1 were among the 120 mentioned in Acts 1:15, for the scripture does not say so. And as to how many people were present to do the baptizing, aside from the twelve, we have no record. No one by going to the Bible can prove how many administrators acted on that day, and fortunately our faith in the act does not depend upon our knowing that.

We wonder if it can be proven that 3000 were immersed that day. Certainly all of the murderers of Jesus who accepted him as Lord were baptized, "and the same day there were added unto them about 3000 souls." But might not some of these have already been baptized by John the Immerser, in his preparation of material for the coming Kingdom? In either case it remains that all must "Repent and be baptized." There's plenty of time to baptize all who obey now).

It means the taking away, or the casting off of their sins. Now to achieve this result, they had to do certain things. If they refused to do them, the result would not follow. These things were commands of our Lord. The record says that they who gladly received his word were baptized. Have you been baptized? If not, can you say that you have gladly received the Word of Christ?

Do you make light of baptism? Do you say that those who are baptized are no better than before? Read with me Romans 6: 4, 5: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, *even so we also should walk in newness of life.*"

Read how Paul was saved (Acts 22: 16); the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8: 38); Cornelius and company (Acts 10: 47, 48); Lydia (Acts 16: 15) and many others. This is God's way. It is the safe way. Follow it out and salvation from sin will be yours.

NEW CASTLE MEETING

The meeting house at New Castle, Indiana, was packed to capacity at all services on July 4. The huge audience gathered for prayer at 7 a. m., and in the solemnity of the occasion, began the day with petitions to the Throne of grace voiced from many hearts. After breakfast served at the church building, the morning service began at 9:30, with four speakers presenting talks relative to the responsibilities of elders, evangelists, deacons and members in general. In the afternoon a three-hour session was devoted to a panel discussion of the morning messages. The talks at night pertained to the Lord's Supper, Contribution, and Prayers of the church. Many states were represented from California to Pennsylvania. The total attendance of the four days reached more than 3000.

On Lord's Day, July 1, an all day meeting was held, with a number of speakers participating in the afternoon. At night, two brethren from Canada, Adam Bruce and William Horrocks, were featured speakers. The elders and congregation at New Castle are deserving of the very highest commendation for the wonderful manner in which they had worked out all details of the meetings.

STUDY OF NEHEMIAH

It is the firm conviction of the editor that the church needs to know the Word of the Lord. To do so, we must study that Word. And in order to encourage such study we will begin in our next issue an analysis of the book written by Nehemiah. As preparation for this series of studies we do most earnestly request that all who love the blessed Book, start now to study the entire account of the return from captivity as given by Nehemiah. Encourage others to do the same.

BECOMING A CHRISTIAN

BY N. COOPER, BELFAST, NORTH IRELAND

"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26: 28).

This statement indicates that a man does not become a Christian by nature, but that he is persuaded to do so. It is apparent that certain things are required in the process, and until these are accomplished one is not yet in that state or condition, where he is said to be a Christian.

Men tell us that only one thing is necessary—faith! But the Bible insists that more than a mere statement of faith is required. Let us look at some of the examples in it, with a view to becoming a Christian in just

the way the Lord has stipulated. The first case I mention is found in Acts 2: 37, 38 and pertains to the people on Pentecost. How were they saved? Certainly they must have believed, or they would not have been led to cry out and ask what they must do. But still they were not saved, or else there would have been nothing left to do. They were yet in their sins. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

What does the word "remission" mean?

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

Romans 12: 11

The first phrase of this verse is the part to be considered in this article. One may frequently hear such a speech as the following: "The Lord is interested in all of our affairs and realizes that success requires the proper attention to them. Even in our temporal matters we are exhorted to be 'not slothful in business.'" Then will follow some comments about a merchant or farmer or factory owner who failed in "business" because he was slothful. Such comments may be true and contain good advice, but that is not the meaning of the word Paul is using.



The word "business" as a commercial or secular term in contrast with spiritual matters, is not once used in the New Testament. It is supposed to be used in that sense as a contrasting term when a church announces a "business meeting" for a certain night. Then perhaps most of the time will be taken

up discussing plans for a protracted meeting, or a program for the Lord's day services, or other matters of a spiritual character. If it is really a business meeting in the sense attributed to the word in our heading text, it will be taken up with such subjects as painting the meeting house or renewing fire insurance on it, etc. Such matters are actually those of business in the sense erroneously attached to the word in the heading.

The word here is from *spoude*, and Thayer's definition is, "earnestness, diligence," without any special application to things commercial. The context shows the idea is for Christians to be active in their profession. We may be sure Paul would not interrupt an important chapter on religious duties with advice for a merchant not to be late in opening up his store on Monday morning. But he does mean for disciples to be prompt in coming to the services. Or congregations not to delay the exercise of discipline against unfaithful members. Or an offending member not to be careless in making it right with the offended party. Be punctual in all religious activities.

ASSISTANCE NEEDED

The little group of disciples at Wakenda, Missouri, need your help in erecting a meeting house which will adequately serve their needs. They are faithful and earnest in their labors, and they are set for the defence of the gospel. Will you prayerfully consider this appeal for aid, and if possible send a contribution to Marvin Mayden, Wakenda, Missouri. No small group in the past has been more ready and willing to help others, and now the brotherhood can reciprocate and show them that their faith has not been misplaced.

RUE PORTER DEAD

It is with a feeling of sorrow that we have learned of the death of Rue Porter, Neosho, Missouri. A number of years ago, a group of brethren as a protest against the fact that the church in Ozark, Missouri, did not believe that it is right to set up separate institutions to teach the Word of the Lord, left the place where they had been worshipping and started another congregation. Bro. Porter was called to hold a meeting for them, and I had been scheduled to hold one at the other place before the rift came. A public discussion was eventually arranged on the divisive issues, and the two of us were se-

lected to present the varied and conflicting concepts. I have ever been an admirer of Bro. Porter, and no animosity was engendered toward him in my heart. I am sure that he was very sincere in his position. The last time I saw him in Saint Louis I invited him to come to my home for a meal and a visit. I regret that he has been removed by death, coming as the result of a heart attack, and I extend my very sincere sympathy to those who mourn the passing of this one whom I counted as a friend.

(Continued from page 3)

turns a beautiful green, and the trees show their resplendent glories. Yet with all this new life, the more precious dust beneath the earth does not stir. Our loved ones sleep on. Indeed, this earth has no cure for the sorrow and anguish felt by those who have been parted from loved ones by death.

As far back as history can trace, there has been a universal denial that death ends it all. Every tribe and every nation in every age and under every condition has held the belief and hope of some sort of life beyond the grave. The early American Indian with his "happy hunting ground," the ancient Egyptian with his mummified carcass clutching the book of the dead, the early Greek who

was buried with a coin in his mouth to pay his way across the river of death—all looked forward to immortality.

When David, the first God-appointed king of Israel, transgressed God's law, he was punished. In 2 Sam. 12 the record tells how he caused Uriah to be killed in order to have Uriah's wife for himself. This was not according to the will of God, and David repented, but he had to bear the punishment of sin. We see that the child born of Uriah's wife to David was called to leave this old earth. David, however, had the hope of life beyond the grave planted within his breast, and he realized that although God would not restore again unto him the child, he, David, had it within his power to go to be with his son. "But now he is dead wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. 12: 23). Certainly David, a man who was striving to do God's will at all times, realized that if he was truly repentant and would obey his Father in heaven he could look forward to the day when he would be joined together with his loved ones and his father in heaven.

Yes, there is a day coming when Jesus shall come again. A day when "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5: 28, 29). Let us resolve to live for Jesus here below in order that we might meet our loved ones and our Saviour in that mansion in the sky.

NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY

E. M. Zerr is continuing his work on the first volume of the New Testament Commentary, and now announces that the first volume will contain all of the notes and comments on Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts and Romans. Many of the great subjects will be covered thoroughly and in detail in this first volume, which will sell for \$4. Advance orders are being taken, and until date of publication, you may obtain 3 copies for \$10. Here is your chance to make this book available to children and friends at a great reduction. Send all orders to MISSION MESSENGER, 7505 Trenton Avenue, St. Louis 14, Missouri. Please state if you are sending a new order, or paying for books already reserved.

OUTLINE STUDIES

Roy Loney has had a second edition of his booklet, "Suggested Outlines for Scriptural Study" imprinted, and these may now be secured at 25c per copy, or \$2.50 per dozen copies. This booklet is neat, attractive and helpful to all who desire to make public talks, or to teach the way of life. Send for yours immediately, addressing your order to Roy Loney, Wellsville, Kansas.

OUR FINANCIAL OBLIGATION

BY A. C. WARREN

The knowledge that a great many brethren point an accusing finger at any evangelist who dares to mention financial matters has caused me to be timid on this matter all of my life as a preacher. I fear my teaching relative to it has been so seldom and so weak as to constitute neglect. Knowing that it is a part of the gospel and that to be pure from the blood of all men, I must not shun to declare all the counsel of God (Acts 20: 26, 27) I intend to express myself boldly.

The natural starting place is the question asked by God (Malachi 3:8), "Will a man rob God?" In these days of great material blessings, prosperity and spiritual dearth I deem that a pertinent question and one that each of us should ask himself in all seriousness, then be moved by an honest answer to a position of justice and equity on the matter. When those Israelites asked the question "Wherein have we robbed thee?" the answer was "In tithes and offerings." Then they were warned that they were cursed with a curse.

Of course we Christians are not bound under tithing, but we are bound to make offerings, including financial offerings (1 Cor. 16: 1, 2; Jas. 1: 27). The principal trouble with both individuals and congregations seems to be that although they may have by them sufficient to give and help out in the Lord's Cause, they fear to let loose of it, not knowing for sure that more is forthcoming. Perhaps this fear is the most disgusting thing imaginable to our bountiful Father in heaven. To the tight-fisted Israelites he said, "Bring *all* the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me therewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3: 10). To the Corinthians, Paul said, "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor. 9: 8). In the face of such promises from our God who has proven himself in the past by giving us far beyond what we deserve, to withhold that which should be invested in the Lord's Cause for fear it will not be replaced, is nothing short of faithlessness, and "without faith it is impossible to please Him." Remember, it is not possessing riches that bars us from heaven, but it is trusting in riches (Mark 10: 23, 24), instead of trusting in God, the great and benevolent One who has given us all we now possess.

Since the lively stones built into the temple of God have both a body and spirit, there is need of finance for the upkeep of both the material and spiritual sides of this holy temple. Thus we find Paul interested in a collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem

and a general demand for sustenance of the fatherless and widows. And on the spiritual side, souls cannot be saved without laborers in the vineyard. Thus we hear this from Paul, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" (1 Cor. 9: 11). Paul also in advocating support for elders who rule well, and who labor in word and doctrine, says, "The laborer is worthy of his reward" (1 Tim. 5: 17, 18).

Paul calls attention to the fact that they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar, then says, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel shall live of the gospel (1 Cor. 9: 13, 14). The individual Christian who has the means to help the needy and knowingly allows the fatherless and widows to suffer is a robber just as much as the man who takes plunder at the point of a gun. We were created for God's glory (Isaiah 43: 7). The Lord is a reliever of the fatherless and widow (Psalm 146: 9). How then can we claim to be His followers if we fail to accomplish His holy purpose on this earth? We rob Him of His glory.

The individual who withholds his offering from the Lord's treasury is a robber of God just as much as those Jews who robbed Him in tithes and offerings. If the Lord has ordained that those who preach the gospel shall live of the gospel, and if that kind of laborer is worthy of His reward, then that congregation which employs a preacher to labor in evangelistic work, and refuses to support him is robbing God. They are hindering the man in seeking and saving that which is lost. Many a faithful preacher has been forced to abandon the field because he could not support himself and family on what he received. Now since God is able to make all grace abound toward us, that we always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work, I contend that the fact that any able preacher has to leave the gospel field to support himself and family shows that there is something wrong with us. We are too faithless to let go of what we have on hand and to trust God for our future abundance.

We have conceived false ideas about a preacher's support, discouraging to the man in the field. We get the idea that we have a right to sit in judgment as to how much we may withhold from him, because of his financial circumstances, instead of remunerating him fully for service rendered. It isn't our business how much the preacher has if the laborer is worthy of his reward. If we are able to give him full reward for service rendered, it is our duty to give him just and full remuneration regardless of his financial standing. If he hoards it and does not pass it on, or misuses it, that is his re-

sponsibility, just as any other member is responsible for his use of God-given prosperity. Many times, we who have all modern conveniences in our home, who are liberal in giving our children spending money, and show a general tendency toward extravagance, lift our voices in holy horror if a preaching brother takes the same privileges. We seem to think we've a right to dictate to him how to spend his money. But if he is worthy of his reward, when we pass that remuneration to him, it belongs to him as much as our money belongs to us from our occupation.

If a preacher makes an investment, or puts in extra long and weary hours, by taking part time secular work in order that he may have some of the comforts of life that other members enjoy, we feel at liberty if we can do so to find how much he makes on the side, and deduct that from his reward, even though he has done a good and complete job for the Lord in spite of those secular efforts. "Will a man rob God?" If a brother thus used gets to thinking "O, what's the use?" and quits the field, we have robbed God of a useful laborer.

Many times we get the idea that because the preacher is young and single, regardless of his labors for Christ, we are at liberty to pinch him down to just enough to eat and the few clothes on his back. The laborer is worthy of his reward. This young man may have a sweetheart whom he wants to make his wife. He will either have to pass up the God-ordained privilege of starting a home and family, or quit the gospel field in order to realize that privilege.

Many other things could be said on this subject, but this is enough for one man at one time. Whether or not you agree with these sentiments, I feel that a load of responsibility has been lifted from my shoulders in saying them. I have no quarrel with any individual or congregation. I have ever been treated by my brethren better than I have deserved. Ill health limits my work. Therefore I must naturally be limited in the support I receive.

GET THESE BOOKS!

Johnson's Peoples New Testament with notes, 2 volumes \$5; Foster's Story of the Bible \$2.50; Cruden's Complete Concordance \$3; Bible Dictionary \$3; Milligan's Commentary on Hebrews \$2.50; Lard's Commentary on Romans \$2.50. Mail your orders for these to MISSION MESSENGER, 7505 Trenton Avenue, Saint Louis 14, Missouri.

ARIZONA WORK

Vern Atwell reports the church at Claypool, Arizona, are now in their new meeting house, and things look brighter than ever for the church. Two more have been immersed recently. Wilbur Storm is assisting the congregation.

The Voice of Bob White

BY W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

In an article entitled "God Is Everywhere" appearing in "The New Age," the writer, R. H. "Bob" White, has this to say: "Since time immemorial error within the Church has occurred, causing many splits within the original church, the final analysis of which is denominationalism, which is probably a good thing for the Christian, giving him the opportunity to approach the Christian faith the way he sees it, just so long as he practices it in a manner befitting the teachings of Christ. The result will inevitably be the same regardless of the route taken."

This is a good sample of the mixed up thinking and muddled reasoning of the present day. Denominationalism is condemned by Jesus Christ and the holy apostles. It will not enable anyone to practice in a manner befitting the teachings of Christ. Jesus prayed that all who believe on him might be one (John 17: 21). Paul pleaded for an undivided church, and asked the pertinent question, "Is Christ divided?" (1 Cor. 1: 10, 11). He instructed us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4: 3) and provided that there be no schism in the body (1 Cor. 12: 25). Denominationalism is not a good thing for the Christian or anyone else. It is the most tragic sin of the new age.

We are not to approach the Christian faith the way we see it, but the way God reveals it. His thoughts and ways are not ours. (Isa. 55: 8). There is one faith (Eph. 4: 5) and it must be contended for earnestly (Jude 3). The only acceptable approach to it is an acceptance of it, without quibbling or reluctance. We cannot change the Bible to suit our lives, we must change our lives to suit the Bible! No one can practice error in a manner befitting the teachings of Christ! Even the word "teachings" is misleading. When the term doctrines is used in the plural, it always applies to false teaching; with regard to the revelation of God, it is always in the singular.

The assumption that there are many routes to heaven is born of the wistful thinking of finite men. Jesus said "I am the way . . . no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14: 6). He said "I am the door. By me if any man enter in . . ." (John 10: 9). He trusts in vain, who puts his hope in the thought that he can walk as he pleases and still reach heaven. There is only one way to the glory world. Walk ye in it!

DES MOINES MEETING

Marilyn Turnquist reports that the young people's meeting held at Des Moines (Iowa) June 24, was well attended with 207 present at the morning service. Harold Shasteen was in charge. Mary Alice Suddeth was married to Harold Fillman, June 9, in Des Moines.

CALIFORNIA WORK

Robert Brumback has done extensive work in California, including a series of studies at West Riverside on "The Church Through the Ages"; a meeting at Compton, June 4-15; followed by a meeting at Stockton, June 17-July 1. He was assisted in a part of this work by Lawrence Swearingin, of Kansas City.

REQUESTED PUBLICATION

Springfield, Missouri. For the information of the brotherhood, we wish to announce that the church here no longer endorses Carl Isham as a faithful preacher of the gospel. He has separated himself from the church, so that we have been forced to withdraw fellowship from him. *Edward Buttram, Garner Copley, George L. Ruhl, Elders.*

SIXTEEN SUBS

Talmage Weekley, Lamine, Missouri, who has been a faithful assistant in the work, sent 16 subscriptions at one time this month. Bob Duncan and Loren McCord combined to send 5, and we are indebted to Harry Powell for generous assistance in helping to mail the papers abroad. Thanks to all who aid in every way!

ARKANSAS MEETING

Large audiences attended the series of meetings conducted by the editor at Beech Grove, Arkansas, with special interest shown in the last three talks on the topics: "Qualifications for Scriptural Elders," "Caring for Fatherless and Widows," and "The One-Man Salaried Pastor." The boycott attempted by certain preachers a year ago was completely broken and representatives were present from many congregations in the area. Arrangements were made for a discussion of the issues dividing the churches, and we shall write about it in detail in our next issue. Darrell Bolin labored with me effectively in the meeting, speaking both at Beech Grove and Evening Star.

WIDE MARGIN BIBLES

We have been able to import 24 Oxford Wide Margin Bibles, from Great Britain, which are now ready for distribution. These books are all bound in the very best grade of leather, and are also leather-lined. The pages have extra wide margins, for writing of notes in India ink, and there are blank pages in front and back for additional notes. The cost is \$25 each, and those who want one may obtain it by sending check for that amount. This book will make an extra-special gift for an earnest student of the Bible. The books will be sent on a first come—first served basis, so please notify us at once if you want one.

SAINT LOUIS STUDY

The six weeks Bible Study at Saint Louis, will begin on November 5 and close on December 14 this year. Sessions will be held daily except Saturday and Sunday starting at 9 a. m., with several night classes held each week in addition. There is no charge or tuition, except for room and board in the city. The studies are open to all who wish to avail themselves of this opportunity to know more about the Bible. Reservations for rooms should be made at once. Write to: The Deacons, Church of Christ, 7121 Manchester Avenue, Saint Louis, Missouri.

HAYS MEETING

Roy Lonely advises that the date of the Hays (Kansas) tent meeting has been advanced to September 1. He will go there one week in advance and do publicity work.

WARREN REPORTS

Seven were immersed, and four placed membership at Flat Rock, near Summersville, Missouri. Sylvan Stoops and Charles Robinson were ordained as elders, Alec Schweighauser and Gloster Tuttle as deacons. Our next meeting at Summersville will close July 29. *A. C. Warren.*

RICHARD KERR

Richard Kerr reports that he has moved to Brookport, Illinois, where he is now managing a hardware and appliance store. He spoke at Reedley, Calif., June 3; Albuquerque, N. Mex., June 17; and Brookport, Ill., June 24. Richard also gave the baccalaureate address at the local high school on May 27.

MOUNT VIEW MEETING

J. M. Lamb, elder at Mount View, near Iberia (Mo.) commends very highly the work of James Mabery and Bob Marshall, in a two weeks series of services culminating in early June. Two placed membership and 1 was restored during these meetings.

THANKS FROM IOWA

Ivan Dennis sends thanks of the church at Mt. Ayr, Iowa, to those who have assisted in starting the work there. He mentions the following gifts: Lillian Avenue Church (St. Louis), \$50; Carrollton (Mo.) Church, \$50; Manchester Avenue Church (St. Louis), \$25. William Hensley conducted the first meeting which has just concluded. Services were held 2½ miles west of Mt. Ayr on Highway 2.

Arrangements have been made for the editor to assist the church at Farmington, Mo. If you know of persons in that vicinity who may be interested, write us.

THIS and THAT from HERE and THERE

OUR THANKS

We sincerely thank our daughter, Sharon Sue, for her excellent editing of the *MISSION MESSENGER* during our five months absence in Europe. At the age of 19, she is a laboratory technician, and has a great responsibility in the service she renders in the laboratory of two St. Louis physicians. She sacrificed a lot to keep the paper going. We thank Helen Watts, my sister-in-law, for the constant help she gave, and also all of the brothers and sisters in Saint Louis who so freely gave of their time and efforts. May God bless them all.

SONGS FOR CHILDREN

Do you need songs and exercises for the little children whom you teach the Word of Life? You may obtain a number of these without obligation. They have been written and compiled by Mrs. Cecil Garrison, and selected and mimeographed by Roy Harris. You may obtain your copy by addressing a request to Sister Garrison, at Mackeyville, Pennsylvania. It will be appreciated if you will include stamps to help in the mailing. Please send at once!

KANSAS CITY STUDY

The annual vacation Bible Study at 59th and Kenwood, Kansas City (Mo.) conducted by Bernell Weems, has attracted good interest, with students present from several states. The latter part of the time was devoted also to gospel meetings each night. We are thankful for this event which means much to the churches.

ARKANSAS MEETING

Fred Killebrew concluded a series of meetings at Ring, Arkansas, near Ravenden, and reports 2 immersed and 1 restored by acknowledgment of wrongs. He was assisted in the work by F. R. Bailey, Jr. Bro. Killebrew has scheduled additional work with some other Arkansas congregations for this summer. He reports 4 baptized recently at Senath, Missouri. We give thanks to God for these things.

NEW MEXICO

Albuquerque. The church here presses forward and we are trying to make a firm stand for the truth. We are greatly encouraged by the work of Wilford Landes, as well as by the assistance of Bernell Weems in a meeting conducted in May. Richard Kerr was with us June 10. We invite all faithful disciples to worship with us at our meeting place, 106 N. Rio Grande Blvd., and those who know of other disciples living in

this region are urged to send names and addresses to Herman Gower, 1368 Tapia Road, Albuquerque, New Mexico. We thank the church at Farmington for help in our labors.

LEAD BELT LABORS

Bob Duncan and Loren McCord are conducting labors in the lead belt section of Missouri, with special meetings and vacation studies at Bonne Terre and Fredericktown. The brethren report that Buddy Moyer of Fredericktown has been training with John Patrick during this summer.

CALIFORNIA WORK

Lloyd Riggins immersed a young man during the Vacation Bible Study which he conducted at Riverside, California. He next held a study of like type with the church at Oakland, and reports gratifying interest and attendance. At the time of his report he was en route to Klamath Falls, Oregon, and stated that he would be in meetings in the midwest starting in August at Bethlehem congregation, in Ray County, Missouri.

OKLAHOMA MEETINGS

Paul Ketcherside recently concluded successful meetings at Coweta, assisted by Bob Marshall. In the Nowata and Bartlesville meetings, six were immersed and 1 restored. The congregation at Oktaha has an average of 60 in attendance now and are adding class rooms to their building.

FREE TALK OUTLINES

Roy Harris has completed the mimeographing of an entirely new series of outlines for short talks and public lessons. All who need this type of material to aid them in furthering the Cause of Christ, may obtain a set of the outlines without cost, by sending your name and address to Lawrence Swearingin, 137 South Oakley, Kansas City, Missouri. The group of outlines should not be confused with the ones offered last year. This is an entirely new set of helps available to you.

PENNSYLVANIA WORK

L. J. Karkosky, Jr. reports 5 immersed into Christ at Roseville (Penn.) in the meeting conducted by Harold Shasteen. Three were baptized at Jacksonville, in the meeting conducted by William Hensley. Bro. Karkosky and family are moving to Painesville, Ohio, where he will labor with the congregation in sounding out the Word. He will continue to assist the church at Jacksonville, Pennsylvania.

LATE NEWS!

Doy Rhoton immersed one at Canalou (Mo.) July 29. . . . Fred Killebrew spoke at Beech Grove (Ark.) on August 5. . . . Darrell Bolin spoke at Bloomfield (Mo.) on the afternoon of July 29, and at Flat River (Mo.) the same night. . . . R. H. Brumback will be in a meeting at Antioch (near Bethany, Mo.) Aug. 5-19. . . . A. W. Harvey reports a man and wife from the Christian Church recently took their stand with the brethren at Bloomington (Ind.). . . . One was immersed at the meeting in Tunbridge Wells (England) in the meeting with William Hendren. . . . Elmer H. Sherman will give a series of talks at Jacksonville (Penn.) Oct. 7-14. . . . Roy Loney spoke at Gardner (Kans.) July 29, having preached at Dentonia, the Lord's Day previous. . . . A. C. Warren and family are returning to Farmington (N. Mex.) after a brief sojourn in southern Missouri. . . . Thomas Dennis reports the Mount Ayr (Iowa) meeting a grand success. . . . One was immersed at Dewsbury (England) recently and others are showing excellent interest. . . . Bessie McClafin sends a clipping from the Vincennes (Ind.) *Sun-Commercial* to the effect that the Montgomery county welfare board decided to close the 67-year-old county children's home. It has been caring for 8 children at a cost of \$100 a month each, and found they could be maintained in private homes at a cost of \$40 each. Bessie pens the note: "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." . . . Our good brother, Charles Boyd, at Ozark (Mo.) has retired as county school superintendent after more than 25 years at the post. Previous to that time he served as prosecuting attorney, and made a record in his opposition to liquor law violators. The officials of the county gave him a great send-off. He is an elder at Ozark. . . . Hershel Ottwell reports interesting work at Woodburn (Ill.) where a group of 30 recently left the Congregational church, and invited teaching in the Word of the Lord. Hartford brethren have been laboring with them for several months. . . . The editor will conduct meetings this fall at Independence and Nixa (Mo.) as well as with the rural church at Eureka (near Meadville, Mo.).

HENSLEY SCHEDULE

The following places will have meetings conducted by William Hensley on the dates given: Fairbury, Nebraska (Aug. 5-19); Richmond, Missouri (Aug. 27-Sept. 16); Warrensburg, Missouri (Sept. 17-30); Iberia, Missouri (Oct. 1-14); Shelbyville, Illinois (Oct. 28-Nov. 18); Alanthus Grove, Missouri (Dec. 2-16).