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WHEN AND HOW THE CHURCH BEGAN

Radio Talk by RICHARD KERR

The words "church" and "churches" are found in the New Testament 113 times. In one passage, Acts 19: 37, the words "robbers of churches" are from the Greek word "hierosulos" which means "a robber of temples" (Young). In the other passages the words "church" and "churches" are always translated from the Greek word "ekklesia," which means "that which is called out" (Young).



The church of Christ is composed of those who have been called out of the world of sin into the kingdom of God. In the New Testament the church is referred to as a family (Eph. 3: 15), a flock (1 Pet. 5: 2), a temple (Eph. 2: 21), the body of Christ (Col. 1: 18), the bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11: 2), and the kingdom of God (Mark 9: 1).

The church of Christ did not begin with the preaching of Martin Luther in the sixteenth century. Neither did it begin with the preaching of John Wesley in the eighteenth century. Nor did it begin with the preaching of Alexander Campbell in the nineteenth century. The church of Christ began with the preaching of Peter and the other apostles on the day of Pentecost following the ascension of Christ. The beginning of the church is recorded in the second chapter of the book of Acts.

Some erroneously believe that the church was established in the days of John the Baptist. In Matthew 14: 10 we read of the death of John, then two chapters later we read the words of Jesus, "... upon this rock I will build my church. ..." (Mt. 16: 18). Notice the use of the future tense "will build." This proves that John the Baptist did not establish the church. It also proves that Jesus did not build the church during the lifetime of John.

Throughout His ministry Jesus preached concerning the kingdom of heaven, the church. His first proclamation was, "... Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mt. 4: 17). From that time Jesus spoke to the people in parables, prophecies, and pronouncements, telling them of the coming kingdom, His church. His followers were disappointed when He died without having

set up His kingdom. They did not understand the prophecy of Daniel 7: 13, 14, stating that Jesus, the Son of man, must ascend to God, the Ancient of days, to receive the kingdom. The church could not be established upon the earth until after Christ ascended into heaven.

Just before His ascension, the apostles of Jesus asked Him, "... Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1: 6-9).

The apostles then returned from Mount Olivet to Jerusalem to wait for the power from on high. While waiting they engaged in prayer with the other disciples and selected Matthias to take the place of Judas Iscariot, who had committed suicide after betraying Jesus.

Ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven, when the Jewish feast day of Pentecost was fully come, a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind filled the house where the apostles were assembled and forked tongues, like as of fire, appeared above their heads. They were then filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Holy Spirit gave them power.

There were devout Jews from every nation in Jerusalem to attend the feast of Pentecost. When they heard the apostles miraculously speaking to them in the languages of the countries from which they had come they were filled with amazement and said to each other, "... Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" (Acts 2: 7, 8). They asked each other what it was all about. Others tried to laugh it off by saying that the apostles were drunk.

Peter, standing up with the other apostles, acted as their spokesman, thus using the keys of the kingdom promised him by Christ (Mt. 16: 19). He opened wide the door of salvation by preaching Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. He began by affirming that

the ability to speak the wonderful works of God in many foreign languages was but the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (Joel 2: 28-32). He then proclaimed the resurrection of the very man they had by wicked hands taken and slain, showing them that even David had heralded the resurrection of Christ (Psalm 16: 8-11).

The apostle then declared the exaltation of Jesus. "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool: Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2: 33-36).

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2: 37, 38). Peter's sermon had convicted them of their sin. They could not withstand the power of God which enabled him to speak such words of truth. The consciousness of their awful crime cut to the heart. Was there an avenue of escape from God's wrath? Was there any way for them to receive forgiveness?

When they showed their faith by crying out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?", Peter did not tell them to "only believe." He did not tell them to come to a mourners' bench. He did not tell them to get down on their knees and pray to God. He did not tell them to have others help them "pray through" until they had a "wonderful feeling inside." He did not tell them to counsel a psychiatrist. He did not tell them to confess their sins to a clergyman. He did not tell them to study a catechism. He did not tell them to be sprinkled. He did not tell them to join the church of their choice. What then did he tell them? Hear again those inspired words, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Those words are bound in heaven (Mt. 16: 19). Today, as then, sinners must repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from

this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine

and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2: 40-42).

"... And the Lord added to the church daily..." (Acts 2: 47). (606 S. Mine La-Motte St., Fredericktown, Mo.).

A RELIGION THAT SATISFIES

BY ROY LONEY

Some people advertise their religion as "A religion that satisfies." This is a strong appeal to those whose consciences are not at peace and whose hearts are filled with restless, unsatisfied longing. A religion that supplies no comfort in sorrow, no strength in times of weakness and no sympathy in adversity, is truly a hollow one and does not come from God.



The word "religion" is a simple one meaning "to rebind." Sin separates man from God. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid his face that he will not hear" (Isa. 59: 2). Man astray from God is as a rudderless ship upon a trackless sea, without chart or compass to guide, or hope to sustain when the darkness and gloom of the grave enshrouds with the blackness of eternal night. True religion is the means provided by the loving Father whereby the sin-blinded, wandering soul may find its way back to the glorious sunlight of the Father's unchanging love to the shelter and security of his haven of rest. "For we were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of our souls" (1 Peter 2: 25).

The value of your soul, the brevity of life, the certainty of death, the length of eternity, the joys of heaven and the terrors of hell, all make it imperative that we have the most unquestioned assurance in death's solemn hour that all is well with our souls. Are you absolutely satisfied that your profession of religion has brought eternal safety to your soul? Thousands will answer, "I am satisfied." But, in order to have absolute assurance that you are safe, there are two parties to be satisfied—yourself and God! Did it ever occur to you that what will satisfy you may not be acceptable to the Lord? The devil convinced Eve that it would be all right to eat of the forbidden fruit; and she ate of it, satisfied in her own heart that she was doing the proper and wise thing; but she soon learned how very displeasing it was to God, and she had to suffer thereby. Cain was apparently satisfied that his grain or vegetable sacrifice was just as satisfactory to the Lord as Abel's lamb, but he was soon to learn of God's displeasure. God was satis-

fied with Abel's offering because it was precisely what he had commanded (Gen. 4).

God has declared: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55: 8, 9). Solomon stated that "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14: 12).

There is one lesson that man through all the past ages just will not learn, and that is the sobering fact that his own finite, limited wisdom is a poor substitute for the infinite wisdom of God. "For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom (man's wisdom) knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1: 21). The wisdom of man suggests a multitude of ways to be saved; but how absurd for puny man to issue his dictum of what is right and wrong, and then expect God to accept without question, his decision! Would it not be an act of commendable wisdom on our part to first go to the Lord in all humility and ask as did penitent Saul of Tarsus, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" In this separation between God and man, man is the offending party, not God. Man is responsible for his own condition, and the Lord rightly demands unconditional surrender of man's will. Nothing else will satisfy him, for he alone has a right to set forth the terms upon which he will save, cleanse and pardon rebellious man. Man does not find God by following his own wisdom. He is to be found only in his divine appointments for man. Solomon states that God made man "upright, but they have sought out many inventions" (Eccl. 7: 29). Many inventions! Yes, man has invented many new means and new methods of salvation; but all such are worse than useless. Such methods may be very satisfying to man; but Jesus said: "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15: 9).

Ancient men thought they had a wonderful idea in the Tower of Babel as a means of salvation, but they made one fatal mistake. They did not first consult with God, who always has the last and final word; so all their brilliant plans ended in utter failure!

The divine Father desires your salvation far more than you can ever realize. Through

his Son, he has made the greatest sacrifice that even a God could make to effect your salvation, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish but have everlasting life." Why tamper with anything so precious as your immortal soul? Why be satisfied with anything but the very best? Surely God's wisdom, love and mercy has provided the very best for our redemption; and the way to reunion is clearly revealed in his word. It is the one and only source of divine light to sinful men. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway." You can have no assurance except in the immutable promises of God. Only when you comply with God's requirements can you have assurance that you are prepared for eternity. God has promised life to you and we can "live in hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1: 2), but that promise is conditional upon your full obedience to His word.

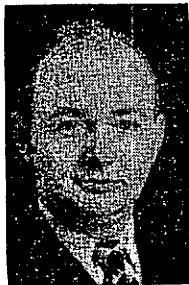
Your salvation is now in your own hands. When you obey, then God saves; but not before. "He that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock." Both the house and the rock withstood the raging storms and the swirling floods, so that they fell not. No religion can be truly satisfying unless it has for its foundation the assurance that only God can give. And his assurance is given only when we have obeyed him. Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 16). When the penitent, believing soul has obeyed his Lord in baptism, then he has Christ's own divine word for his assurance of salvation. Can't we take him at his word? God says: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and that trembleth at my word." And "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool, but whoso walketh wisely shall be delivered" (Prov. 28: 26). We should be satisfied with nothing less than the knowledge that we have complied with all of God's requirements. The child Samuel humbly said: "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth." But many today, more concerned with having their own ways than submitting to God, say: "Now listen to me Lord, for I'm going to speak!" Such an attitude may be satisfying to a proud and haughty heart; but it does not fit in with the statement of Jesus: "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter it through the gates into the city." Blessed assurance indeed! (Rfd. 2, Wellsville, Kansas).

Cruden's Complete Concordance, \$3; Smith's Bible Dictionary, \$3; "A Clean Church," \$1.00. Order these books today!

THE KING IS DEAD!

BY ELLIS CRUM

Today, here in Canada, the flag is at half mast; the king of the British Empire is dead! Over half a billion people have lost their sovereign ruler and leader. According to the numerous tributes to the late King George VI, he was a good man and a fine king. However, death is no respecter of persons. "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9: 27). All rulers and all subjects are alike subject to death, and many are subject to the "second death" (Revelation 20: 14).



dom at an early age. He was good and kind to everyone; he took a special interest in children. He possessed the requisites of a truly great leader: He was always willing to do that which He asked His subjects to do. Meekness, gentleness, and humbleness were a part of His life. Thousands heard His speeches; they thronged Him in the streets. He was a friend of all.

The death of our king came as quite a shock to His followers, although they should have been expecting it. He had tried to prepare them. Even as He was dying He was interested in others. At the death of the king even His enemies paid Him tribute. Heaven and nature also paid their respects.

Yes, King George VI, is dead; his reign is over. However, the King of Glory lives on;

the Monarch of Monarchs still rules. During His personal ministry His reign was in prospect. Jesus made it quite clear that His kingdom was "not of this world" (John 18: 36). Once in the tomb He lay, but then He "sat down on the right hand of God," (Hebrews 10: 12) where "He ever liveth to make intercession. . . ." for the saints (Hebrews 7: 25). Truly He is "worthy . . . to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing" (Revelation 5: 12). The KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS will someday divide His inheritance with His subjects and deliver "the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (1 Corinthians 15: 24, 25). Let us prepare for the coming of the king, by serving Him as faithful subjects. (2377 Parent Ave., Windsor, Ontario, Canada).

Almost two thousand years ago the king of the world's greatest commonwealth died. Out of respect to this great king, the world was draped in darkness—the sun refused to shine. Grief and sorrow struck through the hearts of His faithful followers. To this day such a feeling sweeps through the hearts of those who have been "delivered . . . from the power of darkness, and . . . translated . . . into the kingdom of his dear Son." Especially is this feeling prevalent when the subjects of our Lord assemble on the first day of the week to observe the memorial feast in honor of the King's death. Paul says in regard to the observance of the Lord's Supper, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (1 Corinthians 11: 26). The Lord's Supper depicts the death of our King. Although this causes us to be sad when we think of his great suffering and cruel death, nevertheless, we also have much to be happy about and thankful for. First of all we should be thankful that He loved us enough to die for us while we were yet sinners. Secondly, we should be thankful that by His death we have received the forgiveness of our sins and have been redeemed. Furthermore, we should be happy that we have the promise and assurance that our king will come again. Yes, once our king was dead, but only for three days. He now lives not only in our hearts, but in the heavens.

Not a living soul on earth has ever seen our sovereign ruler; however, a carefully written book of memoirs is available to all citizens of the kingdom that shall never be destroyed. Just as we read and study history books to learn concerning the life of great kings, we should also seek to know more about the King of Glory. Four biographical books reveal unto us interesting facts in the life of our Lord, the King.

During the life of our great king we learn that He was interested in His Father's king-

The advent of the second World War transformed the south coast of England almost overnight. Normally the playground of care-free holidaymakers, it became—for six long, weary years—Britain's front line of defence. Excepting London, our capital, and a few other big cities, which felt the fury of the "blitz" at that time, no part of our land experienced more of the "terror by night" than this southeast corner of England.

I remember spending some time on the south coast, at a popular holiday resort named Brighton, in the early days of the war, and there being introduced to "tip and run" raids. From the coast of France (uncomfortably close) bombers would come roaring over the English Channel, so close to the sea that they seemed to appear miraculously over the town. As soon as they crossed the coast-line they unloaded their lethal load upon us—and in a matter of seconds they were gone again. When, later on, the "blitz" began in earnest, the people here came to accept with almost fatalistic indifference the nightly drone of invading air fleets, carrying death and destruction into the heart of Britain. After that came the "buzz bombs"—flying bombs—and heavy bombardment from big guns ranged along the French coast, and finally—in the last phase of the conflict—the terrifying V. Ones, the rocket bombs.

Small wonder then that scars still remain. The discerning traveler can pick them out in town and hamlet—open places where there



IN THE GARDEN OF ENGLAND

BY ALBERT E. WINSTANLEY

ought not to be; tidy now, perhaps planted with trees and lawns, but a dimming memory of great heaps of rubble and mounds of smoking debris. But all this is past history now, and the scars are gradually being effaced; and despite them this little county of Kent—the southeast tip of England—is as lovely as ever it was. It well deserves the appellation, "The Garden of England," for its scenic beauty, though perhaps equalled, is nowhere surpassed in these old, sea-girl isles.

Kent is a small county (less than sixty miles across at its widest point) but it has all the varied beauty of the "typically English scene." There are rolling hills, warmly wooded, with old-world villages nestling in their folds—villages that look just as they must have done, often enough, many centuries ago. Here are timbered cottages five hundred years old—and still being lived in! Here, too, are village church buildings erected by William the Conqueror, who stormed this land, and took it in the eleventh century. We still have many examples of Saxon art—in its heighday long before the Normans came—and further back than that indeed, for I can still walk over portions of road, long since neglected, but still remarkably preserved, which once rang to the tramp of Roman legions in the earthly days of the Son of God.

But I was talking about the scenery here. Perhaps the most fascinating thing about it is its variety—and here is the uniqueness of our country lanes. I've never seen anything like them—either in Europe or America! They twist and turn, run up hill and down dale, between thick hedgerows and avenues of trees, presenting you with a new and de-

lightful vista at every corner. But enough—or you'll think I'm writing for a travel agency!

A Glimpse into History

We've mentioned the Romans, so let's start with them. About forty-five miles away from here is the coast town of Deal, where Julius Caesar landed, at the head of an invading army, in B. C. 54. The ancient Britons resented the intrusion, and it was a long time before Roman law and order settled over this southern region of our land. What builders those Romans were! We have spoken of their roads—not comparable to your modern six-lane highways, to be sure, but built to last—and these are just a part of the evidence we have today of Roman thoroughness. At Dover (one of the large Kent ports) there is the oldest building in Britain—a Roman lighthouse which is over two thousand years old! Were the soldiers of King Jesus but half as thorough in their spiritual labours as were the sons of Rome in olden times—well, there would be a different story to tell. Whether it be roads, or bridges, or lighthouses—or congregations—the essential is a good foundation, well and truly laid. Never forget this, that so far as congregations of Christ are concerned—whether in Britain, America, or anywhere else, there is only one foundation that will stand the test of time: *the Word of God*. When churches forsake the divine plan for the spiritual development of the saints, and hand over responsibility for edification to any man or set of men, then the doors are opened wide to departure. The beauty of what we in this country are wont to call "mutual ministry" is that for its practice it demands a *membership schooled in the Scriptures*—and that in turn is *the only safe-guard* against apostasy and digression.

Pursuing this figure a little, the story of the restoration in Britain bears eloquent testimony to this: that the mission of the church is to impart a full knowledge of the New Covenant to all her members in every generation. When the movement began here it was a force to be reckoned with. "The People of the Book"—that was how our brethren were known, deservedly. But with the passing of years there came a gradual change. Emphasis on Bible knowledge gave place to appeals for more progressive methods. Often the saints gloried in memories of past victories—and as often forgot the present vital need: a continual training programme for every church member. The end was inevitable—a membership which accepted a human organization (the so-called "Cooperation of Churches of Christ" which is in fellowship with the "Christian Church"); which had no quibbles about instrumental music; which tamely acquiesced when gospel preachers came to be titled "the Minister"—and which today is fast dying out of existence and doesn't know why! But perhaps "there are none so blind as those who do

not wish to see." It is easy to hand over one's God-given responsibilities to another—especially if he's paid to do the job! But methinks it were better far to be obedient to the will of the Lord—and anticipate a rich reward in a glorious hereafter.

There are around fifty churches which are now separate from the digressive "Cooperation." May we never repeat the error which produced this sect—for such it surely is today—may we never neglect to "teach them to observe all things. . . ."

Well, by way of concluding this first of a series of articles, let me introduce you to

Royal Tunbridge Wells

Since my return from across the Atlantic, I have spent about fourteen months in this town. Recently—after living for quite a long time in rooms—we were able to rent a house, and now my family and I are really settled here. We intend to make it our permanent home—a centre for evangelisation in an area where (unfortunately) New Testament Christianity is unknown in scores of towns and villages.

Four hundred years ago Tunbridge Wells was little more than a hamlet, consisting of a few scattered houses among wide-flung common land. Today it is a progressive town, with over forty thousand inhabitants,

laying honest claim to being one of the most popular inland resorts in the country. I'm told there are more rich people living here than in any other town in Britain! That may be true. It's the fashion for wealthy people who retire to come here and live on their money—no brethren, that wasn't my reason for coming! Maybe that fact doesn't suggest an easy path for us as we press on our plans for establishing a strong, faithful church of the Lord—but millionaires have souls, and "lords and ladies" will spend eternity in Heaven or Hell. The gospel is for all men—regardless of station or class. It is adequate to the needs of all men—and whether a man be a Duke or a Dustman he can realise his highest aspirations in the gospel of Christ. We must never err in thinking that because "the common people heard him gladly" (and in the nature of things that truth will be re-enacted in every age) that we can appeal to but one section of human society. Churches of Christ have a plea that rings true to the thinking of any honest man—whether he be king or commoner. Our business is to take the message, as our Lord commanded, *to every creature*. But that's enough for the present—more about "the Wells" (as the locals call it) next month. (2 Clarence Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, England).

WAS CORNELIUS A SINNER?

BY W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

Was Cornelius recognized as an alien sinner when the angel appeared unto him as he prayed, and instructed him to send to Joppa for Simon Peter? He was a Gentile, but under what law were the Gentiles operating at the time? Was he a transgressor of that law? To answer these questions requires some reasoning based upon the facts of scripture.

God made of one blood all nations of men (Acts 17: 26). From the three sons of Noah came the triple branches of humanity; the Japhetic, Semitic and Hamitic. The descendants of Japheth peopled the lands of the Gentiles (Gen. 10: 5); those of Ham provided the inhabitants of Egypt, Ethiopia and Canaan, including the Philistines (Gen. 10: 6-20); those of Shem the lands of Persia, Assyria and Chaldea (Gen. 10: 22). All of these were in the Patriarchal age and under its law. In their development as nations, they progressed from the family, through the clan, and into the national stage. The Patriarchal age required the oldest male member of the clan to officiate as priest. The people were dependent upon



God's revelation and the traditions of previous revelations, as the bases for their religious practices. In course of time they all began to drift into idolatry. When each nation had developed its gods, the God of heaven began the development of a nation. The prime purpose of this nation was to be the protection of the revelation of monotheism. Its motto was to become, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God, and beside him there is no other."

To effect this purpose the Lord selected an Arphaxadean, from the city of Ur, in the realm of Chaldea. The people of this area were serving other gods, and such idolatry was being practiced by Terah, father of the chosen individual (Josh. 24: 2). Accordingly,

MISSION MESSENGER

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

God called upon Abram to leave his kindred, country and father's house (Gen. 12: 1). Upon the condition that he would do so, God promised to make of him a great nation. The call of Abram, and his separation from the rest of humanity, in no wise affected their spiritual relationship. They continued in the same way, under the same law, and subject to the same requirements.

Four hundred thirty years later, the descendants of Abram had become a people so powerful that the Pharaoh of mighty Egypt trembled at what might happen if they leagued with his enemies to battle their Egyptian oppressor. God led them out of bondage, took them to the foot of Sinai, and gave them a law, first orally, and then in writing. But the giving of this law and the formation of the Jewish era did not offset the rest of the nations. Their status was unaltered. They continued under the Patriarchal law. For 1500 years the Jewish and Patriarchal laws ran concurrently. One governed that part of Abram's seed which came through Jacob; the other governed the rest of humanity, of whatever nation, color or clime.

The law of Moses was only a schoolmaster to bring its subjects unto Christ (Gal. 3: 24). Thus "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son . . . made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law" (Gal. 4: 4). By his death he paid the ransom for all men. The good news of this redemption was announced to the Jews first. This occurred when their representatives from every nation under heaven were present to observe the feast of weeks at Jerusalem (Acts 2: 5). From this date onward "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" was operative to the Jews, and the law of Moses was invalid as a system of justification. But the Gentiles were unaffected as yet, for the time had not come to declare the glad tidings unto them. They remained where they were, and always had been, under the Patriarchal law. But that economy was now a sinking ship, and God wanted them to be rescued from it.

He chose Caesarea, headquarters of the great Roman power in Palestine as the locale. He selected a devout centurion in the Roman garrison, whose family, soldiers and servants had great respect for him, as the firstfruits of the Gentiles (Cp. Acts 10: 2, 7, 22). He made choice of Simon Peter as the agent by whose mouth "the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe" (Acts 15: 7). What kind of man was Cornelius before this time? His servants and a religious soldier testified he was "a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews." The inspired historian declares he was "a devout man, one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always."

Cornelius was not a lost sinner before he

heard the gospel announced. He would have been so if he had continued to try and be justified by the Patriarchal law after the terms of the new covenant had been declared unto him. He revered God with all of his heart, and his household joined with him in this. What better description could be given of anyone under the Patriarchal law? Here was an officer in the army of Caesar who did "by nature the things contained in the law," and thus became a law unto himself (Rom. 2: 14). But from the day Peter stood in his house and declared the "new and living way" the Gentiles could no more be justified

by their unwritten law, than the Jews could be by their written law after Pentecost. The Patriarchal economy ended for the Gentiles in Caesarea, as it had for the Jews 1500 years earlier at Sinai. We are pleased to learn that Cornelius was baptized into Christ as were the Jewish converts on Pentecost. The Jewish disciples were forced to acknowledge "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11: 18). Christ had reconciled "both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." (Eph. 2: 16). (7505 Trenton Ave., St. Louis 14, Missouri).

A CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

BY VERNON W. HURST

Some time ago, when my brethren who disagree with me on extra organizations adopted a more tolerant attitude towards me than is now the case, I had a long talk with Brother Kenneth Franklin, Minister of the Walnut Bottom Church of Christ, near Carlyle, Pennsylvania. I am very happy to report that we spent more time discussing scriptural ways of getting closer together than in seeking means to force ourselves farther apart. I walked away from that discussion with no feeling of bitterness, and with a very high respect for Brother Franklin. Our views were as far apart as the poles. He favored extra organization for carrying on the Lord's work; I was, and still am, opposed to it. But I felt, and I think it possible that he did to, that we had come a long way in the right direction when we had been able to fully discuss our differences, and still remain friends.



I expressed to Brother Franklin my belief that it would be possible to have an educational institution which would answer every purpose for which the Bible Colleges have been established; yet which would not exist as a rival institution to the Church, a usurper of the glory due God through the Church. Brother Franklin seemed somewhat impressed with such a possibility, but seemed of the opinion that I was speaking merely as a "lone wolf," and that my views would meet the violent disapproval of my brethren. As I now recall, he chided me somewhat, and expressed a belief that I would not dare to make my views known. I think he stated that such views, if placed before the brotherhood, might serve to convince many of his brethren that we were not just striving to be "anti," but conscientiously pleading for closer confirmation to the revealed will of God.

I believe the time has come for me to take up Brother Franklin's challenge. I imagine that he has long since concluded that I lacked the courage to do so, or that the publishers among us would be afraid to put it into print. He seemed to feel that I would face immediate corrective action, but I think he need not wait to hear that I have been disfellowshipped by the elders to whose authority I am subject. I lay the gauntlet again at his feet. The next step is his to take. Perhaps if he will be as willing to consider my views once they appear in print as he was when I expressed them in private conversation, the cause of peace under the banner of Truth will have been served.

I. I do not feel inclined to deny that sending our young people to college poses a threat to their spiritual safety. This is especially true when they must leave home and go into a community where no church exists. This might not be the case if both the home and the Church had been as active in youth-training as should be the case, but I am considering facts as they are, not as wishful thinking would have them.

II. I believe that any brother with the educational requirements, the inclination and the necessary financial backing, has a perfect right to establish an institution of higher learning, and make that his life's secular occupation, if he chooses to do so. He would have a right to regulate that school in any way he saw fit. Being a Christian, he should certainly feel a personal responsibility for keeping his school as free from atheistic teaching as possible. (Some may wonder why I do not say "completely free from such teaching." Please see the last paragraph.) If he wanted to implement this by employing only other Christians as instructors, that certainly would be his privilege, and in my judgment a highly commendable attitude.

III. When the above mentioned school enters the field of religious education, and makes itself responsible for the spiritual supervision and development of its students,

it becomes a rival institution to the Church, and violates one of the basic tenets of God's law. (See Isaiah 42: 8). Paul says there is but ONE body (Eph. 4: 4) and that God is to be glorified through THAT body or institution (Eph. 3: 21).

IV. A brother, or group of brethren, who might own such a school as the one briefly described under headings I and II must confine its activity to the field where it belongs—secular education. But they would have a perfect right to permit the Church to take over the spiritual supervision of those students who would be members of the Church, and to institute whatever program they felt necessary in the way of Bible instruction and spiritual development. Such a program would be under the supervision of the elders where God placed it. If any of the regular faculty members should be chosen by the elders to take part in this program set up by the local church, they would act under the supervision of the church and not the school. The school, as such, would have no part in the support or supervision of this program aimed at the spiritual development of the students. There would be no infringement upon the Church's God-given right to act as the "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3: 15).

The attitude of such a school would be this. We operate, as a school, only in the field of secular education. With the completion of that task to the best of our ability, our responsibility is at an end. When we cross the line which separates the spiritual from the temporal, the Church takes over. It is not the school's responsibility, or privilege, to support, either with money or credit, the promotion and supervision of Bible truth. The Church, as God's institution, has a "patent right" on that work (1 Tim. 3: 15). We dare not infringe upon it. If the elders select any of our faculty to help in their program of spiritual development, then be it clearly understood that in carrying out that work, they operate under the direct supervision of the Church, and in that work are supported by it, not the school. Our policy is strictly "hands off."

There it is, Brother Franklin. I submit that there is no essential need which present Bible Colleges are intended to supply that would not be fully met by such a school as I have suggested. I submit, further, that the need would be met without the danger of bringing into existence a dangerous hybrid, a cross between a temporal and spiritual institution. I think that no honest person who conscientiously reads the papers now being published by those who have brought such institutions into existence will be inclined to deny that such institutions have brought with them one of the gravest dangers the Church has yet been called on to face. Permit me to quote from a prominent writer in the South where the practice of extra organization is almost universal.

"Brother ———, your institutions that are fastening themselves upon the Church are like mistletoe, a semiparasite that fastens itself upon the elm trees of our forests, and while people rave over it the tree dies. **THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT YOUR INSTITUTIONS ARE DOING TO THE CHURCH TODAY.**"

Now there is just one difficulty in all this as it applies to those who support Bible Colleges. It would fill every claim that is made for Bible Colleges as they are now. However, it would put the college strictly on its own financially. It would no longer be able to extract money from the pockets of people who would feel that they were supporting the Gospel by donating to the college. It would be the Church teaching the Bible and developing workers for the Lord, and those wanting to support that work would give to the Church. **LET'S FACE IT!** The fact that people have been giving to the colleges instead of the Church is positive proof of what some of us have been contending all along: the colleges are getting the credit that should go to God through the Church.

I have long felt that when people get to the place where they are willing to face an issue squarely and honestly, then something can be worked out to God's glory. I feel that although this little piece has been laboriously forged out in the fear of God, and with much trembling, and after literally years of careful study and earnest prayer, it removes any justification for quibbling about sawmills, grocery stores and farms. I have heard it claimed that there is a parallel between Bible Colleges and all of these, but I have never been convinced. Why? Because I have never known a congregation to permit its "Minister" to go before its assembly and make an appeal for a "Bible Sawmill," and then have the ushers stand at the door and extract the ducats as people leave the building. I have never known a congregation to call a "Bible Grocery Store promotion night," and then permit the clerks to sing something like "A Hole in the Bottom of the Sea," while the collection plates were being passed. I have never known a congregation to contribute each fifth Sunday's collection to a "Bible Farm." All these things have been done, **AND ARE BEING DONE TO PROMOTE THE DOLLARS UPON WHICH BIBLE COLLEGES MUST FEED.**

You said, Brother Franklin, that we were afraid to face the facts that a college education, while in some instances necessary to our way of life, can be a definite threat to the student's spiritual safety. I am not convinced that a college, ANY COLLEGE, can meet today's scholastic standards and eliminate that danger completely. The reason I say that is because I choose not to ignore the fact that in order to bestow degrees a school must submit to supervision and direction by certain supervisory boards designated by state and federal authority. In

keeping with today's requirements, any school is controlled by such boards and does not control them. But such a college as I have proposed would not get in the Church's way while it functioned to do that for which God designed it—to meet and overcome the threat of sin. (See John 17: 15). (Rfd 1, Central Station, West Virginia).

Claycomo Building

The construction of the basement at Claycomo north of Kansas City, Missouri, has been delayed, but as soon as weather permits, work will get under way. Additional financial assistance is still needed for the erection of a building for the group meeting in this community. Any and all contributions regardless of size will be appreciated. The interest and zeal of this group is increasing daily and attendance the past two months has increased remarkably.

We would like to express our appreciation and thanks for the excellent lessons presented by the brethren from the churches in the Kansas City area in the form of talks and training classes and for their time and effort expended in the preparation of these edifying messages. Their cooperation and support has been wonderful.

Contributions received to date are as follows: Wakenda, Mo., \$25; Iberia, Mo. (Mt. View), \$100; Bogard, Mo., \$100; Kansas City (26th and Spruce), \$500; Chesapeake, West Virginia, \$20; Nevada, Mo., \$100; Gardner, Kansas, \$100; Stockton, California (517 N. Windsor Ave.), \$25; Paola, Kansas, \$12; Beloit, Kansas, \$10; Compton, California (333 W. Olive Ave.), \$25; Carrollton, Mo., \$100; Independence, Mo., \$50; Unionville, Mo. (1318 Grant Street), \$25; Red Cloud, Nebr., \$50; Braymer, Mo., \$55; Warrensburg, Mo., \$25; St. Louis, Mo. (5344 Lillian Avenue), \$100; Bloomington, Ill., \$100; New Cambria, Mo. (Ethel Congregation), \$25; Shippensburg, Penn., \$10; Sullivan, Ill., \$50.—*Veva Kirkpatrick.*

New Testament Commentary

The first volume of the New Testament Commentary by E. M. Zerr will be in the mails before many days. It is a most attractive volume containing notes and explanations on every verse of the New Testament from Matthew through Romans. We request that those who made it possible by ordering three copies send their money at the earliest convenience. The cost is \$4 per copy, or 3 for \$10. Orders for single copies will now be received. You'll miss something real if you do not get this book. Send at once to MISSION MESSENGER, 7505 Trenton Avenue, St. Louis 14, Missouri. If you send money state whether it is a new order or in payment of a previous one.

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

Luke 2: 7



The last part of this verse will be considered in this article. Many earnest and sentimental speeches have been made by people who wish to pay tribute to the poverty and humility of the parents of Jesus. Comparison is made between people who are rich or otherwise popular socially, and those who are poor and belong to the "common class." It will be said that if the former apply for a room in a city hotel, they will be accommodated regardless of how crowded the institution may be. But if some poor or insignificant people ask for a room for the night, they will be told there is "no room for them." The speaker will then pervert this passage by referring to the rich and proud citizens of the earth, or to those who are interested in the evil pleasures of this world so much they do not wish to be disturbed. The conclusion will next be stated by saying, "so it is the same today as then: there is no room for Him in their hearts."

Many of the statements about the proud and sinful people of the world are true, but the heading text has nothing to do with that subject, and it is a perversion to make such a use of it. The word *room* does not mean merely any certain spot or amount of space, but it denotes a suitable place for some specific purpose. The word *inn* is from the same Greek word as "guestchamber" in chapter 22: 11, and should be so rendered in our passage. It was a place similar to the lobby or waiting room of a hotel. It was a time of large crowds on account of the decree of Caesar calling for all people to come to the proper headquarters for registering. While there, the time came for the child to be born, which would take place on a birth stool that was used in old times (Exodus 1: 16). After the birth there would be no suitable place (*room*) for the caring of the babe in that crowded guestchamber. For that reason he was laid in one of the manger^s that were connected with the public lodging places in that country. Hence the statement of the heading text has nothing to do with the attitude of the managers toward these "humble, poor people." Truth needs no perversion of scripture.

The Loney Booklet

We have carefully read Bro. Loney's new booklet, "Suggested Outlines for Scriptural Study—No. 2." It contains 48 pages and a neat cover. It is printed in legible type and is handy pocket size. The title page declares it is "prepared for indoctrination and development work among the churches of Christ." Our brother did a tremendous job of scriptural research in its preparation. The booklet contains hundreds of references to substantiate the various subjects. General topics are: God, Christ, Holy Spirit, Church, Man, Salvation, Christians, Angels. There are numerous sub-topics arranged with a fair degree of judgment as to importance.

This booklet will be invaluable to teachers and students. You should secure a copy for every friend of yours who is interested in Bible study. Groups of young people should assemble and take one topic at a time, looking up all references together and discussing their relationship to the topic. All who do so will grow in grace and knowledge. The booklets are 35c each; 3 for \$1.00; 100 for \$24. Order from Roy Loney, Rfd 2, Wellsville, Kansas. Ask Bro. Loney for a sample tract when you write.

HELP NEEDED

Winford Lee informs us that the little group of disciples at Brookfield, Missouri, lost the use of the V. F. W. hall when the building changed hands. They can purchase for a nominal sum a dwelling house in good location which can be made over into a meeting place. They are asking that you assist them in the down payment and they will then take care of the monthly payments themselves. Please send a check at once to E. F. Davis, 718 West Wood, Brookfield, Missouri.

BIBLES!

We have only 5 copies of the Oxford Wide Margin Bible remaining. These will take your notes in ink on the page. They are beautifully bound in leather and are leather lined. The cost is \$25 each. In addition we have an excellent leather bound teachers' Bible, with concordance, center references, and good readable type. The price is \$11.50. Another leather bound teachers' Bible with above features and convenient size to carry is \$10.00. Write us your Bible needs. A Bible is the best graduation present. It will be treasured for years.

W. G. ROBERTS

It was cold and gray on this March 13 afternoon. As the hearse pulled up in front of the church building, the wind pelted drops of rain into the faces of the pallbearers and mourners. The casket was carried up the steps with gentle hands, and wheeled to the front of the large meeting-house. It reposed in front of the speaker's platform. Bro. W. G. Roberts had come for the last time to a gathering of the saints in Hammond, Illinois. He had often walked down the same aisle, often exhorted from the same platform, often taught with open Bible held reverently in hand. Now he had to be carried, and there was no response from his lips to the singing or scripture reading.

For 57 years, William Grant Roberts proclaimed the news of the great King. More than 190 times he stood in defense of the gospel against the best that sectarianism could produce. He trusted in the Lord, and if he had an outstanding fault, it was that he trusted in men, sometimes too far, for he tried to see the good in them all! The first time the editor met him, he was not an editor, but a boy 13 years old. Bro. Roberts was called home to the bedside of a daughter, and he arranged for me to finish the meeting he was conducting at Farmer's Ridge, Illinois. That was thirty years ago! Since I have known of the churches of Christ I have known of Brother Roberts.

He dropped the sword from nerveless fingers at Carl Clinic, Urbana, Illinois, where he slipped quietly into a merciful coma while he slept on the night of March 10. In death he followed the two companions who had shared the sacrifices of his preaching career, for he had been married twice: first to Margaret Toynet Walling, and two years after her death, to Elma J. Allen.

A quartet sang his favorite hymns. The writer read David's lament over Saul and Jonathan, and spoke to the large assembly. There were few tears, strangely enough. One does not weep over the well-deserved rest which comes to a warrior at the close of day. He was faithful until death. The flowers, wind-whipped on the little mound in beautiful Arcola cemetery are already sere and faded, but not so the memory of W. G. Roberts! "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

By the time your next paper arrives you will no doubt have your copies of the New Testament Commentary by E. M. Zerr.

The debate with G. K. Wallace is scheduled for June 30—July 4 in Arkansas. Bro. Wallace is an outstanding debater and man of ability. Plan to attend!

It is important that you attempt to get other subscriptions for the paper.

THIS and THAT from HERE and THERE

Thanks to Reginald and Helen Spence, and Mildred Carlo for help in wrapping and mailing last month's papers. . . . Richard Kerr reports 2 immersed in his meeting at Reeds Station, near Carbondale (Ill.) and tells us that 2 were restored there in January. Dick's schedule of meetings calls for him to be at Woodson (Ill.) March 3-14; Asphalt (Ky.) Mar. 31—April 11; Lyons (Ind.) May 5-16. . . . Bro. and Sister Robert Sankey celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary at Long Beach (Calif.) Feb. 24. . . . We regret to report the death of Sister Belle Carley, who died at Phoenix (Ariz.) and was buried at Waco (Tex.) last month. She and her late husband were former members at Manchester Avenue (St. Louis). . . . We express our sincere sympathy to Clinton Wofford, St. Louis (Mo.) whose aged mother departed this life at Belle (Mo.) Feb. 25. . . . One was restored at Flat River (Mo.) Feb. 17; one immersed at Farmington (Mo.) Feb. 22. . . . Those who have friends at Kirtland or Sandia Air Base are urged to have them attend services at Albuquerque (N. Mex.) and for information they may contact Herman Gower, whose telephone number is 3-7011. . . . Farmington (N. Mex.) congregation will remodel their building by adding classrooms. . . . Thanks to Sister Minnie Kryselmier, Nevada (Mo.) who mailed in 12 subs, and said they conceived the idea that by sending them in before expiration, they could save expense and time. A good idea indeed. Go thou and do likewise! . . . We appreciate six subs from Sister Orie Brady, Des Moines (Iowa), and also assistance from Bro. Leonard Bilyeu, Saint Louis (Mo.) in mailing papers to overseas brethren. . . . We appreciate an encouraging letter from R. F. Williamson, Sebastopol (Calif.). . . . Alan Brown reports the church in Dunfermline (Scotland) is coming along quite well. . . . C. V. Terry, Gallatin (Mo.) appreciated Roy Loney's article on the subject "Television." . . . J. C. Vaughn spoke at Beech Grove (Ark.) Feb. 24 and reports the brethren doing well. . . . Rosa Finley, Orange (Calif.) reports that she likes the paper a great deal. It was first sent to her by an interested friend. . . . James Mabery conducted funeral services for Carl Courtley, Canalou (Mo.) Feb. 19. . . . W. Carl Ketcherside spoke to a high school assembly at Venice (Ill.) March 7, and addressed a meeting of teachers at New Madrid (Mo.) March 21. . . . James Mabery held a meeting at Advance (Mo.) starting March 2. . . . We have placed the mailing address of the authors of the various articles appearing in this edition, at the close of their respective articles, so that those of you who wish to do so may write to them

personally about their printed message. . . . Roy Loney has a new tract in two colors entitled "What Is Truth?" It is a six page folder which is very attractive. The cost is \$3 per 100. Write to him for a supply to use in personal work. A sample will be mailed you if you send a stamp to Roy Loney, Rfd 2, Wellsville, Kansas. . . . William Hensley appointed Frank Rosebery and Melvin Short as elders of the University Street Church, Des Moines (Iowa). Both are good men and we rejoice in the fact that they are now officers in that congregation. . . . Curtis Burton and Sharon Sue Ketcherside were united in marriage at Graham Memorial Chapel on Washington University Campus, March 2. Both are members of the church in St. Louis. . . . J. C. Mabery, an elder at Bonne Terre (Mo.) says there are many good messages in the paper. . . . D. R. Garrison edits an attractive monthly information pamphlet for the church at Jacksonville (Penn.). . . . Winford Lee held a two weeks meeting in Kirksville (Mo.) in February with a daily broadcast over the local station. . . . Mary Barker, Hale (Mo.) expresses appreciation for the good reading in the MISSION MESSENGER. . . . Ernest White reminds us of the three day meeting at Anderson (Ind.) starting July 4. . . . C. R. Turner did some preaching at Clever (Mo.) in a theater building during March. The work was sponsored by the church at Nixa. . . . Lavene Wash, Anderson (Ind.) says they get much good from the paper. . . . Fred Killebrew was with the Nixa (Mo.) congregation February 24. . . . Leeman Counts was immersed at Lillian Avenue Church (St. Louis) March 2. . . . Bessie Smock, Riverside (Calif.) expresses appreciation for the work of Jerry Ketcherside and Joe Stracke in the church there. . . . Anna Schlieper, Pearl (Ill.) was 85 years old on New Year's Day and says she used to hear Roy Loney's father preach at Baytown (Ill.) many years ago. . . . Roy Loney was with the church at Greensburg (Kans.) March 2, but the meetings were hindered by a heavy blizzard. . . . Horace Hinds, Harlan (Iowa) advances his subscription three years. Thanks! . . . Guy Foreman reports an excellent Bible Study at Hammond (Ill.) conducted by Robert Brumback. The study closed March 7. . . . The church at Riverside (Calif.) held a song rally on March 2. . . . Bernell Weems conducted a three weeks meeting at West Riverside. . . . The church at Pomona (Calif.) held its annual all-day meeting March 23, with dinner at noon at Washington Park Clubhouse. . . . The congregation at Morley (England) celebrated its 58th anniversary, Feb. 24, and Bros. Fred Sugden and A. C. Wilson were placed in the eldership. . . . Our hearts are very saddened by the report of the death

of Bro. George Millar, Belfast (North Ireland). . . . Harold Baines, Morley (England) expresses appreciation for the articles of our daughter, Sharon, and those written by Roy Loney. . . . We have a few copies of Commentary on Romans (Lard), and Commentary on Hebrews (Milligan) which have slightly soiled covers. While they last you can have them for \$2 each. That's a real buy. First come, first served! . . . A. W. Harvey begins at Galesburg (Ill.) for one month's work in April. . . . We thank Troy Patrick, Hammond (Ill.) for 5 subs. . . . Mrs. Leeman Counts was baptized at Lillian Avenue (St. Louis) March 9, and another was added by membership. . . . Three restored at Indiana Avenue, Bloomington (Ind.) March 2; one added at Southwest (St. Louis) by membership transfer March 9. . . . There's a real opening for a salesman of advertising specialties where much good can be done for the church. Write us and we'll forward the letter. . . . Thanks to Bessie McClaffin, Bicknell (Ind.) for help in overseas mailing. . . . Roy Harris held 3 services at Dentonia (Kans.) March 2, and was at Green Mound (Kans.) March 4. He recently conducted a song class at Lamine (Mo.). . . . Elders at Nevada (Mo.) request mail be addressed: Church of Christ, 630 North Main, Care of C. H. Ephland. . . . Roy Loney, Box 15, Hays (Kans.) has 5000 more tracts on "What Is Truth." The cost is \$2.25 per 100. . . . Thanks to Grandma Mayden, Wakenda (Mo.) for 6 subs. . . . Vern Atwell spoke at Phoenix (Ariz.) in February. Wilbur Storm and a group of singers conducted a service at Good Samaritan Hospital (Phoenix) where Nyma June Pivoda is taking nurses' training. . . . Our hearts were saddened by death of our aged Brother Edward Mansur, Braymer (Mo.) who passed away Feb. 29. . . . A. C. Warren will soon move to Summersville (Mo.) to labor with churches in south Missouri. At present he is giving the radio talks on the Farmington (N. Mex.) program. . . . Gordon Dunham and Kenneth Inman were appointed elders, Leslie Moore and Carl Fitzpatrick appointed deacons at Nixa (Mo.) during Fred Killebrew's recent labors there. These are good men and will accomplish much with the help of the brethren. . . . There were 63 young people from 3 states and 11 congregations present at Anderson (Ind.) on March 8 and 9 in a period of grand fellowship. . . . Winford Lee started a meeting at Bloomfield (Ind.) March 18. . . . John Patrick spoke twice at Pomona (Calif.) on March 2. . . . W. Carl Ketcherside spoke twice at Farmington (Mo.) March 16. . . . We rejoice at the fact of appointment of godly men as elders in so many congregations. This is God's plan being carried out!