

ABILENE1953 LECTURES

by Abilene Christian College

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25 Chapters

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Publisher's Notice

Publisher's Notice PUBLISHER'S NOTICE The Firm Foundation Publishing House, for a number of years, has been publishing the principal addresses in the Abilene Christian College Lectureship during February of each year. These volumes from year to year are added to the principal libraries, public and private, and to individuals' private libraries. They have become a feature and embody some of the finest literature that is now published by the loyal churches of Christ.

These compositions are of high order, prepared and delivered by outstanding men—preachers, lecturers, debaters, and educators—among the churches of Christ.

We are sending this volume for 1953 out with confidence that it will be received, read, and studied with a full measure of appreciation by loyal and faithful disciples of our Lord. A large number who have, from time to time, been buying and filing in their library these volumes, have developed a confidence and an appreciation for them and are replete in their commendations and expressions of thankfulness that they have these great annuals for their library for many years.

It may be noted that the Firm Foundation Publishing House has in stock about one-half dozen of miscellaneous numbers of volumes for several past years. If your library is short on some particular year, we are probably in position to supply it. Write us. We are sending this volume forth with a full measure of confidence in its merit, and also with the persuasion that it will be highly appreciated. There is one address in this list that several have said is worth the price of the entire book. Such a remark might be made with regard to several of the addresses.

O. H. P. SHOW ALTER, Publisher

Austin, Texas, May 25, 1953

THE CHURCH AND THE COMMUNITY

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Glenn L. Wallace

Romans 13:1-7

“Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: for he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For, for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing. Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.”

There are two extremes that are held by members of the church on the relationship of the church to the community. One group says that the church, being a spiritual institution, belongs to God and that there can be no connection between the Christian and the world. These people insist that a Christian is a temporary traveler here with a task that should be completely severed from the “powers that be” and all community life. Another view held by some Christians is that the church is a service organization; a vessel of community action; that Christians are members of a semi-religious order and that a “chamber of commerce” attitude should prevail in all that is done. The latter view would urge that such things as major disasters, political pressure, racial betterment, scout work, polio drives, and any and all community projects should be made the heart of the church at work and even supported from the budget of the congregation. These people often insist that the “voice of the church” should be heard in public affairs all the way from the local precinct to the White House. The truth is between the two extremes. The church does have a definite relationship to sustain to the community and yet there is a line that should be drawn between the mission of the church and the service rendered by the members to the community life. The Mission of the Church

If we are to know the true relationship of the church to the community, we must understand the mission as outlined in the New Testament. This plan will show that the church is divine in origin, (Matthew 16:18) and was purchased with Christ's blood (Acts 20:28). This blood-bought institution has a definite mission and all the machinery necessary to carry it out is provided by command or example. The church organization consists of elders and deacons (Php_1:1-2). This is the only class of officers in the church and the authority of the elders extends only to the local congregation in which they are selected to serve. The evangelist is not an officer, and he along with any other

members employed to work is under the oversight of those who secure his services.

Three major works make up the program of the church.

First, each congregation should seek to keep the local membership edified, strong and loyal.

Second, the church should reach out to other communities and lands where the gospel is unknown with a program of evangelization.

Third, the distressed should be given help and provisions, especially those who are of the "household of faith."

There is an obligation to provide help to those outside of the church but the restrictions upon such a work are clearly evident in the New Testament plan. The church has neither the numbers (it will never be in the majority) nor the machinery for world-wide relief work. The church should attempt only that which she can do and supervise.

We can see how this mission was carried out by looking at a few examples in the New Testament plan. When a famine arose in apostolic times, money was raised by Christians and sent to Christians to be administered by the elders, the only class of supervisors that the church can recognize (Acts 11:30). Elders today have the right and privilege to call upon sister congregations to assist them in a work of providing for the needy but no "board of trustees" or any other unscriptural body has a New Testament right to call upon the church for aid in any kind of program. This would prevent a congregation from building its program to include any community, civic, national, educational or charitable organizations, whether they are administered by people of the world or of the church. A congregation may purchase the service and supplies of a human institution but the purchase of such service and the support of the institution are not parallel. The task of evangelizing the world is a great one but it is not too great for God's people. The church at Antioch was the base of operation of two evangelists according to Luke's record (Acts 13). The work of these men began and ended with a report to this congregation. All work of evangelization, both local and foreign, should originate and end under the oversight of a local church. When a church is planted, it should become a church and not a "mission," then this relationship between the two churches will cease to exist. The church cannot allocate the work of evangelization to any community and world-wide service organization. In our anxiety to carry out this mission let us maintain the proper relationship to the worldly institutions among which we work.

James teaches that orphan children should be cared for by Christians (James 1:27). This work cannot be handed to benevolent organizations that have no connection with the elders of a local congregation. The church cannot have any organic connections with worldly institutions who claim to do what the church is commanded to do. Our relationship to such orders is very clear. The Christian and Community

"The voice of the church should be heard in community affairs," says one. "We should make ourselves an effective agency for community service" is advocated by a few Christians. One preacher was heard to exclaim: "Our government cannot overlook one million votes." Is this the course the church should take? To make our influence felt should we organize and select a spokesman to be our "ambassador" at Washington? Should we have paid lobbyists in Congress to safeguard the plans of the "church of Christ?"

How can the church be heard in public life? A lobby in congress or “representative members” working in Washington for the church is a violation of the principle upon which the American government is built. We have recently heard that the Pope of Rome has intervened in behalf of the Rosenbergs who are condemned to die. A church head, speaking for his church, is seeking to pressure the President and change the decision of an American court. He has no right to such action and neither does any other church including the church that Jesus built. No man can ever speak for all the churches of Christ. A sermon on “what the church of Christ teaches” should be titled, “what the Bible teaches about the church.” It is not possible to know what all the members believe on any question but it is possible to determine what the Bible teaches on all questions. There are many members who wear the name of Christ and worship according to the apostolic pattern, yet they are in error on many points of doctrine. Can any man speak for them or can one among them speak for all the churches?

If a condition should arise locally where the citizen-ship of this town is called upon to vote on the liquor questions, I personally would vote to keep prohibition and I would openly campaign if necessary to keep out the open sale of liquor. I am a prohibitionist but I cannot speak for all the congregation. I have known some good people who do not drink but who feel that a prohibition law is not the way to handle this issue. I would feel free to teach the Bible truth against the evils of liquor but I cannot presume to “vote the congregation” on this or any other issue. The Christian individual has a debt to pay to help to keep the moral standards of the community lifted high, but the church as an organization cannot enter into the political maneuvering of civic life.

What then is the medium through which a Christian may work to lend his influence for good? The text for this sermon reveals that God has ordered that all society be organized for the purposes of peace and happiness. Individual Christians live in this society and they are taught to support it and direct it toward the proper ends. The individual Christian must pay his taxes and give support to the government in any goals that are within the proper realm of government operation. A few examples of the actions of individual Christians in the New Testament will help to keep this relationship clarified. The jailor was converted at midnight and the next morning he was a jailor (Acts 16). He was a Christian and served his community through this medium. We would not say he was a “church of Christ” jailor, but he was a Christian citizen serving the community in this capacity. Erastus was the treasurer of the city. As an individual he had a right to take such a job and the influence of his Christian teaching should have guided him in the administration of this work. He was not a “church of Christ” treasurer. We are taught to pray for kings, governors and those in authority. Christians may hold such offices, operate legitimate business houses, work at honorable occupations and in this way, the influence of the church is being felt in the community life. A Christian may vote, hold office and campaign for his favorite candidate. He may engage in drives for funds to treat polio, tuberculosis, heart disease and any other worthwhile civic and community enterprise. A Christian can build a hospital, work for city improvement, serve to relieve transients who are stranded in the city and he can support any task that is detached from some sectarian religion. These projects belong to the state, the community, and not to the church of the Lord. A Christian as a member of this community has an obligation to support such work. Let the Christian learn to be a good citizen. The Christian, His Money and the Community

All the money of a Christian does not belong to the church. He has a great obligation to the Lord's church and only a prayerful heart and honest purpose can determine the amount that belongs to

the Lord. The Christian must support his government with some of his money (Romans 13:1-7). He must support his family and provide for his old age (1 Timothy 5:4-8). A Christian has the obligation to educate his children and he is entitled to some clean recreation (1 Timothy 4:8). These things are not the obligation of the church and an individual Christian is exercising his God given right when he is in contact with the proper community and government organizations that provide such opportunities for these things.

It is sometimes advocated that, "whatever a Christian individual does, the church can do." This is not true. A Christian may operate a grocery store but a Church should not. A Christian can purchase a ticket to a basketball game but the church does not purchase the ticket. In this capacity a Christian always acts as a Christian but he is not acting in a church capacity. The church should be the church and follow her divine mission. The individual Christian should let the leaven of the truth he learns go with him into his daily life.

Matthew 5:13-14 "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid."

Acts 2:47 "praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved."

THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH IN THE LIFE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

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Robert C. Jones The church is the body of Christ, the house of God, the kingdom of heaven. It is the spiritual institution in which all the saved have membership, over which Christ rules as head and in which his spirit dwells. The Lord's church is ever exerting influence upon the individual just as a flower steadily bestows fragrance upon the air. So when the church fulfills her mission in the world, individuals are influenced to become Christians, God is glorified and the world is made a better place in which to live. In ancient days when God, through the prophets, spoke of the establishment, the mission, the glory and the destiny of the church, he also mentioned the great influence the church would exert in the hearts and lives of the people. "They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom" (Psalms 145:11-12). When the church, in word and deed, speaks of the glory of the kingdom, talks of God's power, making known his mighty acts, we are doing the very things that, through the ages, have influenced the lives of the people. The prophet Isaiah said: (Isaiah 2:2-3) "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord; to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." It requires great influence to cause many people to say: "Come, let us go to the house of God and be taught of his ways and walk in his paths." But with the passing of time we see the complete fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. The prophet Daniel referred to the mighty influence of the church when he said: (Daniel 2:44) "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." Not by force of arms, not by political tricks, but by righteous living and gospel teaching, the church as a stone cut out without hands, smote the image until it was broken to pieces and became like the chaff of the threshing floor, and the wind carried them away, and no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. The prophet speaks of the small beginning, great growth, mighty influence and eternal destiny of the church.

I think Solomon referred to the church when he asked: "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" (Son_6:10). If the answer to this question is the church, the influence of the church is suggested in a very beautiful and impressive way.

Jesus made, in the sermon on the mount, one of the strongest and most striking statements to be found in the scriptures on the influence his disciples should have on the world. He said: "Ye are

the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:13-16). As salt works silently and mightily in seasoning and saving, so the church must exert a strong, enriching and saving influence in the life of the individual and through the individual effect the whole world. As an illuminating, revealing and guiding light the church dispels the darkness, makes known the way of life and gives every incentive to righteousness. In order to exert a strong influence on the individual, and upon the world, the church must do and the church must refuse to do certain things. In words the church must be scriptural in all things if she would be influential in righteousness. Our influence for good is always in proportion to our faithfulness to Christ. “And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Colossians 3:17). Christ, not the church is our authority. The things commanded, and the things condemned, are fully revealed, by the Lord, in his word. He hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness in the perfect law of liberty. This revelation furnishes us completely unto every good work. “And he that goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the teaching hath both the Father and the Son” (2 John 1:9).

If we would be, and if we would influence others to be, pleasing to the Lord, we must accept his word as the standard of authority, doing no more and no less than it requires. Balaam said: “If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more” (Numbers 22:18). On this point Balaam preached the truth, but like many of our day he failed to practice what he preached. “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God” (1 Peter 4:11). If a man, or if the church, will speak and live according to the oracles of God, Christian influence in the life of the individual will be overwhelming. There is an ever present danger of our turning from the truth unto lies, and thereby losing our righteousness and our influence here, and our immortal souls hereafter. Paul said: “I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:29-32). To be scriptural and influential the church must be strong in faith.

The faith of the church in Rome was spoken of throughout the whole world. This was a powerful influence for good for which Paul was thankful. Paul remembered and thanked God for the Thessalonians, because of their work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in Christ. Such people will not be ignored or forgotten. When the churches were established in the faith, they increased in number daily (Acts 16:5). This shows that a faithful church will be an influential church, and a growing church. Faith working through love avails in Christ (Galatians 5:6), and faith working through love avails in the life of the individual. Faith alone is dead, but obedient faith is alive and mighty in its work and influence. Jesus said: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). Work

has tremendous influence in the life of man. Those who work are influenced by the work they do, and those who witness good works are usually effected by them. While we are working on our work our work is working on us. While a man is building a house, the house is building the man. In all our work we are building ourselves. Look at what we are doing on the outside and you can tell what we are becoming on the inside. The highest reward for man's work is not what he gets for it, but what he becomes by it and the good effects that it has on others. In order for the church to influence the individual her faith must work through love. We must love the Lord and all the people in all the world, not in word only but in deed and in truth. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (1 Cor. 13:13). Let the church prove her love for the individual, and her influence on the individual will be good and great.

Good character is the foundation for good influence.

"Be ye holy; for I am holy (1 Peter 1:16). "We should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Ephesians 1:4). "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1). Be good, do good, and influence other for good. The Lord's plan for the church calls for us to worship God in spirit and in truth (Matthew 4:10; John 4:24; Revelation 22:8-9). Worship is one of the most influential acts of the church. In worship the intellect of the individual is enlightened, his emotions are stirred, and his will is enlisted in the service of God and humanity. We should place ourselves under the influence of the worship of the church as often as we have opportunity. The church has influence, which is exerted consciously or unconsciously, for good or evil, for time and eternity. The influence of the church in the life of the individual in the hereafter is apparent when we understand that membership in the Lord's church is essential to the salvation of the soul. The church is the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18-24). Christ is the saviour of the body (Ephesians 5:23). God sets the members in the body as it pleases him (1 Corinthians 12:18). The Lord adds to the church those that should be saved (Acts 2:27). Man was created for God's glory (Isaiah 43:7). We are commanded to glorify God (Rom. 16 :27; Revelation 1:6). We are told to glorify God in the name Christian (1 Peter 4:16). And Paul says: "Unto him be glory in the church of Christ Jesus throughout all ages world without end." Therefore a man cannot obey the Lord, and he cannot do that for which he was created without being a member of the Lord's church. Jesus, taught that all the sheep must be in the one fold, with one shepherd (John 10:16). He also taught that only the sheep would be saved, the goats will be lost (Matthew 25:33). The flock is the church of our Lord (Acts 20:28). You must be a sheep in order to be saved, all the sheep are in the fold, and the fold is the church. When the end comes, and Christ shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, he will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24). "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27). Let us make our calling and election sure, by being members of the church, and at the end of the ages be presented to Christ, and delivered to the Father. So the influence of the church in the life of time, and space, into the great and boundless eternity, the individual reaches beyond the realm of matter, and up to the throne of

God and the everlasting home of the redeemed.

Fort Worth, Texas

THE CHURCH AT WORK IN ITALY

THE CHURCH AT WORK IN ITALY THE CHURCH AT WORK IN ITALY

Carl Mitchell

I am humbly grateful to your planning committee for the distinct honor paid me in being invited to appear on this lectureship program. It is a great joy to see so many people of kindred spirit in the same gathering, and my only regret is that my Brethren in Italy are not privileged to be here this morning. In doing missionary work there are many problems that must be met. There are two that are particularly important. The first is the problem of adjustment. Many times when we read Paul's admonition that we become all things to all people, we are prone to pass over it lightly, not giving it the consideration that it deserves. The problem of adjustment becomes especially important in missionary work. One must come to know and understand the people with whom he is working, must come to realize and appreciate their philosophy and ways of meeting problems, and must try to become as much like them as possible. Sometimes a mistake is made of confusing Christianity and Americanism. We think that we have to make Americans out of them in helping them to become Christians. This, of course, is not true, as there is a great deal of difference between Christianity and Americanism.

Foreign peoples do not appreciate being told how we do things back home. It has been my experience that people of other countries are as attached to and devoted to their way of life as we are to ours. Therefore, the problem of adjustment is most important if one would have the maximum efficiency in preaching to foreign peoples. The second problem is that of language differences. It is a difficult and trying thing to go into another country burdened with the gospel message, but unable to speak to the people. Sometimes we might almost have wished that the age for 'speaking in tongues' still existed; however, that period being past, we were forced to apply ourselves in learning the Italian language. We are thankful that the Italian language is comparatively simple in comparison with other languages; and this, together with the fact that the Italian people were very helpful in teaching and correcting us, made it relatively easy to learn. This, of course, does not mean that we speak perfectly. Oftentimes we make mistakes; some of them are amusing, more often embarrassing. I remember, on one occasion, that I wanted to tell a young lady in my class at Rome that I had seen her mother that morning. I confused the words "to see" with the words "to sell", and announced to her that I had sold her mother that morning. Of course she was rather shocked until she realized that I had made a mistake. Brother Harold Paden was announcing to the congregation that they should remember one of the brethren in their prayer who had fallen and had broken his leg. He confused the word for leg with the word for "a rubber tire." To the startled congregation he announced, "We must remember our dear brother in our prayer who has fallen and broken his rubber tire". Brother Howard Bybee, on one occasion, went to the employment agency to hire some men to attach posters advertising a pending meeting. He confused the word for "poster attacher" with the word meaning "a baby turkey." He then requested that several baby turkeys be sent out to attach posters for the church of Christ.

I would like to divide my discourse under three major headings. The first will be to indicate to you the actual condition of our work today in Italy. The second will be to give a brief narrative of the recent persecution suffered by the church of our Lord in Italy. I would like to conclude with a word of warning concerning what I consider the real threat that Catholicism poses to our way of life.

Beginning in the northern most reaches of Italy, near the confines of Switzerland, and at the feet of the beautiful Alps, stretching down through southern Italy and across into sunny Sicily, there have been some 23 congregations established. In addition to these, there are 5 or 6 mission points where classes are being held but where the church, as yet, has not come into existence. Serving congregations are 14 full-time native Italian evangelists, men schooled and educated by us in God's word, who have chosen to dedicate themselves to the preaching of God's word to the Italian people. Of this number, 6 were priests in the Catholic church; some held very high positions. These congregations represent a total faithful membership of between 400 and 500 persons. I say faithful because these brethren have shown themselves faithful through persecution, privation, and suffering. Of our total membership, 9 were priests in the Catholic church. These statistics are not satisfactory to us; but considering the fact that only 4 years ago, as far as we know, there was not a Christian in Italy; and that during this period, we have been forced to labor under very trying circumstances, we feel that some accomplishment has been made. In the city of Frascati, 28 little boys are living and growing as rapidly as well fed little boys do into Christian manhood. Every day they study God's word and join together in periods of song and prayer. We have not attempted to dictate to them as to how they should use their life. The boys were assured that we would aid them in doing anything that was worthwhile, such as becoming a doctor, lawyer, professor, etc. It was gratifying to us when we recently called each of these young fellows into the office to ask them what they wanted to do with their life and found that almost all of them were planning to be gospel preachers. In Milano, we have the training system comparable to the University here in the United States. Eight young men are studying over a period of three years subjects pertinent to the work that they will be doing as gospel preachers. We have a rather peculiar situation in Italy: no division, no hobby-riders, and perfect unity. We want to keep it that way. Thus we are doing everything in our power to ascertain that those who preach the gospel in Italy are sufficiently prepared in God's word to do the work which will be required of them, and at the same time, able to distinguish between their own personal opinions and the truth of God's word. We have a correspondence course which operates out of Rome and reaches into almost every major city of Italy. Our student members number in the hundreds; and this course has been advantageous to us, not only that we are converting people through the mail, but it also aids in the beginning of a new work. For instance: if I should have the time expendable to initiate a new effort in the city of Florence, I would go to our card file, take out the names of perhaps 20 or 25 correspondence class students in that city, and use these people, already favorable to us, as a working nucleus; and, with a minimum of time lost, the congregation could be established. Just before I left Rome, through the contributions sent us as a result of a plea made by Brother Paul Edwards, we were able to buy a printing press. We are anticipating that our labor will be greatly aided by our being able to preach the gospel through the printed page. There are many other facts which could be stated, but I feel that these are sufficient to give you an idea of our work as it exists today in Italy.

Since our work was initiated some 4 years ago, we have received continuous resistance from the Catholic church. At least 4 major attempts have been made to drive us from Italy. We are thankful

to God that none of them have been successful. Shortly after our workers arrived in Italy, the first attempt was made. The Catholic church said we will follow you from place to place, challenging your teaching publicly and will debate you out of this country. Their plan did not work out as effectively as they had anticipated. Error always fares badly when confronted by the truth of God's word. After a few nights, they realized that debating was not an effective way of ridding Italy of the churches of Christ. Today it is impossible to get an Italian Priest to engage you in public discussion. The obvious reason is they are afraid of the truth. The second attempt made was to scare us out of Italy. You remember how the workers were stoned out of the city of Castel Gondolfo; how in the City of Rocca di Papa an attempt was made to overturn our Jeep; and threats of physical violence were made against the missionaries. You will recall that a bomb was set for Brother Hudson, and a child accidentally touched off the bomb, blowing his hand from his arm; how on one or two occasions, bombs were found in the apartments of workers; how threatening letters were received: how the brake lining was found cut on the automobiles in the hope that the car, going down some incline, would go out of control killing the occupants; how members of the church were beaten; how some of them lost their jobs and others were turned out from their homes. All these were calculated to scare the Church of our Lord out of Italy. I am frank to admit, that there were times when I was very frightened; and yet, if one is truly a Christian, and appreciates his mission, you will not be able to scare him sufficiently to make him forget his responsibility.

Even though at times they still try to scare us, they have found it impossible to frighten the Church of Christ out of Italy. The third attempt was made through legal channels. The Italian government told the world that we were communists operating under a religious front; that we had come to Italy as tourists, masking our real motives and intentions; therefore we were in Italy illegally, and, as law breakers, so the Italian government was forced to invite us to leave. They refused to renew our permission to stay in Italy, commanded the Orphanage closed, and the little boys turned back out on the streets from whence they had come. It was only when brethren such as you protested to the State Department in Washington, causing the American government to make a strong appeal in our behalf, that the Italian government was forced to renew our visas, and to allow us to reopen the Orphanage. For a period of about two years we had comparative peace.

I remember talking with Brother Cline Paden in the opening days of February of last year. We concluded that the Catholic church had decided that it was best just to leave us alone and to hope that we wouldn't do too much damage. It was only a few days later that Brother Paden and I were downstairs in the Rome Church building teaching some young people when Brother Melvin Pownall called us from the city of Alessandria announcing the fourth attempt. He said that they had received a police order informing them that our worship was illegal and that the Church building in Alessandria was officially closed. It further stated that any effort to hold services would be broken up with armed police force. So that you might fully understand the legal situation in which we found ourselves, I would like to explain something about the laws that exist in Italy. I have a copy of the Italian Constitution. This document was written in the blood of martyrs of Italy and was passed by popular vote shortly after the recent war. This document is very similar to the American Constitution. It guarantees liberty and the dignity of the individual. Among the liberties promised is that of the freedom of religion. Articles 8, 17, 18, and 19 guarantee that in Italy all religions are equal before the law and free to carry on their program, either publicly or in private, with no

authorization or recognition whatsoever being required. There is only one condition stipulated, and that is that the religion not be immoral. Until we received this telephone call, we thought that, at least theoretically, this freedom existed. We had made it a practice to go to the Chief of Police in any city in which we desired to commence a new work, and to ask him if anything were necessary in the way of permission for the initiation of that work. In compliance with the constitution, they had always informed us that there was no authorization necessary and that we were free to carry on our activity. Contrary to the thought of some, that we went to Italy as hot-heads or troublemakers with a chip on our shoulder, we have attempted to co-operate with the authorities there in every way. It was only when they made further co-operation impossible, and told us that we would have to close down our work and go home that we were forced to tell them that we defied them or their authority; for we must obey God rather than men. Brother Pownall informed us that two old laws had been cited in the police order in justification of their action. As one man in the State Department in Rome said, "You men from the Church of Christ have forced us to search our laws to find those applicable to you. The laws quoted were taken from the Latern Pact of 1929 between Mussolini and the Vatican when Church and State in Italy were unified. These laws stipulated that the Catholic Church was the State church and that other religions would be tolerated; however, the provisions involved were of such nature that it made it almost impossible for the beginning of any new religious activity in Italy. Actually the above mentioned laws were obsolete, abrogated by the new constitution; but the Italian government, in an effort to mask its intolerance, fished out these two old laws and deceitfully told the world that these were existent legal norms in Italy. Brother Paden and I left immediately for Alessandria. We arrived the next morning just before the hour of worship, and together with Brother Pownall and Brother Petrim we made our way into the church building. As we rounded the corner, near the building, we saw 12 or 14 armed, uniformed policemen blocking the entrance to the church building. When we attempted to enter through the side door, they stopped us, telling us the building was closed and that we could not enter. We persisted, and they informed us that we should go home quietly before we would find ourselves in a great deal of trouble. We told them that it was a disgrace and a shocking thing that the Italian government, which poses as a free nation, and presents its spiritual leader, the Pope, as a great champion of tolerance and liberty, that screamed continually against Communistic oppression of priests in Communist held territory, should find itself guilty of religious discrimination and intolerance in its own country. After awhile, they told us that we could enter the building, but that we could not worship, and that no one else would be allowed to enter. The first thing that we did after gaining admission was to open the large doors at the front of the building. The policemen commanded us to close them, but we refused; we knew that it was our right to have them open, if we so desired. They saw that it was useless to argue with us, and stepped in there and, by force, attempted to close the doors. There was a great deal of pushing and pulling, but we won and the doors were left open. They did content themselves, however, by tearing down the little sign which we had attached on the outside of the building announcing the hour of our services. One by one our members began to arrive, and one by one they were turned away. If they should question the authority of the policemen, they would be pushed and told to go home or they would be taken in. It is a terrible thing to see the look of hurt and anguish in the eyes of the people who approach the house of our Lord intent upon raising their voices in song and in prayer, but who find instead armed policemen who tell them that their worship is illegal. Many Italians passed by who were not members, and many of them stopped to ask what was happening. The average Italian is a very

curious person, and these were no exception. I say they are curious—if you have a flat tire in Italy, before you can get out to fix it, there will be so many people crowded around you can't fix it. They are very curious, and yet they are not always as thoughtful as they should be in offering assistance; not that they are unkind—it is just that they do not think. I have run out of gas and pushed my car uphill by myself, and have had Italians walking along beside me, pitying me for having to do all that hard work, and never think to offer to help me. The policemen would tell those who asked, that this was none of their affair and that they should move along. One rather large man came by and stopped, as did others, to ask what was going on. The Lieutenant in charge told him that it was none of his affair, and that he should go on his way. The man looked around him and then said that he saw nothing which said that he couldn't stand there, and that he wanted to know what was happening. The Lieutenant became very angry and said, "What is your name?" The man, looking him squarely in the eye replied, "What is your name?" The policeman became all the more angry and commanded him to leave at once or he would take him into custody. The man responded that he would leave, but before he left he wanted to say one thing: that until that day he had thought that he lived in a free country, but he saw that he was mistaken. If you are laboring under the thought that Italy is a free country, or has anything vaguely akin to freedom, then you are laboring under a misapprehension.

There is no real freedom in Italy today; whether the system be called the Ancient Roman Empire, the Papal States, the Mussolini Regime, or the Catholic Church, it is all the same totalitarian system. We saw that no one else was going to be allowed to enter the building, so we decided to have worship by ourselves. We went to the back of the building, and I opened my Bible to the 8th chapter of Romans and read the concluding verses, beginning with verse 28. The precious promises therein recorded were certainly consoling to us that morning. We knelt in prayer as Brother Petrini led us, and then we began to sing; and when we began singing, the house fell in on us. The policemen ran in yelling, "You can't worship, you can't worship." When we paid them no mind, they grabbed us by the shoulders and shook us, and we sang all the more sweetly and forcefully. They were afraid to be physically violent with us Americans; our citizenship has been of tremendous value in Italy, possibly somewhat as the apostle Paul's was in his day. The Chief of Police told us in Rome that if we weren't Americans, they would not have been so nice to us; that the building would be closed down and that is all there would be to it. The policemen, however, did lay hands on the Italian minister to take him outside with them; he asked them please not to bother him as he was worshipping; when they attempted to take him out, he held on to his seat and they couldn't budge him. We must have been singing "I Shall Not Be Moved". Seeing that they could not interrupt our worship, they retired outside the building in some confusion, waiting for us to conclude our services. After worship, we saw no point in staying further inside the church building; and we made our way to the office of the Chief of Police. He either was not in, or did not wish to see us, so we were ushered into the office of one of his assistants. This man was a gentleman and expressed his sympathy toward us for the occurrences of that day. He said that he hoped we would not hold him personally responsible; that he realized that we had been wronged; but that they had been forced to act on orders from very high authority. He further stated that we should realize that there was not any freedom in Italy as we know it in America. We agreed with him and understood his position; yet I felt forced to tell him that it was a strange situation; that Italy, a supposedly democratic country, had that day given government permission to the Communist Party to hold a mass meeting in the city of Alessandria, and they, at that very moment, were

meeting, about 13,000 strong, in the city park. In this meeting, they were openly advocating their principles of violence and overthrow. In contrast, the Italian government declared illegal the worship of a small band of Christians meeting peacefully in their own hired house to worship God. I felt that he was made to feel ashamed.

There was no further point in staying in Alessandria, so Brother Paden and I made our way back to Rome. As we arrived at the church building in Rome and prepared to enter the downstairs apartment, Brother Corazza summoned us to the office upstairs where the Chief of Police was waiting for us. He informed us that our Rome church building was to be closed; on further investigation, we learned that the order was to include all of our church buildings throughout Italy; and for justification, the same two obsolete laws cited at Alessandria were being used. We immediately notified the brethren in the United States, asking that you appeal to Washington in our behalf; and we thank you for your marvelous and gratifying response. We thought that perhaps our government would aid us and made our way to the office of the American Embassy. We were met by a man by the name of Outa bridge Horsey, who is everything that his name indicated. He refused to consider our problem a serious one, and denied our request for an appointment with the Ambassador saying that he was too busy to see us, and suggested that if we wanted to contact him we should do so by letter. The only other thing that we knew to do was to contact the Foreign Press. We received a tremendous reception in the office of the Associated Press. Brother Paden's and my pictures were taken and a full account of our situation was given them. The next day, September 14, in the majority of the major releases of this country, a complete and fair account of the condition in Italy was presented. Actually only three of our buildings were closed, and those were closed over a three week period. During this period, we tried in every way imaginable to have them reopened; however, though the buildings were closed, the Church of Christ certainly was not. The members met just the same in private homes; and when the policemen followed us making it impossible to meet anywhere in the city, we were forced to go about 20 miles into the country to worship God. We were proud of our members during this persecution. They said that the policemen could put them in prison or do whatever they liked, but that they were determined to worship God. You would have been proud of them had you been there. At the conclusion of the three week period, we received a telephone call informing us that the Italian authorities had decided to allow us to reopen our buildings; however, they said it would be conditional; and the condition was that we call off the Foreign Press. It was hurting them too much for the free world to know the situation as it actually is in Italy. We told them that we would call the Foreign Press off, but that we wanted them to know that these men were our friends and would be held in readiness for any future incident. We do owe a tremendous vote of thanks to the Foreign Press.

Shortly before leaving Italy, Brother Paden and I had a press conference with Brother MacDonald and Brother Nichols in which about 20 Foreign Press men were present. These men, representing Great Britain, France, Switzerland, Germany, and the United States, almost to a man, promised to aid us in every way possible; not because they agreed with us religiously, but because they recognized the activity of the Italian government as a flagrant violation of one of the most basic principles of freedom and democracy.

Today our buildings in Italy are open. The government tells us that through a treaty agreement existing between the U. S. and Italy that they will be forced to allow us to continue our work. I personally am convinced that we will be allowed to stay in Italy at least as long as she is financially

and economically dependent upon our country. As I see it, we are working against time in Italy; and our task is to labor as effectively as we can, so that if and when we should be forced to leave Italy, the church will be sufficiently strong to carry on by itself. Looking back over the situation, I see two major goods that have been accomplished. The first is that we usually think of the power of God in terms of some Old Testament incidents, for instance: the time of Gideon or of Sampson or of Moses. Often we think wouldn't it be wonderful if God did work in that way today; and yet I feel that I in Italy have witnessed one of the greatest manifestations of the power of God. God has proven, with mighty force, his presence and his faithfulness to his church. Consider Catholicism, numbering several hundred million adherents in the world, and representing a potentiality and organization unparalleled in human history. This great force rose up in defiance against the small, relatively insignificant numerical group, which is the Church of Christ, commanding that they cease to teach within her borders. This group rose to respond that we challenge you and your authority for we must obey God rather than men. God in his faithfulness and in a manifestation of his power, has enabled us to make this challenge successfully, and today the gospel is being preached in Italy.

Brethren in the church need a restoration of faith.

We need to remember that it doesn't all depend on us and we must realize that we are workers together with God. We have arrived at the point where we feel that everything depends upon us; and in making our plans for the future, we judge according to what we have done in the past. It is time that we quit limiting God and learn to trust in the truth of his statement that his strength is made perfect in human weakness. It is time that we begin to believe and to practice what we say that we believe that if God is with us, who can be against us; and that we can do all things through him who strengthened us. The second great good is that through the persecutions of the church in Italy, the cause of Christ has been made known throughout the world. You know, as well as I, that publicity was received in the United States that money could never buy; and today throughout Europe, people are asking about us, and want to know what we teach and who we are. I was talking with a Baron, Von Lumberg, recently in his hotel at Rome. He is one of the great statesmen of Europe. He said that he had just returned from Sweden, and that many people there had been asking him, "What is the Church of Christ." It is a pitiful thing that so many nations of the world are asking this question and are going unanswered. Today in Italy cries are going up, doors of opportunity are being opened, and from every part of that country people are asking for Christ. Men are traveling hundreds of miles to come to Rome or Milano to plead with us to send someone back with them to the city from whence they came to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

God has given us opportunity in Italy, but because of the short-sightedness of our brethren, we are unable to accept these opportunities. Today in Italy, only three American missionaries are attempting to preach the gospel to 47 million people. This has been my purpose in coming back to America: to convince you of the urgency of that work, and to encourage other workers to labor there. I have found about fifteen qualified preachers desirous of going to Italy this summer, but their going will depend upon you. Today the door of opportunity is open; tomorrow it might be closed forever.

I want to conclude by attempting to impress upon your minds the grave danger that Catholicism is to our way of life. It might be shocking to you if I were to tell you that I consider the greatest threat

to the American way of life the Catholic church. I hate Communism as I hate any system which denies liberties, but if I were forced to choose between living under Catholicism or Communism, I, with no hesitation whatsoever, would say let me live under Communism. I know that Catholicism offers no hope for liberty, will not be tolerant toward those of other religions, and will do anything that they feel necessary in establishing their system. You need not think that they have changed through the years; their system of oppression suffering and persecution, is still the same. The only reason we have not been put to death in Italy is because they are afraid of the rest of the world; and if it suited their purposes, they would be willing to persecute you or put you to death in order to establish their ends. The Catholic church is working toward one thing, and only one thing, and that is world domination. Today while you and I continue to kid ourselves into thinking that our system is going on forever, Catholicism is working and eating away at the foundation of our democracy, and some day will cause it to collapse.

Catholicism cannot exist together with democracy. Catholicism thrives upon ignorance, poverty, superstition and hate, and these things are directly opposed to every principle of democracy. If you think that they are not working while you are sleeping,[^] then you are refusing to accept the facts. Look at our school system which is being undermined by the Catholic Church. Look at our political system which is almost already under Catholic control. Attempt to write an article in which you attack Catholicism and see if you are successful in having it printed in the paper. Attempt on the radio to speak against Catholicism and see how long you continue to broadcast. Attend the movies and see that in pictures, such as *Quo Vadis*, Catholic doctrine is openly taught; and in our present day, every time the religious character is depicted as a Catholic. Pick up any major magazine publication and find the Knights of Columbus and other Catholic organizations bombarding you with Ues in which they are attempting to convince you the best way to be an American and uphold democracy is by being a Catholic.

Yes, while we continue to kid ourselves into apathy and indifference, the Catholic system is taking control and one day you will awaken in a bondage similar to that existent in Italy and other Catholic countries. You will come to your church building and find uniformed policemen outside who will tell you that your worship is a violation of law and order and will no longer be tolerated. You say that American Catholics are different from European Catholics. It is possible that in many respects they are different, and yet when the church can convince its people that only through persecuting you they can insure their soul's salvation, you can expect to be persecuted. To prove to you that Catholicism in America holds to the same philosophy for which the Catholic Church throughout the whole world stands, I submit this quotation from the Catholic position on freedom of worship by Francis J. Connell with the imprimatur by Francis Cardinal J. Spellman, printed by the Paul-ist Press in New York City, April 6, 1944, quoting from page 10: "Besides these principles for the conduct of individual Catholics, there are other principles regulating the conduct of a Catholic government toward the non-Catholics in its domains.

If the country is distinctively Catholic—that is, if the population is almost entirely Catholic, and the national life and institutions are permeated with the spirit of Catholicity—the civil rulers can consider themselves justified in restricting or preventing denominational activities hostile to the Catholic religion." Perhaps you are thinking that Protestantism in America will protect us from the things that I have mentioned. I have been in Italy, and I know that protestantism has nothing with which it can effectively combat Catholicism. Catholicism is positive in its teaching. They, believe in

only one Church; they believe in one God; in Christ; in the Virgin Birth; in Heaven and in Hell; and in living a life of preparation for the day of judgment. On the other hand, Protestantism does not really believe in the Church, Many of them do not believe in Heaven and Hell. They are divided and at war among themselves and almost completely negative and modernistic in their teaching. A Catholic cannot be enticed to leave such a positive position to accept something so much inferior. We cannot expect Protestantism to fight our battle for us; in fact, they are unequipped to do so. There is only one thing that can destroy Catholicism and that is God's word. You couldn't destroy Catholicism by killing or persecuting Catholics, but you can overcome it by making Christians out of those who are Catholic. Today we in Italy are devoting ourselves in attempting to do just that. It seems to me that the Italian work in our present situation has a special appeal. Not only are we bringing souls to Christ, but we are carrying on the most effective battle that can be made against Catholicism there from whence it originates. Every time a person of that country is baptized into Christ, every time a priest leaves that system to embrace the word of God, the Catholic system staggers and shakes throughout the world. We have ample illustration of this fact in the recent persecutions. Italy would not have been willing to risk public opinion in their activity against us for our numbers. They would not have been willing to jeopardize their position in the free world as they did because we represented a great numerical force in Italy, 400 out of 47 million is nothing. However, because they realized our potential strength and realized that we are the only ones who pose a threat against them, they were moved to act against us. Today there are books written on how to answer Methodists and Baptists. There are no books written on how to answer the word of God, and there will be none; thus our advantage against error throughout the world.

I want to close with an illustration that I would like for you to burn upon your minds and remember forever. I have a friend in Rome who was the Chief of the Fire Department in our area of the city, and who was the secretary for the government of all fire fighting units throughout Italy. This man is an educated man and a free thinker. He came to us recently, desirous of studying the Bible, and enrolled in our Correspondence Class. Recently he was called in before an investigation group and was told that a pending special tour that he was taking into northern Italy was temporarily cancelled. When he asked why, they informed him that he was under investigation because they had heard that he was a propagandist for the Churches of Christ. He denied it, saying that he wasn't even a member. They took out in his presence the second lesson of the correspondence course filled out by him and intercepted in the mails by the Italian authority. They asked him if it was his, and of course he had to admit that it was. They completed their investigation and found him guilty. And that man is a ruined man; the 20 years that he had spent arriving at that position had been wiped out at a single blow; and all because he dared ask, "What is truth?" Brethren this is the condition under which we are working in Italy, and yet literally thousands are pleading for Christ. God calls you to have fellowship with us in carrying the gospel to these souls and in helping the church to stay at work in Italy.

THE CHURCH AT WORK AMONG LATIN AMERICANS

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Mack Kercheville

It is always a pleasure to attend the ACC lectureship, and of course it is a very special pleasure to speak on the program. I am very grateful for this opportunity.

You have heard speakers on these lectureships year after year tell about the Latin American work, and this story is all in print in a number of places. Therefore I don't intend to give at this time a detailed history of the Latin-American work, nor a lot of statistics about the present status of the Church among the Latin, Americans. Instead I want to give emphasis to some points which I feel have been overlooked in discussing this work in the past. The Geographical Nearness of the Field

I am tempted to give my talk a sub-title: "The Church at Work among Latin Americans" or "How to do Foreign Mission Work without Leaving Home". That is exactly the situation we have in this field. Of course there are some parts of South and Central America which are a considerable distance from home. But most of the work we have done and are doing, and even the greater part of the work we will be doing for some time in the future is right here 'at home. It is just a few blocks down the street into the Latin American colony, or just a few miles down a paved highway and across the river into Mexico. Or, as in the case of Cuba, the work is just a few minutes ride in an airplane across the waters from Florida. With transportation what it is in these times, the whole field is right here at us. It is in our midst.

What would the brethren working in the Eastern hemisphere give to have this advantage of being so close to the churches backing them here in the United States. This is one great advantage the Latin American field has over all other foreign fields. Because of its geographical nearness, we can become so much better acquainted with the work. We can know its problems, needs, and its opportunities first hand. We can have so much closer fellowship with the evangelists, and with the new congregations started. We can exert a much greater influence on the field and protect 'it so much better from all the perils which beset work in new places. These are all advantages which should not be overlooked. For some reason, brethren, we have not taken advantage of the nearness of this field to us. Considering its location one would think that this field would have received as great emphasis or even greater emphasis than any other foreign field in the world. But such is not the case. Since World War II we have spent more money in Europe than has been spent in the thirty years of work among Latin Americans. In fact there are several church buildings in the brotherhood which cost considerably more money than has been spent by the whole brotherhood in thirty years in the Latin American field. I say these things not to speak against big buildings where they are needed nor to speak against the fine work being done in Europe, but rather to prove my point that we have been blind to opportunities right here in our midst. The brethren in Germany, Italy, Africa, and Asia would give anything to have the advantage for their

fields that we have for this one. Yet here where we have all the benefits of being able to do a foreign work without leaving home, many of us have not seen the opportunity. But the picture is changing rapidly. Churches every-where are awakening to the needs of this field, and I thank God for it. There is still room for a lot more improvement, but we are going in the right direction. Let's keep it up!

However, and this may surprise you, this very geo-graphical nearness of the field creates some problems. You may wonder how the closeness of the field, which in some ways presents so many advantages, could at the same time bring some difficulties. But it does, and I want to tell you about them. The Problem of the Scattered Workers

One of our greatest problems is to keep from scattering the workers too much. When we send a party of preachers overseas to some distant field, we expect them to concentrate their efforts sufficiently to really build up a stable work. We are not happy if they so scatter their efforts that the greater part of what they start dies out for lack of attention. But here at home, dealing with the Spanish speaking colonies in our own communities, we sometimes forget that the same principal applies. Some congregations set aside money in their budgets for the Latin Americans, but they specify that they want it used to evangelize the Spanish speaking¹ people of their own home town. Now that is a commendable desire, and one that I would like to promote whole-heartedly. But at the same time I would like to recommend that we face realities in this matter. We have just so many Spanish speaking preachers. There is a definite limit to /the amount of work they can do. Money is not the only thing involved. Some have the idea that all problems can be solved and all work done by the simple process of setting aside the money for it. But there is more to the work than that.

You want to evangelize the Spanish speaking people of your own community. That's fine. But are you willing to start at the beginning? Can you and will you provide a preacher for the job? I don't mean by that simply outbidding some other church for the services of a Latin-American preacher who is already doing a good job where he is. Nor do I mean talking some already over-burdened preacher in a nearby place to come over and help you part of the time. What I mean is this: Are you prepared to put an entirely new man on the job? Maybe you can send one from your own congregation to the work. Maybe you could help train some Spanish American man so he can do the work. Sometimes that requires financing his studies. Sometimes it means patient teaching and counseling on your part, and then a lot more patience as you overlook shortcomings of a beginner starting out to do a hard work. Or, it may be helping train a preacher for some other place where the church has already been established so a more experienced worker can come help you. In other words, I would recommend that churches wanting to back the establishment of a new Spanish speaking congregation start at the beginning and help us train more preachers. That is what is delaying the work right now, the scarcity of Spanish speaking preachers. I know some men right now wanting and needing financial assistance to get the training and practice they need to make full-fledge preachers.

It might be the wise thing for some churches, instead of trying to start a Spanish speaking congregation under the circumstances existing in their home town, to help work which has already been started somewhere else. I know good preachers in Mexico working without any support at all. I know a few right here in the U. S. who are not receiving enough support. I know churches both in

Mexico and in the U. S. being hindered terribly in their work because of a lack of church buildings. From reports I know that the situation is even worse in Cuba. In Mexico City we have one of our finest young preachers, Brother Agustin Figueroa, an ACC graduate and a good preacher. But he can't do what he is capable of doing because there is no budding to which he can invite people. We have the same situation in Chihuahua where Brother Ben Cano, another ACC graduate, preaches. The laws of Mexico are such that we cannot make temporary arrangements for meeting places as we do here in the U. S. This fact makes the need for church buildings especially desperate. For some strange reason we have a lot of trouble getting brethren interested in helping on this matter of church buildings for the Latin American work. When the laws of the land almost completely tie your hands unless you have a church building, I think we would do well to give this part of the work more interest. I know that the brethren backing the preacher in Mexico City and in Chihuahua are do-

ing what they can in this matter. If the rest of us would do what we can, we would soon have the problem solved. These places mentioned are just two examples. I could name many others. The first thing of course is to get brethren interested in the Latin American field. But after that we need to learn to fit our dreams and plans for this field to reality, and not try to force the field to conform to our own plans. Let's help where the help is needed, and where it can get the greatest results. The Problem of How Much to Help

Now we take up another problem stemming from the nearness of the Latin American field to us. How much shall we help the little churches established by our missionary efforts. This is not so vital a question in work done in distant fields. There isn't too much we can do for the little churches out there but send financial help. But when the church we are helping is just a few blocks down the street or a few miles down the highway, the situation is different. In works of charity we have a similar problem: How much help shall we give the man in need? We want him to have enough, but not so much that he loses all feeling of responsibility for himself to do his part. Parents of school children have about the same situation in helping their children with their homework. It is good for someone to help a child with his schoolwork, but it is not good for someone to just take over and get his homework for him. In like manner it is good to help new and weak congregations, but it is not good for other churches to just take over and get their homework for them. To do so cheats them out of the exercise God intended for them to have. Yet there seems to me to be quite a tendency over the brotherhood for one congregation to try to do the "homework" God assigned to another congregation. In such cases our motives are usually good. We want to help those who need our assistance. We want to see the Lord's work done in the most efficient way possible. When money from the Lord's treasury is invested in a work, we don't want that money wasted. These motives are all commendable. But let's be careful that we avoid the error of the Jews who had a "zeal of God but not according to knowledge." If there is any unChrist-like thinking in the matter at all; perhaps it is that some of us still have a touch of racial prejudice. We sometimes get the idea, without even being conscious of having it, that anyone who speaks a different language than we do, or who doesn't have the same color of skin we have, might not have enough intelligence to carry on the Lord's work. I suspect that, coupled with the other motives mentioned which are all good within themselves, this is one of the big reasons why this is so much of a problem in the Latin American field. The Matter of Congregational Autonomy Is Involved

This is not just a question of expediency. It involves a scriptural principle as well. The Bible teaches the idea of congregational autonomy. This is something we all believe in theoretically, but in actual practice, I fear that some of us don't know what the words mean. Can you answer these questions on the basis of what the Bible teaches? When does a congregation become autonomous? How many members must it have? What other qualifications must it have? Does it have to have elders before becoming autonomous? What constitutes the "homework" of a local church which nobody else can do for it? Is there any situation in which an eldership can scripturally superintend more than one congregation at a time? If so, what is it?

I realize that this is not the occasion for going into a detailed study of such an important matter. But since it is a problem we face in all mission work, and especially in work close to home, and since a tendency toward racial prejudice makes it a special problem in work among Spanish speaking people, I feel justified in bringing up the subject. I feel that this matter ought to be studied carefully by brethren in general. My answers briefly for whatever they are worth, to the questions asked a moment ago are these: I believe a congregation is independent and autonomous from birth. When as many as two or three people start meeting regularly for worship and work after the New Testament order, I believe they constitute an independent church, and they have some "homework" to do that nobody can scripturally do for them. As important as elders are in the church, no congregation has to have them in order to be autonomous. Paul and Barnabas left some autonomous churches on their first missionary tour to get along for some time without the supervision of any eldership anywhere. Elders have a great and vital place in the church, but their authority 'is limited to their own local church. I can't find any scriptural justification for elders under any circumstances overseeing anything except their own local congregation and its work. Of course, if they send money or help of any kind somewhere else, they certainly have a right to see to it that the help sent is put to the use intended, but this doesn't give them the right to oversee the local work of another congregation.

I believe the Bible is very specific in telling us what the "homework" of the local church is. In Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus assigned to the local church the responsibility of church discipline. If our brother sins against us, the highest court of appeal on this earth is the local congregation. If there is trouble then in the little church out on the mission field, let not some sponsoring church nor some individual presume to take over and solve the problem. Rather let us take advantage of this very opportunity to teach new congregations what their responsibilities and obligations are. We may have to help them a little with their "homework", but, brethren, let's don't get it for them.

It is also the local church's business to choose its own servants. I find that principle laid down in Acts 6, when the apostles insisted that the "multitude of disciples" choose the seven men needed to handle a certain work. Even though the apostles laid down the qualifications needed and then ordained the men to the work, they were named by the local church at Jerusalem. I don't believe one church can choose elders, deacons, teachers, or any other workers for another congregation, even though that other church be a so-called mission-point. Of course, if we are going to support a preacher in a certain work, we have a right to decide who he shall be. But by the same token, every other church, even the one to which we send a preacher, has a right to say who shall stand in its pulpit. Brethren should operate on this basis, and little churches should be taught their rights and responsibilities in these matters. The Scriptures also teach that each congregation is to have control of its own collections for the Lord's cause. In fact it would be very hard for a church to be

independent in any way if some other church or agency takes over its collections. Yet, I know of some little Spanish speaking churches which send their contributions back to the sponsoring church, and the elders of the sponsoring church use the money as they see fit. To me this is an obvious violation of the scriptural principle of congregational autonomy. The Lord's way is always right, and it is always the most practical way. I can't believe that the just mentioned plan under any circumstances could be practical for the simple reason that it is not scriptural. Some contend that this is necessary because the little "mission" still isn't capable of handling its own funds. Now we are not talking about the funds others send them, but the money the people at the little church give to the Lord. Do you mean to tell me that these people capable of earning the money and giving it to the Lord don't have enough sense to hold it and use it for the Lord's cause? If that really were the case, which I doubt, how do you ever expect to develop any leadership? How do you expect to change this situation? Obviously giving these people the opportunity to practice handling their own funds is the only way to do it. When you find a church in which the people have neither the intelligence nor the spirituality to handle the contribution they themselves give to the Lord, seriously question their having enough of these qualities to take the Lord's Supper either. Or, would you contend that the collection is more sacred and deserving of greater protection than the Lord's Supper?

Even though we speak of mission fields, it is not our purpose to establish "missions", but autonomous, independent churches which will stand on their own feet and do their own work. That's what I want to see done in the Latin American field. That's what we all want. Then let's never let any of these little churches get in the habit of letting some other church do their "homework" for them. I assure you, my brethren, that the Mexican people, the Cubans, the Negroes, the Japanese, and all the other peoples of the world we can reach with the gospel will have enough sense to do any and every work God assigns to them. We don't need to make any improvements on the Lord's plan at all. The Closeness of the Field Brings Discouragement to Some

I have one more problem stemming from the nearness of the Latin American field which I want to discuss. The problem is keeping some brethren from getting discouraged. The field is so close to us that elders, deacons, and preachers of the home congregations can become almost immediately aware of all the difficulties we face on the field. This may be the big reason why it has been so hard to get brethren interested in the Latin American field. It is considerably easier to remain complacently unaware of the discouragements existing on distant fields. We can read the glowing reports of victories won, and know nothing or little about the bitter battles necessary to win those victories. But not so in this foreign field we have right here at home. We have too close a contact with it. The result is that some brethren are scared away from it before they ever start work. Others start, but when the discouragements come they are ready to quit. We need preachers in this work as in every other work, who will stick no matter what the obstacles. Behind these preachers we need elders, deacons, and members in general of home congregations that won't turn and run when the going gets rough.

I promise any of you planning to go into this field of work or help in evangelizing it in any way, that there will be a generous supply of discouragements. Only those people who have a strong and genuine faith in God and the power of His Word will persevere. There have been times when all of us participating in this work have been so disheartened that the urge was almost irresistible to run

from these nagging problems. But I'm celebrating this month my 10th anniversary in the Spanish speaking work. I have found that the best cure for discouragement is to look back through the years and consider the progress of the work. It is a little like climbing some hills I have seen. It doesn't seem that you are climbing at all until you look back. Then you can see how far up you have come.

Ten years ago, February 1, 1943, I went to work at El Paso with the Mexican church there. At that time you could count on your fingers all the Spanish speaking preachers of the gospel in the world. You could count on your fingers all the known Spanish speaking churches of Christ in the world. Today I know of 52 sound gospel preachers in Mexico and in the U. S. and am told there are 14 more in Cuba. Most of the men on this list have been converted, grounded in the truth, trained, and put to work all in the space of these 10 years. At present I know of 34 active, though small, Spanish speaking churches in the U. S. and 24 in Mexico. There are about 30 more in Cuba. To cap the climax we have a new field opening up right now in South America. I'm sure you have read of the Had- win family, backed by the Central church in Cleburne, Texas, which just a few days ago arrived in Montevideo, Uruguay. There is a vast field to be worked. Let us see that these people have all the cooperation they need from us. These courageous pioneers into a completely new field deserve our whole-hearted backing.

Ten years ago we had no literature in Spanish to speak of. Now we have three monthly papers, one published in Cuba, one in Mexico, and one in the U. S. We have a fairly liberal supply of tracts and booklets on various gospel subjects, and more is being printed all the time.

Ten years ago, we had almost no way to train Spanish speaking preachers. The college here was ready and is still ready to help train those who are able to study in English. But the real problem was to find a way to train them in Spanish. Now, Brother Pedro Rivas has a small dormitory in Torreon, Coahuila, which houses a few men, and he carries on a systematic training program as a part of the work of the local church there. Brethren Wayne Partain and Bill Reeves are doing a similar work in McAllen, Texas. In a more informal way a number of brethren are engaged in encouraging and tutoring those who would like to preach the gospel. In Chihuahua City, Bro. Ben Cano is doing a fine work in developing preachers. In the 10 years I have been in El Paso we have had some part in helping turn out nine full-time preachers. I have one of them on the platform with me this morning. This young man grew up in the church in El Paso. I think he was baptized by Brother John Wolfe. Just about a year ago he started preaching. Between November 1st and Christmas of last year he baptized exactly 100 men over in Pecos, Texas. But I want him to tell you about the work there himself. Brother Gabriel Ortiz.

OPPORTUNITIES AMONG THE BRACEROS

OPPORTUNITIES AMONG THE BRACEROS OPPORTUNITIES AMONG THE BRACEROS

Gabriel Ortiz

It is with pleasure that I come before you this morning. I thank God for the opportunity given me at this time to speak to such a splendid audience as are assembled here this morning, and for the interest being manifested by all of God's people at this place. I have been called upon this morning to speak to you of the opportunities among the braceros, Mexican Nationals that come from Mexico to pick cotton, at Pecos. Many of you have probably already heard of this work, but to as many of you as haven't I am sure that it will be of interest to you, and that you will want to be part of that work with us also. The opportunities at Pecos are of the greatest that I have ever seen anywhere for evangelizing Mexico. God has opened one of the greatest mission works that can be found with Mexico here in our own back yard.

Last year there were 16,000 braceros in Pecos. During the months of Nov. and Dec. 107 were baptized into the church of our Lord. Eleven more have been baptized since the first of the year, making it a total of 118. This was done in no more than half a dozen camps. There are hundreds of these camps that we did not get to because we did not have the workers.

Now the church at Pecos is carrying on a tremendous amount of work. At the present time it has under construction a new building. It is carrying on missionary work at two different places, benevolence at two orphan homes, supporting two preachers, and carrying on the work of the colored church there at Pecos. I know that the church there is making a great sacrifice to carry on all this work. I pray God that I can awaken within you the desire to team with us in this great work.

Christ said to his disciples before his ascension into heaven, in what is known as the Great Commission: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel". How can you go with us in this great work? We need your help financially, so that we can start planning ahead of time as to what we will be able to do when these braceros start coming back in Sept. Twenty thousand are expected this year. We will need workers of the Lord to indoctrinate these men well so that when they return to their homes in Mexico they can take the message of good news to their families. We will need Bible, testaments, literature. We need some way by which we can transport these men to church every Sunday. Last year the brethren formed a caravan of cars to get these men to church, I'm sure that a bus would save time and money. In the past years thousands have been dying in Mexico without a hope of salvation, but now the door of opportunity is open to us. Will you not come in with us? You can say in the years that follow, "I am part of that team that is helping evangelize Mexico that they too may drink freely of the water of life. A financial report will be sent to all contributors, also a report as to the work as it is carried on. If you wish to help in this work, this is the address to which you can send your contributions.

Box 724,, Pecos, Texas

WORK FOR CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

WORK FOR CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS WORKING FOR CHRIST IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

L. E. O'Neal

"Cayat co ti manuk." I spent several minutes learning to speak and write this locano sentence. It means, "I like chicken." Brother Canuto Vicente took me to a cafe and no doubt hoped to satisfy my interest in this food line. He placed our order in the Visayan dialect. When our meal arrived my share was six fried eggs and one half of a full grown chicken.

Brother Vicente's attitude about the chicken holds true with many Filipinos about the gospel of Christ ; they go "all out". Cornelio Alegre is a farmer with little of this world for security, but rich in faith and loyalty toward Christ. An American missionary approached him, intent upon subverting him from the truth. After Brother Alegre had given negative answers to the first advances, the man offered to pay him a "good" salary and all expenses to their national council at Manila if he would change churches. The promise was confirmed by a large roll of bills drawn from his pocket. That was in 1947. Brother Alegre is still preaching the pure gospel of Christ.

School teachers are under Civil Service, but where there is an evil will there is also percecution. Jesusa Mendoza was asked to help her school raise money by sponsoring a dance. She refused. The colony super-intendent called her to his office and issued this ulti-matum, "Cooperate with the dance or leave the colony."

Sister Mendoza went home, packed necessities in a cart, and was on her way out. But the superintendent changed his mind for the time being. However, next year she was taken from her eight-teacher school in the colony and given a back-woods one-room school.

L. N. Belo, a very successful Filipino minister, was arrested by Constabulary soldiers as result of a type-written, unsigned letter which accused him of Com-munistic views. Brother Belo produced a New Testament to prove his faith but was cursed and slapped by the captain. When he showed documents proving that he was neither a Communist nor a Roman Catholic, he was knocked through a window opening with the captain's fist and these words, "So you're against my religion." By the time I left the Islands Brother Belo had met opposition in seven debates and always baptized some of his listeners.

According to the Harvest Field the unperverted gospel of Christ first reached the Philippines in 1928. George Benson was on his way to work in China. He spent several weeks in Manila and the nearby island, Mindoro. This work resulted in about seventy baptisms. Brother Benson sent back to the States for workers. That same year the H. G. Cassell family answered this call, working in and around Manila until taken prisoner by the Japanese army in 1942.

During the thirties the Orville Rodman family worked in the central islands and also on the island of Mindanao. Four or five fine gospel preachers developed from the Rodman work. In 1945 Frank Trayler landed in the south at Zam-boanga City with American liberation forces as a Chaplain. When his division moved on he left behind forty-five people who had been buried with Christ and raised to walk the new life. A call was sent out for Zamboanga City workers. My family answered that challenge in 1946. When only a few months had passed we insisted that others come to this opportune field. The Floyd Hamilton family responded, arriving early in 1947. For three years the Hamiltons operated a school, teaching Bible and related subjects. Possibly five hundred in the Zamboanga City area are now Christians, forming seven or eight congregations. The Ralph Brashears family arrived also in 1947 at Tayug, Pangasinan, one hundred miles or more north of Manila. Ralph has a wonderful opportunity (teaching Bible in Luna College) and is making good use of it. During his first year several students, five teachers, and the daughter of the president were among those who turned to Christ. Sister Brashears teaches in high school. Southwest Church of Christ, Los Angeles, California, has the oversight of their work. At this moment the Brashears are the only Americans in the Philippines giving full time to the Lord's work.

Some observations, showing the fruits of these la-borers follow: (1) Total number of congregations, about 82. (2) Approximate combined membership is three thousand. (3) Churches of Christ in Mindanao are fellowshipping once each year in an occasion similar to this. A few brethren from the central islands have participated, and I believe Brother Brashears and others from the north attended last year. The Co- tabato brethren began this idea in 1945. (4) Each local congregation with which I am acquainted executes the Lord's will in the home community just as we do here. (5) Possibly there are twelve Filipino ministers who are doing a lot of good. Roman Oltaveros and others are supported by brethren at Port Arthur, Texas. Brother Oltaveros is one of my acquaintances and I know him to be a good speaker and hard worker. The Prince and Fulton Street Church of Christ, Berkeley, California, is helping two brethren to spread the gospel in the central islands; Filo- meno Bolongaita and Santiago L. Samion. The latter is especially successful in converting many to Christ. In Cotabato we have three seasoned ministers Fabian A. Bruno, and the above mentioned L. N. Belo and Cornelio Alegre. Brethren Ernesto Camaganacan and Antonio Villianueva are also working in the Cotabato Area. Seventeenth Street Church of Christ, San Francisco, California, is helping Jose Soler and others in the Zamboanga City area. Britton Church of Christ, Oklahoma City, is cooperating with the Seventeenth brethren in the support of Brother Bruno. By the will of God, my family is scheduled to return this year, leaving Oklahoma August 10. We are to be accompanied by another family, the Harold O'Neals. Harold is my only brother in the flesh and is now working with the church at Wilson, Oklahoma. We are being sent by the Fourteenth and Main Church of Christ, Duncan, Oklahoma. Orrin Utley is minister for the Duncan brethren.

Latest figures released by the Philippine government set the population at twenty million. Twenty million people who need the gosple of Christ, God's power to save. Twenty million souls who long to be released from the bondage of financially fettered religions. Twenty million souls who shall stand in the presence of the Almighty God "in that day". While we are sending the gospel to all the world make sure that we include the Philippines, both prayerfully and financially. The island of Mindanao is about the size of our state of Indiana and has a population of nearly three million. As you can easily imagine there are hundreds of orphans, mostly because of the war. As late as 1950

no organization, not even the Roman Catholics, had done anything for these children. Most of them are living from house to house; several becoming servants of the better situated families. Is that a challenge? It is to me. Our two last years four such children made their home with us. We did not look upon these boys and girls as burdens, but as opportunities to prove our faith; Christianity. If we had possessed the proper facilities we could have had fifty of these children in Christian environment after a few weeks notice.

During 1949 Brother Bruno and I visited the Davao Penal Colony. This institute includes over a thousand prisoners and forty to fifty families of employees. Superintendent Acenas told me that these prisoners did not have access to any religious service and suggested that the Church of Christ send a family to the colony for that purpose. I believe this opportunity was published in some of our papers. No response. The Genesis account, “. . . breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul,” included the Filipino. And, “. . . in the image of God created he him,” likewise included the Filipino.

Manila is the capital and hub of Philippine life, a city of one million people. But there is not one gospel minister in the entire million. Besides giving the truth to this city, a family, or families, would greatly accelerate the work of Christ in the entire nation. We have a few scattered members there.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, Amen.” And “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned,” are words of the Christ deeply embedded in the hearts of some since the first century A. D. And I believe these words still have the quality, the force, and the power to move human hearts as in days gone by.

However, these words and the entire gospel do not have as free course in all nations as enjoyed here in the United States. A short time before World War II, all obtainable Bibles and related books not distributed by the Roman Catholics were used as bon-fire material in Zamboanga City; and that, in Plaza Pershing. Zamboanga City claims about thirty-five thousand population. To my knowledge not one business house offers Bibles for sale. In fact, the establishment which dared such a thing probably would be boycotted. One of my acquaintances, a newspaper columnist, made the mistake of writing that a priest, “is just a human being.” He was fired that the paper might live. This same newspaper can advertise for the merchants stat-

uettes so necessary for worship in Zamboanga City, and do so by use of the word IDOLS.

Ann, our oldest daughter, attended San Ramon Elementary School. When the statue of “the virgin Mary” passed by all school children must line the highway to pay their respects. Ann stayed home that day. The next day the principal passed out slips of paper and asked the absentees to write the reason for not attending school “yesterday”. Ann wrote, “We do not believe in idols.” The principal merely smiled. Had Ann been a citizen of the Philippines the reaction would not have been a smile.

There are only two channels through which residents of Zamboanga City may' get a copy of God's word:

(1) The Protestant sects, who naturally accentuate their beliefs which are foreign to Christ.

(2) The church of Christ. Paul commanded the Galatians, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, ..." (Galatians 6:10). Orally or by book, spreading the gospel of Christ is a most valuable good work.

Centuries before Christ Chinese wisdom became isolationism when they realized that China was the earth's greatest nation. Seeing they were isolated by nature on three sides, it was decided to build a great wall on the other frontier which would insure that the good things of China would be kept from the rest of God's earth. Those early people stayed behind that wall too long.

Many Christians in America have made that same mistake. To be sure, the wall we have built is not concrete in its existence. Nevertheless, some Christians are behind a wall. The American wall is built of such material as:

(1) Protection promised by "Old Glory."

(2) Freedom represented by our "State of Liberty."

(3) "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" by our constitution.

(4) And even the luxury of a flourishing economy.

Let us not be overcome by the spirit of fleshly Israel. Instead, may we energetically and wholeheartedly establish firmly the kingdom of Christ in every corner of this earth; looking forward to the only eternal luxury, everlasting life. In March 1947, I took time out to visit our brethren across the Moro Gulf in Cotabato. After getting acquainted in Cotabato City, someone suggested that we visit the rural community of Pinaring where Brother Ernesto Camaganacan worked for the Lord. Six of us loaded into a dugout known as a "river vinta" and with oars slowly made our way up Cotabato River. After about two hours we left the main stream and followed a small tributary to its source. We tied our vinta and continued on foot for about one-half mile. There in a coconut grove I saw a small house of worship. At several meters distance I could see some words on the trim-board of the front gable. When close enough to read I stopped and these were the words, "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12). From his throne on high, God sees the Philippine situation as it really is. And he will meet you there if you have the faith to go. And soon there will be other congregations of people wearing the name Christ.

God, enlarge our hearts that we may see beyond our own circle.

God, open our eyes that we may see across the

borders of our own nation.

God, quicken our spirits that we may feel obligated to sacrifice SOME of our American luxury.

And Lord, be merciful to the unconcerned.

CANADA—THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

CANADA—THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY CANADA—THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

Charles G. McPhee

Canada is a young man's country. No nation provides greater opportunities in the fields of commerce, industry, agriculture, education and religion. It stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific with a land area of over 3,750,000 square miles. It is larger than the United States including Alaska and is nearly equal to all of Europe.

During the past hundred years the United States and Canada have dwelt side by side as friendly neighbors, avoiding international friction and providing a wholesome example of good will and mutual assistance. Not a single soldier, gun or fort, is maintained along a common border of nearly three thousand miles. Two great nations with a common ancestry, similar habits and peaceful ambitions, have shown the world how all problems can be settled around the conference table with the point of a pen and not the point of a bayonet. We pray that the spirit of fellowship and understanding may long continue.

Climate and Industry

The climate of Canada is such that it cannot be described in a few words. Any country that touches three oceans and stretches across three thousand miles, must of necessity have great variations in climate. Fruits, grain and vegetables are grown in abundance. The forests of the North produce the timber necessary to supply the pulp and paper mills of Canada and about two-thirds of all newsprint used in the United States. During the last world war, Canada not only supplied its own lumber needs but also met 70% of the requirements of Great Britain, while supplying one hundred million feet to the commonwealth countries and one billion feet to the United States. Oil now flows from the Rocky Mountains to the Great Lakes, and the rich iron ore deposits in Labrador assure a supply for the steel mills of America during the next century.

History of the Church

The history of the Church of Christ in Canada dates back to the early days of the restoration movement. The exact date and by whom the first church was planted in the Dominion is a little uncertain. However, many of the pioneer preachers visited Central and Eastern Canada and the church grew rapidly. Men, such as John S. Sweeney and Benjamin Franklin, did much to establish the work. Moses E. Lard preached for some time at Bowmanville, Ontario, as well as Alexander Campbell. Brother Campbell also preached at Jordan, Ontario, where the church has been in existence for more than a century. The old brick building which served the needs of the congregation almost from the beginning has recently been replaced by a splendid edifice suitable for the needs of a growing community.

Many churches sprang up all over Ontario and the Maritime Provinces, without any knowledge of each other. The future looked bright. Denominationalism could not stand in the presence of the

gospel of Christ, when preached by consecrated men. However, the his-tory of the church in Canada, like many places, has been written in sorrow and tears. In those pioneer (days “digression” was unknown and the faith of a gospel preacher was never questioned. An “Editorial Counsellor” -of the “Christian Church” stated the case clearly, while bemoaning the present state of affairs, among the “Disciples of Christ”. He related an experience while crossing the Irish Sea at night. He could not understand the peculiar actions of the boat, since he could not even see a whitecap. A seaman told him it was “Ground Swells”. Some force, working deep down, caused the trouble with the ship.

It was the agitations deep down that caused the trouble in the church. Self-appointed or denominationally selected leaders promoted ambitious programs for “building a new church for a new age”. They used the blueprints drawn by organizational architects, instead of the divine blueprint providing peace and salvation to all believers. The church, therefore, was seriously damaged by the “Ground Swells” of doubt, strife and denominationalism, caused by a lack of respect for “Divine Authority”. The authority of Christ in the church is im-perative. “All authority hath been given unto me both in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18). When men usurp the authority of Christ, the “Ground Swells” will soon indicate themselves in digression and tyranny. The introduction of human societies to do the work of the church, and mechanical music in the worship, were only symptoms of the deadly disease that lurked beneath the surface. Like a cancer whose presence is not detected until it begins to destroy the normal func-tions of the body; its nature is so malignant that it causes great bodily pain and its victim is generally beyond all hope of restoration. However, the church might have been successfully treated in the early stages of its digression. Had the proper treatment been administered a hundred years ago, by the predecessors of those who now see this folly, the situation might have been remedied. Today, the “Disciples of Christ” have so little respect for divine authority, being filled with modernism, premillennialism and worldliness, they are about to be swallowed up by the denominations with whom they have travelled, lo these many years. The spirit of degeneracy, which preceded and prompted the innovations, led to the decline and ruin of many congregations in Canada. Many churches were torn to shreds by the unwise and unreasonable actions of men, who were not concerned about the truth of God or faith in Christ. Havoc was wrought all over the land, while congregations faded and houses of worship were closed, never to open again. Paul said: “From among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them” (Acts 20:30). This scripture has been literally fulfilled. The flood-gate of digression was opened and swept everything before it, leaving only a few churches and brethren stranded here and there. However, the men and churches that departed from the faith have dwindled and almost faded from the memory of men. It is expected that in less than half a century, not one congregation of the digressive element will remain in the Dominion of Canada. The sooner the better. They love the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for evermore. I know whereof I speak. I have lived among them, was baptized by one of them, and have had to oppose their innovations for over forty years. The Church at Work

Today, the church of Christ is on the move. While the congregations are few and scattered, the prospects are bright. With some assistance from our brethren in the South, the church could advance in the North in a manner hitherto undreamed of by those who remained faithful on the firing line. Many gospel workers have gone into the Northeastern States and rendered yeoman

service- for the cause of Christ. The radio broadcasts conducted for years past have acquainted many with the church, and they are now susceptible to the truth. The growing population, entrenched denominationalism, and the tremendous power of the Catholic Church, enlist the interest and demand the service of those who are anxious for the spread of Christianity. The great need of the church is for well qualified preachers and teachers to move into strategic points, and there live and preach the gospel. The work cannot be done in a few months. It is a lifetime job. The ground has to be plowed, harrowed and sown, before a harvest can be garnered. It is a challenge for those who love the Lord to show their love for man. Some have accepted the challenge and have moved into the distant fields, but there are millions who know nothing about the gospel and the church for which Christ died. Hundreds of towns and cities have never heard

a gospel sermon. You can travel for hundreds of miles and never find a church of Christ. Brethren, if we love the Lord, such a condition should not exist. What will you do to change the situation?

Bible Schools

The first Bible School in Canada, of which I have any knowledge, was started in 1898 by Abraham Foster, in Carman, Manitoba. The brethren were few and the resources small, but a very satisfactory building was erected, and it did a splendid job, which was deeply appreciated, during its brief existence. Several young men were trained in the Bible and afterwards became gospel preachers. Another school was started at Beamsville, Ontario, by -S. M. Jones of Nashville, Tennessee. It continued fourteen years, from 1902 until 1916. It was pre-emi-nently a Bible school. Many of the present leaders in the church throughout Canada, were there grounded in the teaching of the Word of God and song leaders were developed. In 1909, the Tallman brothers started a school, known as the Maritime Bible and Literary College at West Gore, Nova Scotia. While the enrollment was never large, its influence was felt and several gospel preachers have arisen as a result of the sacrifice and patience of those who were interested in young people. It closed its doors in 1915, during the first world war. The teachers all left and the church in that province went the way of digression. However, we look forward to the work being started once more. Halifax, the Capitol of Nova Scotia, with its beautiful land-locked harbour and growing population, should be the centre of radiation throughout the Northeast. In the great Prairie Province of Saskatchewan a determined effort was made by Brother J. C. Bailey to start a Bible school. It was a gigantic task, to be undertaken. Through patience, diligence, and a faith in the righteousness of the cause, the work has been done. With a determination and a willingness to sacrifice on the part of all the workers, the school has progressed, and is now doing a splendid job training young people, and thus preparing for greater things in the future. For a number of years, the brethren in Ontario have felt the need of a school to save our young people from the blighting influence of modernism and worldliness. Upon the return of several of our young preachers from the United States, it was resolved to commence this undertaking. A board of directors was appointed, a charter received from the Ontario Government, and after much deliberation a very beautiful location was selected in Beamsville, about twenty-five miles from Niagara Falls. This is a radiating centre. Fifty-three percent of the population of the United States and the major portion of the population of Ontario, live within a radius of 500 miles of the college.

Great Lakes Christian College opened its doors for the first time on September, the eighth, 1952. We believe much good has been accomplished and we look forward to wider fields and brighter

horizons. It is our aim to create and maintain a standard of conduct in harmony with the principles and ideals of Christianity. Students educated here are trained to respect divine authority, and to solve the problems of life in relation to the church and the world.

Gospel Preachers

Canada has enjoyed the presence and preaching of many of the best preachers in the brotherhood. James A. Harding, T. B. Larimore and E. A. Elam, are still remembered and loved by many of the older and faithful brethren. Today, the crying need of Canada and the Northern United States is for five hundred faithful gospel preachers, to move into the still unbroken fields, with a hundred million people, and there offer themselves as a living sacrifice, in the service of man and for the glory of God. The field truly is ripe unto the harvest but the laborers are few. We do not need science and philosophy to save America, but we do need the gospel of Christ. In the hands and hearts of men it will change the face of the globe. The Roman Empire was changed by the power of the gospel. It still has power. Cars, planes, colleges and papers, are wonderful assets, but they will not do the work of the church. The gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation, must be preached to the world. "It was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe". I believe in education, I believe in science, but I also believe that God knew what he was doing when he commanded that men should go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Brethren, the work has not yet been done, and our responsibility is increasing with our opportunities and growing resources.

What Must I Give To Be Saved?

The rich young ruler asked—"What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" He was told to sell that which he had and give to the poor and he would find treasure in heaven. Can I go to heaven without doing more than he did? He went away in his disobedience and sorrow. He was not willing to "go" and he was not willing to "sell", neither was he willing to "give". Are you willing to go, sell and give, to please the Lord and save souls? We cannot go to heaven without giving.

First, I must give my heart to the Lord. The heart is the centre of our being and out of it are the issues of life. When the heart is right, the life will be right. It, therefore, follows that if we give our heart to the Lord, we will give our life to the Lord and in the service of our fellow-man. Our time, talents and money, all belong to the Lord. They came from him and we must give them back to him. We are not our own, for we have been bought with a price, therefore, we should glorify God in our body and soul, which are his.

Beamsville, Ontario

PLANNING THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

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Clifton Rogers

Growing Churches—Working Churches This is a great day for the church of the Christ—a time of happy fellowship and growing spirituality, a time of vigorous activity and boundless opportunity. Within a few short years many congregations have doubled in size and have quadrupled their programs of work. Indeed, you can't study the activities displayed from the various churches throughout the land without being emotionally moved by the realization that you are part of the growing strength of Christ's church on earth. You are part of the glorious kingdom of light.

Such growth has not come about accidentally, nor is it the fruit of the labors of only a few. At long last the church is really going to work! How we once reclined in our easy chairs of "We have the truth; come hear it"—and blinked our eyes in bewilderment as various denominations about us doubled in size, while we boldly challenged for debate. Why, the day was that rapid growth in any church of Christ was occasion for the raising of the eyebrow—"Something must be wrong over there." Strange how easy it is to forget how rapid was the early growth of the church; strange how easy it is to explain away our own failure to grow.

Present activity and growth—and these do go hand in hand—are largely matters of emphasis and attitude. Long have we insisted with the apostle Paul, "Be ye steadfast, immovable" (1 Corinthians 15:58 a). This is a plea to "stand fast in the faith" (1 Corinthians 16:13), to "hold the pattern of sound words" (2 Timothy 1:13), and this is just as important today as ever it was. We are coming to realize, however, that "Be ye steadfast, unmovable" has ever had this further exhortation, "Always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58 b). It is to this knowledge that we are awakening. Holding faithfully to the one, we continue to "press on" in the other.

Hear these challenging exhortations from zealous workers in the early church: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). You are saved from sin to serve the Christ. "Be ye doers of the word, not hearers only, deluding your own selves . . . But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing . . . Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:22; James 1:25; James 1:27). As a Christian you are a doer or you are nothing. "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven"

(Matthew 5:13-16). Is this what you are in your community? A Well-Balanced Program

In planning the work of the church very careful and prayerful attention must be given to the development of a well-balanced program. This means that proper emphasis must be placed on all phases of Christian growth and endeavor. A congregation may be ever so busy in activities, may have "something going" all the time, but unless proper emphasis is placed upon spiritual development the future can hold only stagnation or apostasy. Various promotional schemes may prove successful in assuring large crowds and contributions for a while, but the ultimate end is spiritual starvation. The church may even be vigorously aggressive in preaching the gospel to non-Christians while failing to help develop real spirituality and godliness in the lives of the Christians.

Emphasis Upon Individual Consecration

Such teaching and attitudes must exist within the very character of the congregation which will cause every disciple to know that his or her life is given as a living sacrifice unto the Lord (Romans 12:1-2)—a life gradually being transformed into the image or likeness of the Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). This is to be one who is poor in spirit, who mourns, who is meek, who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, who is merciful, who is pure in heart, who is a peacemaker, who rejoices in persecution (Matthew 5:3-12), the "good works" seen of men are the fruits of these attributes of character, and this is the distinct, unusual person who is the salt of the earth, the light of the world. But how does the Christian grow into the likeness of the perfect pattern? By having access to, by taking advantage of, opportunities for study and activity. Here it is that much care must be exercised on the part of those who plan the program of work. How important is study to spiritual growth! "As newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation" (1 Peter 2:2). It is absolutely vital. No wonder the apostle Paul prayed "that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding" (Colossians 1:9). And this can be realized to the greatest degree by the Christian when, and only when, there is real QUALITY in the teaching program of the church. Studying is one thing, but sitting at the feet of capable and consecrated Christian teachers greatly enhances that study. This is a fact that many ignore, and they ignore it because they fail to understand the importance of Bible knowledge to Christian development. Surely expenditures of considerable sums of money for better materials, equipment, and teachers is no waste. Definite plans should be made toward increasing the quality of the teaching. But the Christian grows not only by reading, by studying; he grows through ACTIVITY. "Walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1:10). One phase of activity involves participation in worship to God through Jesus Christ. Part of this, a very important part, is private prayer in the inner chamber at home. Pity you if you do not have access to a room on the door of which you can place the sign: "Private: keep out." But the second part of worship relates to fellowship with other saints as the church assembles. "Not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh" (Hebrews 10:25). Here again special care must be exercised to the end that there will be real QUALITY in assembly worship, the service can't just "happen". Definite plans must be made to assure that "all things be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40), and that there will be a reverent atmosphere conducive to spirituality of worship (note 1 Corinthians 14:15).

Then, too, there is activity within the realm of Christian service. Indeed, until the Christian learns to use hospitality to strangers, to wash the saints' feet, to relieve the afflicted (1 Timothy 5:10), he knows little of the spirit of the Master. Exactly the same is true concerning teaching others the way of life. This is church work. Too often you hear statements like this, "A large church has so little for the members to do." What does that mean anyhow? It certainly does not apply within the field of teaching or community service. Sad it is that many consider public participation in a worship service—leading singing, directing the congregational thought in prayer, assisting at the Lord's tables—as the ultimate in "church work". Why, the work of the church is as broad as the individual responsibility of each disciple to serve others. There is far more to be done than folk ever get around to. But again, brethren need leadership, direction, and this requires definite planning.

Emphasis Upon Fellowship in Service

Every Christian, sensing that he has an individual responsibility to the Lord, must also understand that there are congregational responsibilities as well. In the church each several building must be "fitly framed together" (Ephesians 2:21) so that there may exist in the community a closely-knit body of saints who labor as one to the advancement of the Cause of Christ. There is congregational worship, congregational work, con-gregational fellowship. If the church as a unit is to have any real impact upon the community, if the people of the area are to know the church is even there, definite planning in joint enterprise must be made. A few people working together as one man can have a tremendous influence for good in a given locality. But this won't just "happen"; this is the result of concentration of endeavor according to specifically outlined objectives and plans.

Planning the Work

Scriptural Organization

Needless to say, every plan, every activity must operate within the scope of that which is scriptural. This does not mean that methods and procedures in our day will be restricted to methods and procedures of even a generation ago. It does mean that the congregation must not go beyond that which is within the realm of scriptural permission. As was true in the first century, the elders or bishops or pastors (where such exist) plan and oversee the overall program of work. Organization is not truly scriptural as relating to the elders until these three conditions exist:

- (1). The men appointed as bishops are scripturally qualified (1 Timothy 3:1-7) ;
- (2). These men actually fulfill their God-given responsibilities;
- (3). The congregation maintains a proper relationship to them (Hebrews 13:17).

Long have the qualifications been emphasized, and so they should be—the standards must never be lowered. But it is not always that elders have been taught to understand that they are indeed "bishops" or "overseers", and that as such they have the God-given responsibility to "feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). As overseers they are to be the final voice of authority or of decision in matters of judgment as they watch over activities within the realm of both material and spiritual things. Many details may be assigned to the deacons, but the ultimate direction comes from the elders. How important it is, then, that they be conservative men in faith—so that the faithfulness of the church may be preserved. But how

necessary it is, too, that they be men of vision, initiative, aggressiveness. It is to be regretted that often a congregation of people, eager to be at work, must actually try to prod the elders into some semblance of industrious leadership. Happy sign it is that more and more elders are becoming overseers, and that they are coming to understand that overseeing includes planning and pushing as well as it does watching over that which “just happens”.

These same men, the elders, are the pastors of the congregation. Wrote the apostle Peter, “Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock” (1 Peter 5:2-3). The seriousness of this responsibility is emphasized in Hebrews 13:17—“They watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account.” How many elders do you know who are really pastors? It is possible that the evangelists are pastors in everything but name? Here is one of the most productive fields of all church activity, but definite plans must be made by the pastors if they are to serve with diligence in this realm. The deacons, too, must meet the qualifications laid down in Holy Writ (1 Timothy 3:8-13)—being appointed after they have proved themselves, and not in order to inspire them to faithfulness in the Lord’s work. “Deacon” means “servant”, and it is exactly in this capacity that he labors. All too often deacons have as much authority in business meetings as do the elders—in fact, majority vote gives them more when there are more deacons present than elders. You know what I am talking about. If there is any value in having men of age, experience, and wisdom for congregational leadership—and there is, for this is the divinely ordained pattern—then the elders must indeed be bishops of the flock. On the other hand, happy is the situation when the most cordial relationship exists between the elders and deacons, where mutual confidence and trust exist, where the two groups work together in their given spheres as beloved brethren where most of the meetings can be held jointly, where the elders take with them some of the deacons even in matters of church counsel, discipline, etc. So it is, also, with the work of an evangelist. His is a distinct work—contrary to statements of brethren who insist there is no difference between the “clergy” and the “laity”. Certainly these are not scriptural terms, but the idea that an evangelist is distinct from one who is not an evangelist is as scriptural as is the idea that elders are distinct from those who are not. True, in a general sense everyone who preaches is an evangelist, but in a specific sense the one who devotes his life to this work is so designated: “He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11). One who is an evangelist in this specific sense is distinct from those who teach in a general way, just as an elder in the specific sense is distinct from those who are elders in a general way because of age. Evangelists work, and scripturally so, with the elders in the spiritual development of the congregation. They are not just paid deacons who serve in the ministry of preaching at the beck or call of the bishops. On the other hand, always will they recognize the need for working under the oversight of godly men of wisdom who are the congregation. Never will they so bend the outline of planned activities as to make themselves the focal point of all. If this happens, the evangelists soon become the errand boys of the church, expensive church secretaries, and the very heart of their ministry is neglected, “Give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching” (1 Timothy 4:13). If the program is properly organized, then the work won’t come to a standstill when the evangelists are away from home in meetings or when they move to other fields of labor.

Assigned Responsibilities

Woven into the outlined program of work will be all teachers of the word, all men and women who will serve in various capacities. Thus, opportunities are provided for individual activity and experience which will help assure spiritual growth. Moreover, this is making sure that certain work is done in the very best way, in quality of service. It is making sure that outlined objectives are met. It is determining that the most good will be accomplished in the name of the Lord for the present and for generations to come. Brethren, PLAN THE WORK. Prayerfully, aggressively plan the work so that the most good can be accomplished in the shortest period of time, plan the work so that the most good can be accomplished for the longest period of time. Look to the days immediately ahead, and look a century and more ahead. Actually this won't be as difficult as you might suppose. Come together with the specific purpose of outlining the work that should be done in the realization of long range objectives. When you have, ascertained what needs to be done, then make specific assignments to various members of the congregation. As was true in Acts 6, definite responsibilities will be given certain members of the church, with particular emphasis upon the deacons as servants. Perhaps a visit to a number of working congregations will enable you to get a better grasp of the "how" of distribution of work within, the realm of detail work. Definite responsibilities can be outlined under separate headings; for example, preaching, teaching, assembly services, benevolence, buildings and grounds, finance. And elders, please don't explain congregational inactivity by saying, "Oh, we can't find members who are willing to accept these assignments." In our day that is an exception to the rule, and even where it exists positive teaching and motivation will bring about an early change. In large part, the failure is back at the source—where there should be positive planning. "Oh, but such would take hours of time every week." How right you are!

Under each of the major activities groupings can be a dozen or more specific projects for which individual members will be responsible. For example, within the realm of benevolence alone there are a number of possibilities. Remember, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Matthew 25:34-36). How important this is in the cultivation of the soil for the reception of the seed, to make into fertile soil even that which for so long has been unfruitful. What is involved here? Administering to the physical needs of the poor, the ill, the afflicted (1 Timothy 5:10); ministering to the emotional and spiritual needs of those who are troubled, discouraged, despairing, sorrowing (1 Thessalonians 5:14; Galatians 6:2).

How is this need to be met in a specific way? Here is a deacon in charge of general benevolence. It is his responsibility, with the cooperation of his group, to look into and supply the needs where poverty and hardship exist. He consults with the elders when large expenditures are involved.

Here is a lady who sees that flowers are sent to the sick and to the bereaved. A little thing—but, oh, not so little. Money wasted? So thought Judas when Mary anointed Jesus with an expensive ointment, but the Master said, "She hath wrought a good work on me" (Mark 14:6). Many times the emotional needs of people are of greater importance than their physical needs. So the church must serve in the spirit of both Martha, preparing nourishing meals, and Mary, anointing the

troubled with kindness.

Here is a deacon in charge of visitation and care of the sick. What is the duty of his group? To visit the sick—yes, that. But more than that—truly to “visit” in the scriptural sense, which means more than “go see”. Made available to those who are sick are hospital beds, wheel chairs, crutches, electric fans, and other incidentals to health and comfort. Available, too, is a chore of volunteer nurses (male and female) who sit by the bedside of the sick 24 hours a day for weeks at a time when necessary. Also, there is a card file of blood donors, a permanent record of blood types available, of time of previous calls, etc. “You mean the church does all of this?” Yes, the church does all of this—easily, smoothly, and without the minister being called upon to make all the arrangements to meet such needs.

Still another group has charge of serving meals to families in which there is sickness or death. Another is held responsible for boxing and getting into the mails good used clothes for shipment to needy areas. Then, there are special projects such as daily Bible reading at the Community Home (home for aged), food and gifts to the Crippled Children's School, clothes for orphans in one of the Homes for Homeless Children. There appears to be no end to service which can be rendered within the field of benevolence alone—if you will sit down to study and plan. Members want something to do? Here is something they can and will do.

Or, consider the tremendous responsibility of reaching the community with the gospel of Christ. There are opportunities yet untouched within the fields of personal work, preaching, publications, cottage meetings, and a number of other things. Do you really sense that the church is being “felt” in your community, in your city? It can be—when there is concerted effort upon a planned basis.

Or, consider the matter of keeping the congregation a closely-knit family of brethren who know each other, love each other, and serve the Lord faithfully. What can be done to assure regularity in attendance, faithfulness in morals, etc.? One plan that is used successfully is that of zoning the entire area surrounding the congregation, be it city or community, and having some member (usually a lady) in each zone, specifically appointed to encourage such faithfulness. In this arrangement, the elders have a card file listing every member in every zone. Periodically they call every zone chairman and task every person in each zone. Follow up is then made where necessary—the pastors of the flock working diligently to “admonish the disorderly, encourage the fainthearted” (1 Thessalonians 5:14), to restore the erring (Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20). No member is ever simply dropped from the roll because of non-attendance; either the disciple returns to the work of the Lord, or else (after weeks of exhortation and prayer) public announcement is made that he has fallen away from the faith (1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:6).

Or, here is another effective method which can be employed. Under the direction of the elders, the deacon is responsible for some ten families, visiting in their homes several times during the year. These families are brought together periodically for periods of social fellowship, for Bible study in the home, and all watch for the others in matters of sickness, attendance, etc. Earnest exhortation is made to the end that every member will attend service of the church— Bible classes, Lord's day assemblies, midweek devotionals, and protracted meetings. Explanations are made of the entire program of work to the end that every member will feel a warm personal relationship to the work and to every other member. These groups are changed from year to year so that cliques will not

be formed within the congregation. It is understood, of course, that the deacons keep in very close touch with the elders and evangelist in this work, and that help is provided in every way possible.

Having touched upon a few of the many fields of endeavor, surely you can see the possibilities in the many different realms of congregational activity. Let 'it be remembered, again, that the starting point is periodic meetings for planning, praying, and planning some more. "Oh, but will this work? What if those given specific assignments don't do the work given them?" Certainly some attention will have to be given by the elders and others to seeing that success is assured. It is one thing to plan the work, and it is another to work the plan. This, however, will be a smaller problem than you might

Making the Plan Work

Having exercised real care in the selection of those upon whom certain specific responsibilities have been placed, here are a few keys that will open the door to success: accountability, information, enthusiasm. At the very outset, be sure that proper emphasis is placed upon the matter of accountability. This insists that time be taken personally or in letters to explain the importance of the work to the person who is intrusted with it. "Intrusted" is a good word. Surely you know the tremendous motivating power of trust and confidence. One can fail; his brethren trust him, depend upon him. This, coupled with the encouragement of genuine expressions of appreciation, will cause the disciple to give his all in devotion of service. He will not fail. Of great importance to success, also, is the matter of INFORMATION. A program, though having its origin with the elders, will go much further when understood by the membership. It becomes "our program" instead of the "program of the elders". Moreover, in the overall program of activity, the church that is informed will be the church that works most vigorously. The weekly bulletin, though edited at considerable cost in both time and dollars, is about the best medium for keeping every member up to date concerning every phase of the work. The greatest value will be received when the bulletin is mailed to each family of the congregation—to be received on Friday or Saturday. This same bulletin does far less good as a medium for teaching non-Christians than it does in informing and exhorting those who are members. When mailed to each family, such information is received even though there may be sickness in the home which prohibits attendance, or even though a visit has been made outside the city on Lord's day. Other important publications may be an annual or semi-annual membership directory, a yearbook outlining the program of work for the year, and a monthly bulletin containing reports from mission points being supported by the congregation. Thus, the work of the church relates to people, to living souls, and not only to totals in dollars and attendance. Needless to say, these principles will find fruition in dollars and numbers—as will be discussed by other speakers during the Lec-tureship program. The third key is ENTHUSIASM. In fact, often vigor of activity depends as much upon this one thing as anything else. Have you ever been part of a congregation where the elders or the preacher expressed the thought, "This is a h-a-r-d place; just can't convert any of these folk. Brethren are worldly minded; can't get them to do a thing. This is a h-a-r-d place." Yes indeed, it is a hard place. Or, have you assisted in a meeting where the local evangelist said upon your arrival, "We just don't have any interest in meetings, somehow. And, as there are no prospects, don't expect much in the way of responses." Of course, he was right. Just a few days ago while visiting in the hospital comment was made concerning the beauty 'of the blossoms on the plum trees. Said one dear lady, "Just know we'll have a late freeze and kill every one." Ah, but no. What a wonderful plum harvest we

can expect this year! Or, maybe the general feeling is something like that of a brother who cheers a sick friend by saying, "Cheer up, ole top. Enjoy yourself now, for things are going to get much worse later on." Or, is it the spirit of the dear sister who said to her friend in the hospital, "I hope you'll get well." In contrast to this, remember this motto which hung as a scroll in General MacArthur's headquarters throughout the Second World War: "You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear; as young as your hope, as old as your despair. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul:" Brethren, there is no harder task in church leadership than that of always maintaining a positive, dynamic personality that radiates enthusiasm! In the courage and vigor of the apostle Paul, when he had reached his three score years of age, feel and practice, "One thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Php_3:13-14).

Motivating Individual Activity

Having studied at length about the matter of con-gregational activity, let a few minutes be given to a few observations relative to motivating individual activity. After all, group activity is dependent upon in-dividual participation. It should be emphasized that a disciple has not truly learned the spirit of the Christ until his is active in Christian service in addition to assignment. If you do only that which you are told to do, if you sit idly by until you are given an assignment, you have much to learn. What are some of the motivations to devotion of service? You know to do good, you actually want to do good, but you need some spark to set you on your way and to keep you working without growing weary in well doing.

Service in Love

There is no greater motive, no stronger impulse to service than that of love. In fact, it has always been God's purpose that men should serve him through love. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and with all thy mind . . . And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:37-39—this is the very heart of Christian service. Even in the matter of giving of your means, the apostle Paul taught, "I speak not by way of commandment, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity also of your love" (2 Corinthians 8:8). Pity it is that those who have been freed from the bondage of the law of Moses (Galatians 3:15-29) should spend many years in the service of Christ with only a consciousness of the law of duty. "Against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:23) is but a pleasant passage to read. As a Christian it is, "How much MUST I give? How often MUST I attend services? MUST I keep from doing this? Must I do this?" Such is duty to be performed, nothing more, and how far beneath the lofty impulse of service through love. To have a vivid illus-tration of this principle, read again the story of the Samaritan who stopped to help a wounded man even though he might not have been expected to (Luke 10:30-42). What was the difference between this man and the priest and the Levite who had passed? The fundamental difference is to be found in this one word: COMPASSION. Of the Samaritan Jesus said, "When he saw him, he was moved with compassion" (v. 33). Here was love—a general love, for there is no reason to suppose the Samaritan knew the man who had been robbed—but a warm, compassionate sensitiveness to the needs of others. This great motivating power must be developed and nurtured in the lives of members of the church. "Soft-soap" labels have too long kept ministers of the gospel from dealing as they should with this

theme; or is it that there is so little real acquaintance with the principle? Don't forget these words so vibrant with this truth: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Corinthians 13:3). Would you see the difference between service of duty and service of love? A nurse sits by the bedside of a child that is ill. She is concerned about it, but there is nothing really personal about the matter. Engaged at a certain wage for a certain number of hours she leaves at the appointed hour without too much thought as to what the following hours may bring. This is service of contract. But here is the same nurse sitting by another bed, a bed in which lies her suffering little girl. All day and all night she ministers. There is no thought of pay, no consideration of rest, no consciousness of personal sacrifice. This is a service of love. Or consider again: How do you feel about the kindness you can extend the mother who gave so much for you years ago? The wife who has given so much of herself for you? The doctor who saved your life? The gospel preacher who baptized you into Christ? Yours is the response of gratitude, the response of love. Only when you come to this point in your service for Christ will there be "stretching forward" and genuine delight in that service.

Only then will there be true unselfishness of service—even to the washing of the feet of the saints.

"Father, where shall I work today?"

And my love flowed warm and free.

Then he pointed me out a tiny spot And said, "Tend that for me."

I answered quickly, "Oh, no, not that.

Why, no one would ever see No matter how well my work was done.

Not that little place for me."

The word he spoke, it was not stern;

He answered tenderly,

"Little one, search that heart of thine;

Art thou working for them or me?

Nazareth was a little place

And so was Galilee."

—Meade McGuire. And if you prefer the little place, the quiet place, perhaps you need to learn:

I said, "Let me walk in the fields."

God said, "No, walk in the town."

I said, "There are no flowers there."

He said, "No flowers, but a crown."

I said, "But the sky is black.

There is smoke and bustle and din."

He wept as he brought me back

And said, "There is more; there is sin."

Example of Others

Another tremendous impulse to service is to be found in viewing what others have done in their devotion of service to Christ. "Oh, but that has nothing to do with my service. I am supposed to do all I can within my capacity." Agreed. And surely it is understood that all of the suggestions concerning congregational activity take into consideration differences in capacities of congregations. The table displays arranged for this lectureship program were not prepared in the spirit of pride or arrogance. Comparisons between congregations can never be made purely upon a basis of total membership. Each body should resolve to do all it can within the scope of its opportunities and capacities—and that is a big order. So it is with the individual's responsibility before Christ. But, congregations and individual members will learn to evaluate their capacities higher when they consider what others have done and are doing. It was in this very vein of thought that Paul wrote the church of God in Corinth, "Your zeal hath stirred up very many of them" (2 Cor, 9:2), even as he endeavored to stir up the zeal of the Corinthians by telling them about the brethren in Macedonia who had given "beyond their power" (2 Corinthians 8:3). Ah, yes, you learn something about talking to others about the Christ when you see the persecution of the early disciples because they would not keep from telling the good news (Acts 5:40-42; Acts 8:1-3). You learn something about evaluation of your prosperity and about liberality in giving when you observe the early disciples selling their possessions in order to meet an emergency in Jerusalem (Acts 2:45; Acts 4:34-37). And you learn something about zeal and devotion in witnessing the fervor of Christians in the church of the Lord today. What about that eighteen year old boy in a Port Arthur church who gave a check for \$1,000.00 to the building fund—money he had saved for years working after school and during the summer months—money which was to have gone to the purchasing of a family automobile for a family of six which didn't have one (and which didn't even own an electric refrigerator)— money which could have been used for a college education? Can you look at that without thinking of your own giving? What about those godly men and women who tear up stakes at home to cross the oceans, or who go to distant places in our own nation, to preach the gospel of Christ— rearing their children in strange circumstances, burying their dead in a foreign land? Can you look at that without some doubts piling up in your heart concerning your own zeal and devotion? Yes, it does you good to see what others are doing.

Faith in God

And don't forget the great motivating power of absolute faith in the heavenly Father. Will such confidence help you in reaching out much farther than you ever have before? Indeed it will. This is decidedly more than a purely psychological matter. You CAN do more because your Father is working with you. Every plan that is made is made only after consulting the guidance of the heavenly Father, and then in the execution of that plan you have God's companionship. "Working together with him" (2 Corinthians 6:1) is the very heart of Christian courage and aggressiveness. How little you are, and how little you will remain— individual or congregation—so long as you

leave God out of your plans. “Working together” with brethren will produce wonderful results, but “working together with HIM” will produce truly astounding results. Why? Because this is your God, “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:20-21). The Glorified Church

Truly, the church is no refrigerator in which to pre-serve the piety of the members (although holiness of life is absolutely necessary), but it is a dynamo to charge the devotions and wills of the members to power of activity. May the congregation of which you are a member so press on in the service of the Master that its faith will be “proclaimed throughout the whole world” (Romans 1:8). May you do all within your power to help it “abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness”, in love, and in liberality of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7). May you do everything you possibly can to help it be a LOYAL church—standing fast in the faith; a GODLY church—walking in holiness of conduct; a SPIRITUAL church—serving in reverence of soul; a WARM church—responding in sympathy of heart; a HUMBLE church—kneeling in meekness of spirit; a LIVE church—growing in Christlikeness of life; a WORKING church—laboring in fervor of love; a HAPPY church—rejoicing in patience of hope. Then after a little while, you will be part of the glorified church—realizing the absolute in heaven’s love, joy and peace. “Your labor is not in vain in the Lord”— so now. “Hallelujah!”

“Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

THE CHURCH AND MONEY

THE CHURCH AND MONEY THE CHURCH AND MONEY

Leonard Mullens

“But as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also” (2 Corinthians 8:7). The Lord’s church is engaged in performing the greatest task under heaven. To fulfill this mission, the getting and the spending of money is necessary. The apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthian brethren, refers to giving as a grace (2 Corinthians 8:7). He taught that Christians ought to abound in this grace of giving. Money is an absolute requisite in the world today. Our economic system calls for its use as a medium of exchange. It is only to be expected, then, that in a discussion of the church and its work, money should receive our attention. The proper making and spending of money is a matter that digs deep into the heart of our religion. In getting money, we must take into account the will of God, and engage in those occupations that are of real benefit to humanity. The Christian will not pursue a business or a calling that harms and hinders mankind. A true disciple of Christ will realize that God is his partner in the financial affairs of life. Because of this, a Christian will know that God demands righteousness in the making and gathering of money. He will not lie, deceive, misrepresent, or practice fraud to gain one penny. Strict honesty will be his guide in every dealing that he has with others. Every dollar that the real Christian makes will be a clean dollar. The matter of giving money must start with getting money. Sin never pays; it cannot pay, and though a man could make a million dollars by telling one falsehood, he must not do so, even though he should give all that money to preach the gospel! Before we can give, we must get. Our getting as well as our giving must be patterned after the will of our God.

Now the church is made up of individuals. Each one is to “lay by in store.” It becomes necessary for us to study this matter of Christian giving from the standpoint of the individual church member. What the church receives to spend in doing the work of Christ will be contributed by individuals. This is God’s will for us. The Lord has not instructed us to have raffles, drawings, dinners, pie suppers, and rummage sales to raise money for his work. Through his great love for us God has appealed to our love for him. Jehovah expects us to love him enough to give of our means simply, cheerfully, and as he has taught us in his word.

Let me tell you about a man I know, and perhaps you will recognize him too. His name is Henry Brown. He farms on the high plains of Texas. Henry Brown is a good farmer, hard-working and thrifty. As he closed his books for last year, he found himself with \$25,000 in the bank, with all his obligations met and Oris debts paid. Now, the question comes: “Whose money is that in the bank?” Henry says, “It is mine.” At first, we agree with him, but let us think again. It is true that he can go down to the teller’s window, present a little piece of paper with his name signed to it, and walk out with \$25,000. But we want to go deeper inuo this matter. Whose farm has Henr^ been working? Mr. Brown says, “It is my farm.” We go to the county seat and check his title, and sure enough, Henry Brown has a farm. A few years ago, he bought it and by hard work and good

management, Brown has paid off his mortgage. Yes, Henry Brown has a farm, and on Sunday afternoons when the sun is shining, Henry will walk over his land. He knows every acre and just how the water drains and what acres usually produce the best. As he walks about, he says, "This is my farm," and we agree. Yes, Henry Brown has a farm.

But, is it his farm? Listen, and Jehovah God will speak! "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psalms 24:1). When did God give up his title to this land to Henry Brown? Once the Indians roamed over this same land and hunted the nimble footed deer over its broad acres. It was God's then. The white settlers came and drove the red man to the west; the plow replaced the bow and arrow, but it was still God's land. Once this land was part of a land grant and for settling on it, the title passed into the hands of a man whose name is now forgotten. It was sold and resold until Henry Brown purchased it some years ago. All the time the land belonged to God, for "the earth is the Lord's." Henry Brown is just a tenant of God!

How about the fruit that the land produces? To whom does that belong? Mr. Brown says, "That is mine." Yet it is not so, for "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." Who put the fertility in the soil? Who sent the sunshine and the rain? Who put the power of reproduction into the seeds that are planted? Who gave Henry Brown his physical strength and his mental judgment that the crop might be produced? God is the source of it all! If Brown is a Christian, he will bow his head in reverence and say, "I made a mistake. Everything belongs to God." Thus the conclusion is before us. God is the supreme owner, and Brown is only a trustee of God; an agent of the Almighty. Henry Brown is but a steward of God!

Do you know Henry Brown? You say, "I don't think I do. The name is familiar, but I do not know the man." Go home and look in the mirror! See Henry Brown there before you? The name could as well be George Jones, John Smith, or Walter Wilson, for the principle remains the same. You may change the name; you may change the face; you may change the occupation, but still the truth remains. Every man is a steward of God, a trustee of the Lord! As Christians we realize the absolute ownership of our God. This is true for three reasons.

First, God is the owner of all because he is the Creator of all. The Bible begins with these majestic, moving words, "In the beginning God created the 'heaven and the earth.'" Then he created man in his own image and after his likeness (Genesis 1:26). Jehovah is therefore the rightful owner of all men as well as the earth, We recall that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Our God is the author of all material wealth. Man could not make a thin dime without him; he could not produce one bite of bread. Because of creation, all belongs to God.

In the second place, the true Christian realizes that God has a claim upon him because of Jehovah's continued care and blessings day by day. Our Father up-holds all things by the word of his might. Through his power, the planets go on their appointed rounds; the sun shines, the rain falls, and the earth produces for man's benefit. All that we possess comes from God. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning", (James 1:17). Without God, we would not be; without him, we could not exist.

Third, the true Christian realizes that he belongs to God because of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. There is a special way in which the redeemed belong to God. Man is lost in sin without Christ, but God has made possible redemption through the blood of Jesus! "Who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2:24).

Since Christ has paid the price to redeem us, the Lord's ownership of the Christian is not just a fanciful whim of some preacher, nor the mere theory of some religious fanatic. This principle is the truth of God's Word! "For ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body." (1 Corinthians 6:20). Since the Christian belongs to God, it follows that all a Christian possesses belongs to God. When we shall have realized this, the matter of giving has resolved itself. In theory, all Christians accept the teaching that God owns all, ourselves included. The matter sounds easy, but beloved, there are some implications here that we do not accept, as far as our practice of life is concerned. The Christian does not really own anything. He is himself the blood-bought slave of the Lord; the willing, eager slave of God. As a theory, there is nothing more beautiful, but how about the practice of this kind of stewardship in our lives? Is this impractical? Does the Lord really mean what he says? Do we actually belong to God, body and spirit? It is here that we must come face to face with the grace of giving. Once we have accepted the principle that we are but stewards, and give ourselves to the service of God, then the giving of what we possess has been solved. Paul declared that the liberality of the Macedonians was made possible because they "first gave their own selves to the Lord" (2 Corinthians 8:5). We must do the same thing in this twentieth century!

Why should we give to God of our material possessions? The primary reason has already been set down—we belong to God, body and soul. Paul exhorts us in this connection, "to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is our spiritual service" (Romans 12:1). Now the thoughtful heart is the thankful heart. Such a heart can but return a liberal portion to the Lord's work and service. Not only does God grant us all the physical blessings of this present life, but he also has bestowed upon us the spiritual blessings that we enjoy in Christ. Surely when we consider the great abundance of gifts that God so lavishly grants to us daily, we shall be constrained to give more and more of ourselves, as well as of our bounty, to his service.

We give to our God because it is an act of worship to him. God wants us to worship him, not only with our lives, but with that and through that which we acquire in our lives. What I am cannot be separated from what I have—these two always go along together, in getting money or property. I must use my time, my talent, my brain, my heart, my strength. What I give to God is but a portion of myself turned into money. For example, suppose that I work for \$100 a week. It takes my time, my energy, my power to produce the work that brings me money. That money is myself. It is my brain and my brawn transformed into silver. At the end of a week I go to the pay window, get a week of myself, put myself in my pocket, and take myself home with me. Out of this money earned or property acquired, I give to God. Actually I am giving a part of myself in so doing.

Under the law of Moses. God would not have his people appear in his courts for worship empty-handed (Psalms 96:8). Even during the time of the patriarchs, offerings were presented to God. Giving is not an invention of man. It is the will of God. Of the first congregation in Jerusalem, we read: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of

bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). The word "fellowship" certainly includes the giving and the distributing of money, even though the meaning may be a broader one than that. The Emphatic Diaglott renders the word as "contribution" rather than as fellowship." The Jerusalem church, under the direct supervision of the apostles, was taught to give. This "grace" is an act of worship, just as the singing, the praying, and the communion in the Lord's Supper. When we give, it is an act of worship to our great God. Yes, the giver is in the gift.

We give to the service of God because we love our God. Since he has taught us to give through his word, we respond to him. "For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments" (1 John 5:3). A man's purse will follow his heart. If we truly love our God, we will give as we have been prospered. We will give sacrificially to promote the work that our God wants accomplished on earth. It is our duty, our obligation, our responsibility, and our sweet privilege to give of our material means to serve our God.

How much shall I give to God? Let us be sure that we ask this question with "much" in our minds. If this question is asked with "little" in our hearts instead of much, we will be disappointed in the answer that God's Word gives. There are definite suggestions in the will of God that answer this inquiry.

While Israel was under the old law, God required the tithe and also special offerings from his people (Leviticus 27:30-34; Numbers 18:21-32; Nehemiah 10:37-39). Even before the giving of the law from Sinai, devout patriarchs gave a tenth to God. Abraham and Jacob are examples of the ancients who did so give. (Genesis 14:20; Genesis 28:20-22). From time immemorial, the heathen people had also given the tithe to dumb idols. That is a practice which they still follow today. It is unthinkable that a heathen would give more to a piece of wood or stone or metal than the children of God give to their King who dwells on high!

Immediately we are told: "We are not under the law of Moses; we are under Christ. We are under grace, and not under the law." And how true is this! Shall we use the grace of Christ as an excuse for our own selfishness? Surely we would not in that way cheapen the religion for which Jesus died! Since we are under Christ, we come to the New Testament to discover how God would have us give today. The grateful, trusting, loving heart of a Christian, rejoicing over the blessings enjoyed in Christ now, will find standards for his giving that may well lead him to go beyond a tenth! True Christian love is always extravagant and we will give in love to the Master's cause, remembering well what Jesus suffered for us. Such true and devoted love will never try to figure out how little to give and still be saved; but consecrated love will want to know how far to go and how much to give in serving the Lord. Real love for God never wants to get by with an average performance, but this love desires above all things to do its best. True love labors to give in a sacrificial way. The poor widow who cast her two mites into the treasury is the classical example for this sacrificial kind of giving. As Jesus watched, the Master saw the rich cast in much out of their great abundance, but the widow gave all that she had, even her very living! (Luke 21) ; of her the Lord spoke after this fashion: "This poor widow hath cast in more than they all" (Luke 21:3). It was not more from the standpoint of amount, but it was more because of the spirit behind the gift. The Lord was pleased with her sacrifice. Let us notice from what she gave, even her very living, as well as what she gave. Our giving needs to enter also into the realm of true sacrifice. Then and only then will it be the kind of giving that partakes of the divine nature of our Redeemer! To give

out of our surplus; to give out of what we have left over after all our desires are satisfied, is not the kind of giving that involves any sacrificing. How many of us have ever really sacrificed for the Master's cause? A love that balks at sacrifice had better examine how 'it loves. In the church at Jerusalem there were members who practiced such sacrificial giving. Of them we read: "Neither was there any of them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands and houses sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet" (Acts 4:34, 35). We need to drink of this Christ-like spirit today and give as love would prompt us to do.

Paul gives us a very practical guide for our giving. In one verse, practical suggestions for us as stewards of God are laid down. "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come" (1 Corinthians 16:2). Let us strive to take these suggestions and make them the habit of our lives.

We are to give regularly to God's service. "Upon the first day of the week" is the admonition to give. God gives to us in a regular way, so let us return to him with that same regularity. We are to share our income with the Lord as we receive that income. On Sunday, let me give as God has prospered me. The needs of the church go on week after week and our regular weekly contributions supply these needs as they continually arise. Such regular giving also keeps before our hearts the gifts of God that are coming to us all the time, just as the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week continues to remind us of the death of our Lord on the cross for our sins.

Each citizen of the kingdom who is prospered is taught to give. "Let each one of you lay by him in store" is the command. The Lord desires for all his children who are prospered to give to his service. The rich, the poor, the young and the old are to contribute as they are prospered through his goodness. Our boys and girls who are led by our example to spend dollars for candy and gum ought to be taught to give more than pennies to the Lord's vineyard!

We are to give as the Lord has prospered us. "As he may prosper" are the words of the apostle. Let us give to God as he has given to us. In the measure in which we receive from God we are to give to him. Yet we receive in a bushel basket and give in a thimble! Let us give as we get. Under the gospel of Christ, God has set no bottom figure at which we must begin. Nor has he set a top figure where we must as individuals halt in our giving. Often many people in the church today talk about their giving to the Lord as though the amount they give is entirely a matter left up to their own judgment. But this is not true. The New Testament has told us how much to give and that is as God has prospered us. The more we are prospered, the more we give; the less we are prospered /the less we give. How could any rule of life be any fairer than that one? We live in flush days compared to the days that were just before us. But are we actually giving as the Lord has prospered us? Statistics show us that the average church member of today gives only a little more than 2% of his income to the church to which he belongs, while during the lean depression days, the average church member gave more than 5% of his income. This is not caused by a poverty of the purse, but by a poverty of love in the heart! Brethren, even though we are giving today larger and therefore more impressive sums of money to the church, are we really giving as we have been prospered by the Lord ?

How shall I decide how much to give to the Lord's service? Three brief suggestions are in order here. First, let us recall that under the law the Jews gave a tenth, and then made some free-will

offerings above that amount as needed. We are under the grace of God, with a better covenant and better promises; we have a greater Mediator than Moses, and a greater High Priest than that in the Jewish priesthood. Shall we respond to that which is great by giving that which is small?

Let me sincerely pray to God in reference to the portion of my income that I am to give to him. Let me consider that I do not actually give a portion of that which is mine, but a portion of that which is all his own. I am only a trustee. Guided by the revealed will of God, let me prayerfully consider this great privilege of giving. Then let me set aside that portion to God which will express the measure of my love for him. My own nature will incline me to selfishness, and lead me to pamper myself. For this reason I must go to God in earnest prayer to decide how much I am to give.

Last, let me remember the precious promise of the gracious Christ who said, "Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33) He was speaking of material blessings when this promise was made. Let us realize that God has first claim and right to all we have and possess. He has promised to care for us when we respond to his commands. To doubt his word would be sinful and presuming on our part. Let us really believe that God will provide for us when we do his will.

It will help us to give more liberally to consider the purposes for our giving. What is to be done with the monies we contribute to the Lord's service? It goes without saying that God does not need our silver and gold to provide for himself. He is the supreme owner of all things that exist. Our gracious God not only blesses us personally when we give, but he also blesses and uses our contributions for the good of humanity and ourselves. How good is God to us! The money given is to be used to aid the needy and the unfortunate of this earth. "So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith." (Galatians 6:10) The Lord has placed the poor and hungry, the widows and the orphans, before us. It is our privilege to care for them in his name and for his sake. Our Master Christ considers such loving service rendered to these poor and afflicted people of earth as done in service to himself (Matthew 25:40). To meet the needs of the poor we give to the Lord's church. The money we give is to be used to preach the gospel and to spread the word of God at home and abroad. Our Lord has granted to every Christian the high and holy privilege of sharing in the spread of the knowledge of Christ. We must spread that blessed word today as did the early church in the first century. (Matthew 28:19-20). Included in the spread of the gospel of Christ will be whatever is needed to get the truth before those whose hearts hunger for it. It will be necessary to build houses for worship, for study, and for teaching; it will be necessary to send out and support gospel preachers to every corner of the globe. Money will be needed to pay for broadcasting or televising the gospel as deemed needful. The printed page needs to be more extensively used than in the past. All this calls for money. In preaching the gospel in days past we have been sadly deficient, but this was due to a deficit of love in the heart and not to a deficit of cash in the pocketbook! Let us give to carry out the mission that God has outlined for his people, his church.

Notice with me how Americans spend their incomes. The figures for 1952 are not available as yet, but here are the statistics for 1951. The total personal income amounted to the sum of \$254,075,000,000. Personal taxes and savings amounted to some \$46,103,000,000. This left some \$207,972,000,000 for personal consumption expenditures. Of this amount, \$61,000,000,000 was spent for food and some \$20,278,000,000 for clothing and shoes. The

amount of money spent for tobacco and smoking supplies was \$4,703,000,000, and some \$8,450,000,000 was used to purchase alcoholic beverages. The motion picture industry received about \$1,166,000,000 in admissions, while \$1,373,000,000 was spent for magazines, newspapers, and sheet music. For the promotion of private education and research, some \$1,847,000,000 was used. Compared to these figures is the total amount of money given to all religious bodies in America, which was \$1,206,000,000. When we consider these figures, is it wrong to say that America's god is its own belly? But you say, "That is the nation as a whole. As members of the church, we do much better than that." Let us consider just one item as an example to see how we spend our money in the church. The Americana Encyclopedia tells us that we have some 1,500,000 members of the church in our land today. Let us suppose that just one-half of these are smokers. Let us say that this one-half will consume a package of cigarettes a day at 21c a package. This gives us a grand total of \$57,487,500.00 spent in a year's time for tobacco alone. Now this matter of tobacco is being used as an example only. Others may spend their money for that which is no more profitable or useful. This money spent for tobacco amounts to some \$1,105,539.00 each week in the year. If we should use that money to support gospel preachers at \$100 a week for each preacher so supported, that would mean that 11,055 preachers could begin at once to proclaim the gospel of Christ. That is a number of preachers considerably larger than the entire number of gospel preachers in full-time work among the churches of Christ today. If this seems to you to be an exaggerated, over-drawn picture, then let us cut down the number of smokers by one-fifth, and still there would be enough money to support more than 7,000 preachers at \$100 a week in full-time gospel preaching! Beloved, this is only an example of what we do with our money. Are we playing at this great work of God? Are we really sacrificial givers?

It would be well for us to compare ourselves with some of those religious peoples among us who give to support their systems of religion. According to statistics of giving issued for the year 1952 by the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States, the Free Methodists gave \$195 per member last year to the support of their work. How many of the congregations in the church of our Lord will average that much per church member? This would mean that a congregation of five hundred members would contribute some \$97,500.00. Second in the list of some forty-seven denominations comes the Seventh Day Adventists with some \$158.00 per member given for 1952. A congregation among us with 1,000 members that gave as well would have a budget of \$158,000 a year to spend in the Lord's work. Consider brethren, that the average smoker, and I repeat that this is used as an example only, will spend some \$76.00 a year for tobacco. Does the average church member give that much to preach the gospel to others? This is certainly a very serious matter and when we consider how we do waste our financial resources, most all of us, we ought to be filled with the fear of God! An artist was once commissioned to paint a picture of a decaying church. To the astonishment of many, instead of placing on the canvas an old, tottering ruin, the artist painted a beautiful building of modern grandeur. Within the building was stacked the contribution plates for the offerings of the fashionable worshippers. And here it was that the artist set forth his conception of a dying church, for all over the collection plates he had painted a huge cobweb!

Brethren, the Lord is asking you and me a question. "What will you do for me? What will you give to my service?" The answer to acceptable giving can be found and solved only by giving ourselves to the Lord first. This is why God pleads for our hearts, for he knows that when he has our hearts,

he has ourselves and all that pertains to us. We talk much of the consecrated life, but how far are we from 'it in the Lord's church today!

"Money talks", they say and that is true. Money talks in this life and money will speak at the judgment bar of God. What will our money say as we stand before our God? You can guarantee that the money which you hold in your trust in this life will speak well at the end of time only by giving yourself to God!

UNTO HIM BE THE GLORY IN THE CHURCH

UNTO HIM BE THE GLORY IN THE CHURCH UNTO HIM BE THE GLORY IN THE CHURCH

Paul L. Wallace Our Lord, during the third year of his ministry, de-parted from Bethsaida, near the Sea of Galilee, and traveled northward until he had come to the headwaters of the Jordan River near Caesarea Philippi. He and his disciples turned aside to pray. Jesus asked them, "Who do men say that the Son of Man is? Who do the multitudes say that I am?" Naturally, they began to give the most flattering answers that they had heard, "Some say John the Baptist; some Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He then asked them, "But who say ye that I am?" Peter, true to his prompt, decisive nature immediately answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." The imagery of the Lord in this memorable passage is that of a builder seeking to build a temple upon a ledge of rock. The enemy, fortified behind the walls and gates of a hostile city, seeks to prohibit the building of this temple. The builder, however, shows his determination to build by saying, "Upon this rock I will build . . . and the gates . . . shall not prevail against it." The application of the figure is apparent: Christ, the Builder, resolves to build his church upon the bed-rock (Peter's confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God") and states emphatically that the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Notice carefully the uses of shall and will in this context. Shall or will always expresses futurity. In addition to futurity, either shall or will may express also the additional idea of determination, command, or promise. Shall in the first person expresses only futurity ; in the second and third it also expresses determination, command, or promise. Will in the second or third person expresses only futurity; in the first it expresses also determination. For example: one might say, "I shall go to town tonight if everything is convenient." The .shall of this sentence shows simple futurity, but does not express determination. But if one were to say, "I will go to town tonight, and the weather shall not prevent it," the will expresses not only futurity, but also determination. Jesus did not say, "Upon this rock I shall build my church," showing only simple futurity. He said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." This whole text shows not only futurity, but also volition. No one reading this text could receive the impression that the building of the church was of little moment, or that the church, itself, was unimportant. Did Jesus use this language about something that is nonessential? Did he purchase a nonessential with his own precious blood? Who can believe it? The gates of Hades did not prevail against the building of the church. Jesus died upon Golgotha's brow it is true: It is also true that he went into the hadean world; but when he went into the house of the strong man, he bound him and spoiled his goods, as Paul expressed it, "Having despoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Colossians 2:15). Peter sums up the successful conclusion of Christ's

determination to build his church when he quotes God's promise to David, "Thou wilt not leave my soul unto Hades, neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption." This application was then made of it: "Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear . . . Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified."

Jesus, then, is both Lord and Christ. The gates of Hades did not prevail against the building of the church. He is the Founder, the Foundation, the Head, and the Savior of the church. Surely a thing of which Jesus is the Builder, the Head, and the Savior, is of great moment! And a thing so important must have a sphere of necessary usefulness.

Glorify God

What is the main task of this 'important organization? What is its foremost work? Several passages indicate that a principal duty of the church is to glorify God through Jesus Christ, our Lord:

Ephesians 3:20-21, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen."

1 Peter 2:9-10, "But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10, "At the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believe (because our testimony unto you was believed) in that day. To which end we also pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of your calling, and fulfil every desire of goodness and every work of faith, with power; that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

Matthew 5:16, "Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." A realization of this principle would solve many of the problems in the religious world. Can one glorify God, and at the same time ignore his word—belittle his divine pattern for the organization, worship, and work of the church? No! For Peter says in 1 Peter 4:11, "If any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God . . . that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, whose is the glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." The Pharisees had "made void the word of God" because of their tradition, their human creed. They worshipped God in vain, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men. Even the great David, who lived before the day of the Pharisees, had a part in a disappointing failure because he did not recognize that God is glorified only when h'is word is obeyed.

After David had recaptured the ark of God from the Philistines, he desired to bring it to Jerusalem with great joy. To accomplish this worthwhile endeavor, “David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kiriath-jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God Jehovah that sitteth above the cherubim, that is called by the Name . . . And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, even with songs, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets” (1 Chronicles 13 :G-8). From man’s viewpoint every ingredient of success was present—a worthwhile undertaking, large audiences, zeal and energy, pomp and ceremony. Who could desire more? But even though David probably meant well, he erred, and the thing was a dismal failure! When they came to the threshing-floor of Chidon, Uzzah put forth his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen stumbled, and the Lord smote him. The ark turned aside into the house of Obed-edom and David was unable to remove it to Jerusalem.

Why this failure? Let David, himself, answer the question. In speaking to the Levites, he said, “For because ye bare it not at the first Jehovah our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not according to the ordinance” (1 Chronicles 15:13). The ark was to be borne on the shoulders of priests who had sanctified themselves for the occasion. But Uzzah and Ahio, kinsmen of David, and therefore not of the Levites, were transporting the ark on a cart as the Philistines apparently had, and God was displeased. God was not glorified until “The children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of Jehovah.” (vs. 15). Only then was the ark brought to Jerusalem with joy.

Numerical success, zeal, pomp, or ritual cannot be substituted for obedience to God’s word. The church growing out of the apostasy has all of these things. Who will say that God is glorified in it? In short, the church must be what God wants it to be, and to do what God wants it to do, if God is to be glorified. This my friends, is the obligation that Jesus has laid upon the church which he purchased with his blood. To glorify God the church must be something and it must do something.

The Church Must Be Something

There is first a purely personal interest involved in being something. Peter says in 2 Peter 8:11, “Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness?” Believing that the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, men desire to be something in order to escape the “eternal destruction from the face of the Lord.” Herein is the value of that great responsibility of the church, self-edification, that men in the church may learn how to live “soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.” But there is more involved than the salvation of the man himself: from a practical viewpoint godly living and teaching to maintain the purity and the identity of the church are essential to the final success of preaching the gospel to the lost, another of the great tasks of the church. One of the most scathing rebukes our Lord ever uttered was a rebuke to the Pharisees, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is become so, ye make him twofold more a son of hell than yourself” (Matthew 23:13). Think of crossing sea and land to make one convert! Here was zeal personified, and yet all of this energy resulted only in making another son of hell! The conclusion is obvious: unless the church preserves its purity and identity, the more zeal it displays, the more harm it will do. This thought may be further enlarged and emphasized by this question, “What would have happened to the Prodigal, if after coming to himself, and returning home, he had found the elder brother only?” And what will happen when the

Prodigal returns home today if he finds only a congregation made up of “elder brothers”?

Paul underlines this thought in Php_1:27, “Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the gospel . . .” While it is surely true that the preaching of Christ even from the lips of a hypocrite will make a Christian if accepted; from a practical viewpoint letting one’s life be “worthy of the gospel of Christ” will add much weight to the arguments as one strives “for the faith of the gospel.”

Men must be something personally, and collectively, as a church. To fail to maintain the identity of the church in the field of purity is to become an enemy of the cross because of our walk (Philippians 3), to become a traitor to the cause because of our false pretenses, to help defeat the labors of godly men because of our ungodly influence. Paul said, “Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men always.” (Acts 24:16). The Church Must Do Something

Not only must the church be something; it must do something. Jesus said in Revelation 3 :1-2, “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars: I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead. Be thou watchful, and establish the things that remain, which were ready to die: for I have found no works of thine perfected before my God.” In contrast, while the church in Sardis was admonished to remember and to keep God’s word, because none of their work had been perfected, Paul complimented the church in Thessalonica because of their “work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope.” It would be hard, indeed, to find a congregation more nearly fulfilling its obligations than this one in Thessalonica. The men and women who made up this church had “received the word in much affliction.” But in less than two short years from them had sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place their faith to God-word had gone forth. (1 Thessalonians 1). Think of it! In less than two years they had preached the word to the whole Balkan Peninsula! They had become an example of personal faith and zeal, and congregational steadfastness and activity. Some congregations have been in a community for a hundred years without preaching the word even to the community. In Paul’s loving compliment to the church in Philippi the thought of being and doing are found : “So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure. Do all things without mur- murings and questionings: that ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.” (Php_2:12-15). As they had always obeyed, they were to be blameless and harmless, without blemish, because they were seen as luminaries as they held forth the word of life to their wicked and perverse generation. Some today make the excuse that a wicked generation prevents them from shining as lights, and holding forth the word of life!

Preaching the gospel, Christian friends, is one of the great tasks of the church. The church is the “pillar and ground of the truth.” (1 Timothy 3:15). It is to “sound forth the word of the Lord”—“to hold forth the word of life”—to “strive for the faith of the gospel.”

Jehovah, in his infinite wisdom, has chosen the word-method of revelation in order to make known his will to lost man. Worldly wisdom has been unable search out the true God. The intellectual speculations of the wise have performed their best, but have failed. God has decreed that through revealed truth men are to be saved. "For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21). "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). Notice: "Of-his own will (the motivating cause) he brought us forth (the new birth) by the word of truth (the instrument), that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures (the results)." The church is the "pillar and ground of the truth"; that is, it has the responsibility of holding forth the word of life to a wicked world. This great work should engage the energies of every member of the church. It is taken for granted in most congregations that the preacher is responsible for the conversion of the unsaved and for the building up of the church. As important and necessary as the evangelist's work is, it is a fundamental error to suppose that he, and he alone, has this full measure of responsibility. To accomplish this huge assignment to carry the gospel into all the world will require elders who rule, deacons who serve, members who work, and evangelists who preach.

We are evangelistic in our theory, but thousands of us have no feeling of responsibility for the salvation of the souls of others. During the past election many Christians actively campaigned for their favorite candidates, and made their cars available to transport their friends to the polls. But these same people will not always canvass their friends on behalf of a gospel meeting, nor will they in every case offer their automobiles to take them to hear the word of God! To evangelize the world will require a love for the souls of men, and a sense of responsibility to help them. It will compel a passionate concern for the men and women for whom Christ died, and a firm belief that the gospel is God's power to save them. It will enjoin a natural and sincere enthusiasm, and a steadfast conviction that the church is the pillar and ground of the truth. To evangelize the world will call for sacrifices at home. It will make necessary the surrender of some personal or congregational luxury, that funds may be present for the more pressing claim. It will mean giving up some comforts both from a personal and a congregational viewpoint, that the gospel may be preached in some distant city.

It will require the work of large congregations, and small congregations, that the Christ may be preached in every country, every city, every town, every home, until the utmost corner of the earth is reached; May the Lord help us as we seek to glorify God in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever! Amen!

AFRICA

AFRICA AFRICA

Leonard M. Gray

Brother Southern, my brothers and sisters in the Lord, and visiting friends! In the beginning may I pause to express the sincere appreciation of all the men and their families now in Africa and of the individuals and congregations in this country who are interested in that field, for this opportunity to report on the work of the church in Africa. We consider it a most thoughtful favor.

Africa, in various ways, has challenged men throughout the centuries that have passed. Over three thousand years ago, or about the time Moses grew into manhood and led the children of Israel out of their slavery in the northern half of Africa, the historian Herodotus tells us that sailors plied the blue waters of the Indian ocean and brought back tales of having found a land far to the south where dark skinned people collected gold dust by means of ants. Little realizing, perhaps, that this was still a part of the vast continent of Africa. A land of giants and pigmies. A land where towering glacial peaks rise out of steaming tropical jungles. For Kilimanjaro, just two degrees south of the equator finds its feet clothed in banana and coffee plantations, its waist belted with a strip of forest land a mile wide and its peak, which rises 19,720 feet above the bejeweled Indian Ocean, is capped with snow and glaciers. A land of almost incalculable mineral wealth. A land whose western slope swelters in equatorial jungles and along whose eastern side runs a fertile table land of rich soil, till now almost untouched, stretching out from Capetown to Cairo, five thousand miles.

Although all these things are important and interesting, it is not in these respects that Africa challenges us today. For the cry of Africa to you and me today is the same as that of Macedonia to Paul in the first century. For Africa, although it was the home of the eunuch whom Philip converted and of Apollos, a mighty man in the Scriptures, is a continent that obeys not the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Africa, a vast continent of thirty-seven nations is calling out to you and me, people who proclaim with Peter that "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him."

Last year at this time you were privileged to hear Brother Eldred L. Echols shortly after he returned from Nigeria, West Central Africa. As most of you know, he went there to teach some preachers who had studied themselves out of error and asked for his help. They asked that Brother Echols teach them and they in turn would set themselves to the task of evangelizing Nigeria, a land of twenty-one million people. For four months there, Brother Echols taught a training class for preachers, during which time over 1,300 people were baptized. Since that time Brother Howard Horton and his family have gone there to work with these people. You may have noticed in last week's Christian Chronicle the report from Brother Horton concerning the call from a sectarian church for him to come talk to them, after which fifty-three men and women were baptized into

Christ, making more than three hundred and fifty who have been baptized at this place. There are now several thousand Christians in Nigeria but they are babes and need help badly. One of their most pressing needs is a Christian medical doctor. In Nyassaland, a small country on the eastern border of Northern Rhodesia, there are several congregations. One man there, Ahaziah Apollo, was converted in Johannesburg by our brethren. He speaks twelve languages and dialects. A very valuable man to the cause of the Lord there. He is a black man of great ability. In Northern Rhodesia we have work at three major points. One is Namwianga, in the Kalomo district. We have a large school and several out schools. There are many hundreds of Christians in this area. Also in the Kalomo district is the work in Kabanga. The third is Sinde Mission, near Victoria Falls where we also have a school. In Southern Rhodesia we have work at two main' points. Brother Foy Short is working with'a small white congregation and several native congregations. At Nhowe Mission Brother Boyd Reese has charge of a large school. There are many Christians there. Brother Henry Ewing and family are there and Sister Ann Burns and Dr. Marjorie Sewell have just returned from there for a visit in the U. S. This brings us down to the work in the Union of South Africa. This is a country one-sixth as large as the United States or about twice, the size of the State of Texas. In many ways it is more like the United States than any other country. White civilization had its beginning there in 1652 when Jan Van Riebeeck landed at the Cape of Good Hope as a representative of the Dutch East India Company to establish a food supply station for their ships. The Union is now a country of more than twelve million people of many races and combinations. It is one of the few exclusively self-governed countries on the African continent. It is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations (formerly British Commonwealth) along with Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan and Ceylon. It is a country of delightful living conditions and modern conveniences. This English and African-speaking country presents one of the most challenging and most promising fields of labor for the Lord to be found on the entire earth. The work among the white people (All of whom are called Europeans) began in 1950 with the arrival of three families and one single man from this country. These were the families of Waymon D. Miller and Guy V. Caskey of Fort Worth, Texas and John T. Hardin, song leader at Altus, Oklahoma. Eldred L. Echols, also of Fort Worth, had spent five years in the Rhodesias and joined the three families. These seven Christian people began the first congregation in Johannesburg, the largest city in the Union, a commercial and industrial center of about one million people. After much hard work there is now a congregation of some sixty Christians there at this time and a correspondence course and a very fine paper, The Christian Advocate, are special features of that work. The Central congregation at Cleburne, Texas took the initiative in this work and have done a great deal in interesting various congregations in supporting these families. They are busy at this time raising the necessary funds to complete a very fine building for these Johannesburg Christians. I received a cable from Johannesburg Saturday stating that they hope to have the building finished 'in June. Most of you know, if you have been following this work, that the Cleburne church has announced their plans to turn their efforts to other fields upon the completion of this building. They have done a great deal for the work in the Union of South Africa and those of you who are supporting that work through Cleburne will want to make plans to send that support directly to the Johannesburg church, at the'ir permanent location. There is no difficulty in this matter at all. Your check goes there and is cashed just as easily as you pay the expenses of your local work. The only difference is the size of the stamp. With the growth of the work came calls from distant cities for someone to come and study with them. Letters requesting assistance in obedience of the gospel, sometimes

as far as eight hundred to one thousand miles away. These calls could not go unheeded. The men, after much thought, discussion and prayer, decided to spread out. They must meet the needs to the best of their ability. By this time, Brother Don Gardner and family had arrived from Abilene and had begun the work in Pretoria, some forty miles away. Brother Martelle Petty and his family, of Dallas, had joined them in the beginning of a very fine work. It was agreed that the Gardners and the Blakes (a family converted there) would go to East London, some six hundred miles to the south, on the shores of the Indian Ocean. The work at Pretoria, the Administrative capital of the Union, has done well. There are about fifty members there now and some sixty in the congregation in Johannesburg. In the few months at East London, the work has grown to the extent that they have about twenty-five members. This city of ninety thousand people has wonderful prospects and Brother Gardner and Brother Blake are as fine as can be found.

Brother John T. Hardin, the song leader for the original group, moved with his family to Port Elizabeth, a city of two hundred twelve thousand people, eight hundred miles south of Johannesburg and down the coast from East London. Brother Hardin and his family are holding out wonderfully there. Brother Hardin was the song leader at Altus, Oklahoma and does not even consider himself to be a preacher. He and his family are looking for us to join them some time this year. We hope to leave for that work in August if we can raise the needed support. There are six Christians there at this time.

Brethren, this is just a brief review of the situation. On the shores of Table Bay stands the City of Capetown with over a half-million people and no New Testament church among the white people. Durban, on the east coast above East London, is a city of almost five hundred thousand. No New Testament church there at all. The story is the same all over the Union.

Brethren, we have the truth. We live in a time and a country most favorable to the preaching of the gospel of Christ around the globe. Does it bother you to be reminded that in all probability we have not preached the message of life to more than one percent of the people of the earth? Ninety-nine out of every one hundred people on the face of the earth have never heard a simple gospel sermon. It is indeed a sad commentary on the part of our generations that, unlike the shepherd who left the ninety and nine and went out in search of the one that was lost, we, after having saved the one, bask in the sunshine of the love of God and fellowship of the saints where the church is strong and allow the ninety and nine to go begging. It is deplorable that the past hundred years has seen a steady stream of religious groups pouring into the Union of South Africa like a giant passenger train . . . and we're turning out to be the cabooses! I remember reading a severe criticism of a people who had a zeal for God without knowledge. I am persuaded that there is an even greater travesty upon the love of God and it is to be found in a people who have the knowledge of God without zeal!

We place a great deal of emphasis on the necessity of our faith in God. This is true, of course, but never let us forget for a moment that God also has faith in us. God had to have a great faith in the human race to create Adam and Eve; to start over after the flood with Noah and his family; to send his only Son to the earth among people who didn't want him; to leave the gospel message in the hands of men. We have this treasure in earthen vessels and to the degree that you and I do not carry out the great commission we have betrayed the faith our almighty God has in us.

God help us, in this generation, to carry the gospel into every nation under heaven. I thank you.

“MADE IN OCCUPIED JAPAN”

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Logan J. Fox In recent years I am sure that many of you have bought something at the store and found stamped on it the words, “Made in occupied Japan.” Those words stamped on merchandise in the stores of our country have a story to tell. It is a story of tremendous significance to all of Asia and to the whole world, but especially important to two countries—• Japan and the United States. The story of Japan and the United States is an old story, and for the most part it is a story of friendship. It took the U. S. Navy under Admiral Perry to first open Japan for contacts with America in 1853, but the two nations soon became fast friends. You will remember that Japan was one of the major allies of the United States in the first World War. In the light of this traditional friendship it is all the more tragic that beginning in 1941 these two countries were for four years locked in the bloodiest and costliest war of history. Propaganda on both sides of the Pacific was effective in whipping up the hatred without which wars cannot be fought, and on the scattered islands of the peaceful Pacific men were slaughtered while on the homeland the character of the enemy was equally slaughtered. I well remember, her during those dreadful years how often I was told by American Christian friends when they heard of my intention to go back to Japan to preach the gospel after the war, “Why the Japanese don’t have a soul. They aren’t human. You can’t convert them.” And the average man in Japan was saying even worse things about people in America. Then the atom bombs, the surrender, and the occupation. The Japanese and the Americans again, in an almost miraculous way, became fast friends, and the general of the conquering enemy armies for all practical purposes came to replace the emperor-god of the Japanese people.

There is no doubt about the historical importance of the American occupation of Japan. Yet as Christians we must view things in a different perspective. We cannot but view the war as unnecessary, tragic, and wrong. It solved no important problem and created many more complex than those with which we were faced before the war. As Christians we cannot, of course, glory in victory, nor can we think of the military occupation of a nation as anything but an unpleasant but necessary sequel to war. Yet it would be a dreadful mistake to think that God has no way of working in this world of tragedy and sin. Even as of old, God is able to make the imperfect, selfish works of man serve his purposes. We must never think the spread of the gospel depends in any way on the sword. The kingdom of the Lord did not need the sword in the Garden of Gethsemene, and it does not need it today. And yet it is equally true that opportunities for the spread of the gospel may come as a byproduct of many human tragedies, including war. Many a man has been willing for the first time to listen to the gospel after he has been imprisoned for theft or murder. But surely no one would advocate crime and imprisonment as a means of spreading the gospel. So with our situation in Japan. We have used the tragedy of war and its aftermath for the sake of the Kingdom. People whom pride prevented being reached before were reached with the gospel. People who were satisfied with false gods when we tried to reach them before, have now been

reached because the war shattered their false gods. Thousands have heard the gospel for the first time because the power of a police state was broken and gospel preachers for the first time were free to preach unmolested. So it might be said that one of the greatest opportunities for gospel preaching in history was “made in occupied Japan.” In other ways and at other times the story of the progress of the gospel in post-war Japan has been told. I am sure that you are well acquainted with the major features of that story. In brief it is this: a nation which had been one of the most unfruitful mission fields in the world, in the space of four short, but awful years, became one of the most fruitful fields ever known. In five years after World War II as many people were baptized and as many congregations were established as in fifty years before the war. And today churches of Christ have sixty congregations in ten Japanese states, twenty American missionaries, fifty Japanese preachers of varying ability, six kindergartens, four Christian schools, one orphan home and one old people’s home, and about five thousand members with about half of them active. The story of the revival of the church program in Japan after the war is a thrilling story that I wish I had the time to tell you. Some day I hope that it will be in print so that you may read it. This much I will say: it is a story of cooperation, and it is a story of careful planning, and prayers; of young hopes and mature interest; a story of how the passion to evangelize a lost nation hungering for the gospel succeeded in spite of fears, mistakes, opposition, and the blundering attempts of men who frankly admitted they weren’t always sure just what they ought to do or how they ought to do it, but who were sure the Lord wanted them to do the best they could in the best way they knew.

Those of us who went to Japan after the war to take* Christ to the Japanese people found a beaten nation' with many, many needs. The people were hungry and cold and confused and afraid. Everything about, them was changing and no one seemed quite sure about what ought to change and what ought not to change. And from every side voices cried to the people: here is the way, this is your hope. As Christian workers two needs impressed us most deeply: the need of the people for the gospel, and the need of the church for' Bible training.

We did not take lightly the need for food or clothing and we did what we could for hungry and cold people with whom we came in contact. Hundreds of boxes of clothing were shipped over by you good people here in the States and they were distributed in the name of Christ to those who needed them the most. This kind of work was not directly linked with our preaching efforts. In other words, we did not offer a man a meal or a coat if he would listen to a sermon. We believed that if a man was hungry he should be fed, and if he was cold he should be clothed. Of course it was always our prayer that he might be led to obey Christ, but we felt that deeds of charity need no justification other than the real need of the recipient.

It was the need of the people for the gospel that moved us most. Our reason for going to Japan was of course the belief that without Christ the Japanese people were lost and that their only hope was in the gospel. After being in Japan a while this conviction was made only firmer. No words so aptly describe the condition of the people we say as the words, “sheep without a shepherd.” Their nation had fallen, their god had abdicated, their economy had collapsed, and their culture was outdated. Teachers who had ruled by authority found themselves uncertain and confused and had no idea which way to lead the students, who rapidly got out of hand. Parents who in the past were obeyed as gods found their authority gone and many of them took orders from the youngsters who came home and told their parents all about the modern, new, and acceptable way of life as they

saw it portrayed in the Hollywood-made movies to which they flocked. The government knew that it was supposed to be democratic, but it didn't know what democracy was, and so while it halted and-stumbled the communists almost took over the country. And Buddhism and Shintoism, the heathen religions to which all people were supposed to adhere were discredited leaving the people with no moral or spiritual guides of any kind.

How could we but preach the gospel to such people. Feeling as Paul did, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel", we preached in season, out of season, night and day, publicly and from house to house. We preached in the cities, in the towns, in the mountains, and by the sea, and sometimes standing in the rain. We drove over roads that some American mules might even refuse to attempt, we rode bicycles, we rode what they called buses but might more aptly be called bone-crushers, we rode unheated trains in cold winters, and we worshipped in screenless buildings in mosquito-ruled summers. We preached five minute sermons, thirty-minute sermons, one hour sermons, three hour sermons, six hour sermons, and one eleven hour sermon is on the record. We preached to the high, to the low, and to the average. And always we preached Jesus Christ and him crucified. We preached nothing but the gospel—the gospel you can find in the New Testament, the faith once for all delivered to the saints. We haven't needed any modern theories or ancient traditions, and we haven't upheld any ism or hobby. Just the gospel, the story of Jesus Christ and the response God wants all people to make to it. And let me tell you, there is no thrill in all the world that can equal the thrill of preaching to people who have never heard the gospel before, not even in a perverted form, and of seeing such people believe the gospel and obey it. It is always a miracle to me. After all, we haven't the time if we had the ability to prove the things we say about Christ. We just tell the story, proclaim the gospel. And people find themselves believing and obeying it! They find they can't shake it off. The gospel is true and the truth 'in it convinces people. I have found the gospel self-vindicating. It doesn't take eloquence, I know, because the language I first used was surely pitiful, but even though as I began to speak I saw a few smiles as I put together a brand new version of the Japanese language, soon the people would be caught by the message back of the strangely put together words, and finally heads would nod assent, eyes would blink back tears, and hearts would surrender to Chiist. I tell you again, there is no thrill like it. And there are still uncounted millions throughout the world who have never heard the story of Jesus, who have yet to hear the sweetest story ever told. Wouldn't you like to go somewhere and tell the grand old story for the first time to somebody?

Besides the need for gospel preaching, we found in Japan an urgent need for Bible training. The Christians who were baptized before the war were never adequately trained because the war interrupted plans for teaching them. The few churches that managed to survive the persecution of the war years were badly in need of revival. And all the Imw converts being baptized at the rate of nearly a thousand a year were desperately in need of teachers to teach them and leaders to lead them in the activity of the church. But with a few exceptions, the church in Japan was without preachers, teachers, and leaders. There could be no question about the need for a thorough program of Bible training. The question of how to meet the need was not so simple, but as people will do, we fell back on our own experience. Practically every American missionary in Japan had been trained for Christian service in what are commonly called Christian colleges. Harding, Lipscomb, Pepperdine, Abilene, Freed-Hardeman, and Florida Christian have sent graduates to Japan. Among other methods of Christian training and leadership development we are using in

Japan a method which has worked so well in America. We have set up a Christian college called Ibaraki Christian College and we are making every effort to prepare Japanese young people for lives of Christian service.

Today in Ibaraki Christian College we have around three hundred students with about fifty of them preparing to be preachers. Thirty percent of those who enroll in the school are Christians and when they graduate, seventy percent are Christians. Every student studies the Bible for an hour a day, besides attending a daily worship service. Christians are teachers, Christians are associates, Christians are counselors. We have a standard high school, standard junior college, and a special two year course in the Bible for church leaders.

It costs us seven dollars a month per pupil to give a Christian education at I. C. C. We charge two dollars a month tuition, and we go in the hole five. Ours is one of those businesses where the more customers we have the worse we go in the hole. We have been enabled to keep operating so far because some Christian people have believed that the work we were doing was a good work and that Christians ought to support it. We can continue to offer this training to Japanese young people if three hundred people in the United States will say, "Let me make up the difference for one of those students. I'll add five dollars to his two, and see to it that one young Japanese gets the training he ought to have." I am hoping some of you here will button-hole me and tell me that you will sponsor one of our students at five dollars a month during 1953. We have fifty who have already promised, so we need just two hundred and fifty more sponsors.

It should be obvious, I think, that we do not consider Ibaraki Christian College to be a secular endeavor. We are not in Japan to educate the Japanese people, nor are we there to run a business. We are in Japan to serve the Lord, and don't think that we would continue our Bible training and leadership development program another day if we did not believe it to be for the good of the Lord's kingdom. At the same time, no one is more aware than we who are engaged in this work that no human undertaking is perfect. We know there are problems, both theoretical and practical. We believe that we have profited from the honest discussion of the issues involved. We do not absolutize any method we are now employing and we are striving to remain open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit through his Word.

We do know this, however: there can be no Christian school without the support of Christian people, and the work of teaching the Bible and training leaders for the church is not somebody's private business. In Japan, then, we have found two great needs, the need for gospel preaching and the need for Bible teaching, and we have tried as God has given us strength and wisdom to meet these needs in the way most pleasing to him who will judge all of us on that day. Pray for this work, and pray that God will teach you what he wants you to do about it.

STRIVING FOR UNITY AMONG BRETHREN

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Delmar Owens The Psalmist David said: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psalms 133:1).

There are some good things that are not pleasant. There are some pleasant things that are not good, but unity among brethren is both good and pleasant. It is good for the brethren if they dwell together in unity. The full benefits of the religion of our Lord cannot be had in a brotherhood torn asunder with strife and discord. The peace of God that passeth knowledge is the fruit of unity among the people of God. Too, it is good for the world if the brethren dwell together in unity. A divided house will not only fall, but it will fail to accomplish its God given mission in the world. In Mark 1:19, we find James and John busy mending the rends in their fishing nets. These men were experienced fishermen, but they had failed to catch fish. The reason is obvious. The holes in the nets were larger than the fish, so they had labored for nought. There is a great lesson in this experience for us. Jesus said: "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea" (Matthew 13:47). God has given the local congregation a spiritual net to throw over the people in a community. We, like James and John, labor, but too often the results are seemingly in vain. Could it be because of the rends in the net?

Jesus knew that division among his disciples would hinder the work of God. With this knowledge, he prayed: "Neither for these alone do I pray, but for them also that shall believe on me through their word; that they may be one in us; even as Thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (John 17:20-21).

Much of the teaching which gospel preachers use to successfully rout the Goliath of denominationalism as we know it today was not given with this primary end in view. Rather, such teaching was given to define and urge unity among brethren. In one of the most tender scenes of the Bible, Jesus kneels in the presence of his disciples, whom he must shortly leave, and prays: "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; even as thou, Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe thou didst send me. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given unto them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them and thou in me, that they may be perfected together in one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovest them, even as thou lovest me" (John 17:20-23). In the words of Paul, we learn "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the gospel" (Php_1:27). The church is the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23).

This figure stresses the importance of unity among the members who compose the body. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:12). As the human body has its many parts, each having

its respective office, and all contributing to the support of the whole, so we who belong to the body of Christ have various works and yet all belong to the one body. Further, the figure impresses us with the fact each has need of the other and should not exalt himself or despise the work of others. "There should be no schism in the body: but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffereth, all the members suffer with it or one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it" (1 Corinthians 12:25-26). With equal vigor, the inspired writers attacked the opposite: the sin of division among brethren. Solomon declared that the man who sows discord among brethren has committed a hateful and abominable deed in the sight of God. Paul classifies division as a work of the flesh and puts it on a par with such foul deeds as fornication, idolatry and drunkenness. He solemnly warns that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:20-21). James said: "But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom is not a wisdom that cometh down from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where jealousy and faction are, there is confusion and every vile deed" (James 3:14-16). Thus, the originator and the perpetuator of division among God's people makes him self the tool of Satan and the enemy of God.

Division among God's people is more than a serious thing. Perhaps you know of places where the church has become divided. Do you remember the trail of tears that always followed? Do you remember how the enemy laughed and made light of God's church? Do you remember how the work of God in that community came to a standstill while sinners died without the gospel of our Lord? The necessity of unity and abhorrence with which every child of God should look upon division should impress us with the absolute necessity of striving for unity among brethren.

1. Unity must be made.

We can easily drift into strife and discord but peace, the fruit of unity, must be made. Jesus said "Blessed are the peacemakers." It should be noted that he said "peacemakers", not "piecemakers". Since "two cannot walk together except they be agreed" there must be some basis or plan for agreement. We believe that plan is concisely stated in the Word of God. Listen to Paul "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit 'in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all" (Ephesians 1:1-6).

There is one God to worship and serve. Man has not been left to do his own planning in what he shall do when he worships God and serves him in his daily life. We must have proper guidance or our worship will be in vain and our service worthless. There is one Lord, one voice of authority, to direct us in our relationship to God. God did not purpose that the church should look upon itself as the final voice of authority 'in such things to be done or left undone. Authority is not vested in councils, conventions, etc. After his victory over the grave, Jesus said: "All authority hath been given unto me." That leaves none for Moses, David, or any of the Old Testament prophets. He is the head of all things pertaining to the church. (Ephesians 1:22-23). God speaks through his Son (Hebrews 1:1-2). But how did Christ make known his will? Through his official representatives, his ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20). Jesus, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, gave them the

word and work of reconciliation, an essential prerequisite of unity. When he had left the earth, they were empowered and authorized to speak or write in his name. Hence the complete ex-pression of his divine authority is found 'in the one faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints. The perfection or completeness of the one faith in matters pertaining to our relationship to God and to one another must be duly respected today, but the proper respect for the plain utterances of the one faith will likewise lead us to respect its silence as well. In it, we have "all truth" (John 16:13). It is the revelation of God's mystery and contains all "the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:2-3). Philosophy, the traditions of men and the rudiments of the world can add nothing- worthwhile to it. The one faith reveals to us the fact that there is one institution in which God may be served acceptably, and that one institution is the one body, the church.

It is essential that we understand what this one body is. It is a body of people, a body of saved people. It is the body of the saved rather than a body for the saved. God set it forth in the world as "the pillar and ground of the truth." Its mission is not to cater to man's recreational needs. It is not here to compete with institutions which minister to man's recreational requirements. It is not a loaf and fish distributing agency. It is not an aid or an adjunct to any other institution. It is not a vassal of the state. In regard to earthly organization of this one body, 'it is purely presbyterian congregational. Each local congregation is a self-governing and an independent body. If the local congregation is the only earthly organization of the one body, it follows that each Christian, to be in fellowship with the church, must be associated with and amenable to a local congregation. The one baptism is an important part of God's plan for unity. Paul declared: "For by one spirit were ye all baptized into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13). Then, there is unity of life in the one body for Paul affirms there is one Spirit. He said: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the Sons of God" (Romans 8:14). As an anchor to hold us in times of storms and trials, God has provided us with one hope which is eternal life in the home which our Lord has gone to prepare.

There are seven items in this plan. When the figure seven is used in the Bible, it is suggestive of perfection. Hence, God's plan for unity is a perfect plan. The subtraction of a single item from this plan destroys its perfection. God knew it was perfect and he has warned us against adding to it or taking from it. Throughout the inspired writings, God challenged his servants to preserve the plan. Through Paul, Timothy was commanded: "The things which thou hast heard of me of many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." Again, Paul charged Timothy: "Hold fast to the pattern of sound words."

Much is being said and written today about the pioneers and their position on this and that. While we honor the memory of these giants in the faith who contributed so much to us today, we must never lose sight of the fact that it is a great deal more important to know the grounds for the positions of the pioneers than the positions alone. When Paul 'admonished the Philippian brethren "to walk by the same rule" he fully realized that God had provided an adequate plan for unity among brethren regardless of race, color, sex or social standing.

2. Unity must be kept.

Paul challenged the Ephesians to "endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the body of peace." Faithfulness to God's plan is an absolute necessity in keeping unity and when discord rears its ugly head among brethren, you may rest assured that the plan has been violated some place. God is author of the plan, but he is not the author of confusion. Keeping unity among brethren has a

very important negative aspect. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and turn away from them" (Romans 16:17). Again, it is written: "If anyone cometh unto you, and bringeth not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting, for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil deeds" (2 John 1:10-11).

Paul charged that a factious man must be rejected after a first and second admonition. Let no one suppose that a diligent compliance with these divine commands will endanger the peace and unity among brethren. In fact, such diligence is vitally important to unity. The unity of the spirit will be destroyed if such false prophets are allowed to prey upon the body of Christ. God has given the right to disagree on indifferent matters and still remain brethren, provided we can disagree without becoming disagreeable. The eating of meat was a problem the early church had to solve. It was an indifferent matter and Paul said: "But him that is weak in the faith receive ye, yet not for decision of scruples. One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth set at nought him /hat eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth" (Romans 14:1-3). Then he adds in verse 19, "So then let us follow after things which make for peace and things whereby we may edify one another." Abraham proposed that the differences between Lot and him be settled on this premise— "We are brethren." If we "walk in the steps of Abraham's faith" such differences among us will be approached in that spirit. Paul and Barnabas differed over John Mark, but they dealt with their difference as brethren. On one occasion, Paul opposed Simon Peter to his face, but Peter later wrote of "our beloved brother Paul." Their difference was not caused by an indifferent matter, but it was dealt with as brethren.

We must remember that our treatment of our brother is felt by the Lord Jesus Christ. When members of the church reach the low point of becoming chronic accusers of the brethren, they need to realize that such conduct causes them to bear more of the nature of Satan than of Christ. The weapons of Christian warfare in the fight against evil in the church and out of the church are not carnal. It is not necessary to take a gun or a knife to be guilty of using carnal weapons. Carnal words, the products of a carnal heart, are just as destructive as guns or swords. To use carnal words to force a brother to submit to our views on such matters is just as carnal as using a gun or a bomb to accomplish the same end. In Galatians 5:26, Paul lays down a prohibition against provoking one another. The best authorities tell us that the word means to "challenge to combat, to contest, to irritate." The only remedy for this unholy situation is to realize that our treatment of even the weakest among us is in reality our treatment of the Christ.

Another negative aspect of keeping unity among the brethren is the divine light to criticize. There are some who feel that it is never right to criticize for >they feel that such is a threat to the unity of the church. If this be right, much of the New Testament would have to be deleted. How much of the New Testament is concerned with condemning practices and tendencies among the brethren? Abstinence from criticism is an open invitation to stagnation and stag nation is the bitter foe of unity. "Let us alone" cried the agents of Satan in the first century. The echo of that cry can be heard today, however any criticism must possess certain qualifications if it glorifies the, Savior and contributes to unity.

We must be scrupulously honest and fair with our criticisms. Too often criticism is uttered upon the weakest sort of hearsay. We need to possess the facts before we speak. There is no doubt that

this will decrease our critical output to a great extent. Criticism should be rendered in the right spirit. How many of us take very kindly to the person who stands on a pedestal to criticize what we are doing? These words of Paul apply here: "Brethren if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted." Note, he says "in the spirit of meekness." Meekness is not weakness, but it is strength that has been tenderized with compassion. Criticism should be offered with the view in mind of helping. Often, it is necessary to tear down before building up can be done, but tearing down should be looked upon as a means to an end.

You can spend the whole day of your life pulling weeds and leave nothing but a barren field at the end of the day. Let us realize that criticism is powerful. Let us handle it as carefully as we would T.N.T. It is habit forming. It can become to the soul what opium is to the body. The more we criticize, the more we want to criticize and the blinder we become to our own faults. Would it be amiss for a Christian to seek divine guidance when he feels 'it is necessary to criticize? Especially since it is so powerful, dangerous and habit forming? It is important that we know how to take criticism. There are some who start out with high hopes of doing some great work. When the critics start working on the idea, they give up and quit. Others go to the other extreme. Instead of listening to everybody, they listen to no one. They consider every criticism a personal attack and are too busy searching for the ulterior motive which they are sure lurks in the background, hence they will not weigh the worthiness which may be in the criticism. What should we do with criticism? Some of it we should ignore. If some noted pianist came here and gave a program and I launched out the next day in the local paper criticizing his technique, he might well inquire about my qualifications in the field of music. If he found they were almost nil, I imagine he would ignore what I had written. Some criticism should be used. It may be that the thing being done needs criticism. The brother who offers such is simply discharging his duty to his Lord and rendering me a great service. Some criticism should be defied. The remnant in the body of Christ who are greatly responsible for the progress being made in this, the golden era of the church, has had to dream dreams and lead us to our present place in defiance to "the pep squad" that chants from the sidelines "You'll never do it— You'll never do it." Above all, let us temper our criticism with the fine virtue of brotherly love and let us face any criticism which may be hurled at us in the same manner in which our Lord faced such.

III. Unity can be kept if we are vigilant in eliminating those things that destroy it.

At the very head of this list, I will place overly ambitious men. During a period of spiritual depression in Israel, Hosea put his finger on the cause of the trouble when he said "Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity, ye have eaten the fruit of lies, because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of mighty men" (Hosea 6:13). Such men seek a place in the sun, but such a place was never intended to be occupied by mortal man. Such men cry that the end justifies any means. The guiding principle of such men is that if it is expedient, it is lawful, but Paul reasoned to the contrary. He said "All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient." This must mean that a thing can only be expedient if it is lawful. It may be lawful without being expedient, but it cannot be expedient without being lawful first. Even the great Apostle to the Gentiles admonished his brethren to follow him only when he followed Christ. Any man who expects more today is a menace to the peace of the Lord's people, and seeks self-glory and not the glory of the Lord.

Extremists grow in great abundance in every field of endeavor, but there seems to be a larger crop in the field of religion than in any other realm. In politics, we have ultra liberals and old line conservatists. Some are for anything because it is new. Others are against anything if it is not old. I have never known of an extremist to contribute much to the unity of God's people, but I have known of many who have torn the church to shreds. I have observed that the person who does the most for promoting unity is the person who stays in the middle of the road with respect to such extreme views. One may be ready to indict this position as fence riding. Let it be observed that we do not usually build our fences in the middle of the road. In fact, adherence to any extreme view, whether to the right or the left, is a compromise of the truth.

Here is a good example: There are instances in the New Testament where two or more congregations cooperated in achieving a common goal. Each congregation participating in the work retained its independence. Nothing else was organized to do the work. Thus, any contention that two or more congregations cannot cooperate in a common objective is an extreme view.

Just here, I would like to warn of another possible danger. The early church, as it spread throughout the Roman Empire, is a model for us today in evangelizing the world. With this task before it, and with the example of organization and centralization in the Roman Empire, the logical thing, from the standpoint of human reason, would have been for these early congregations to have organized with a central head or agency in order to carry out this task. It was by divine wisdom, rather than by human wisdom, that the church was able to fulfill its mission without central headquarters. Finite eye can see only so far, but I think we can see the wisdom in this plan if we try. In the first place, it was a preventive against apostasy. As long as the autonomy of the local church was observed, any departure from the truth would be localized. Whereas, if the church had been universally organized, if one church went astray, it could pull others away. This is the reason why the inspired men of the first century did not seek to lead the church to function as a brotherhood. From a dollar and cent standpoint, the Lord's way is the better way. Absolute congregational autonomy is the exact antithesis of denominationalism. The wounds upon us, caused by the failure of our fathers to abide by this principle, have hardly healed.

It has been established by Brother Earl West in his book "The Search for the Ancient Order" that it was a part of Alexander Campbell's belief that the church as a whole should be organized for certain works. In 1849, there was established a single missionary agency for the churches of the restoration movement. Soon this slave became the master. This powerful monster, the United Christian Missionary Society soon led congregation after congregation into the apostasy of modernism which is so characteristic of the Christian church today.

Cooperation is a principle taught in the word of God but scriptural autonomy is also taught. Both are true and truth is never contradictory; it is always parallel.

Once again we come back to the middle of the road. May we cooperate? Sure—but let us be sure that the absolute autonomy of each participating local congregation is observed. The sin of envy is responsible for a great deal of our difficulties today. Sometimes we use envy and jealousy interchangeably, but they do not always mean the same thing. Jealousy may be the child of love but envy is always the child of hate. It is the sin of little people, those who recognize no higher authority than themselves. To cure ourselves of this fatal malady, we need to revise our standards of success. We cut our teeth on a "get-on-'in-the-world" philosophy which has all but made

nervous wrecks out of this generation. We need to cease comparing ourselves with others: “What does he have that I do not have?” How out of place is this question when we realize that the Lord gave one five talents, another two and another one. What someone else has is no concern of mine. I will have my hands full to make full use of the ability that God gave me. The trail of blood and sorrow which is so wide today began just outside of the Garden of Eden. Cain slew his brother because he felt he was his “competitor” rather than his “keeper.” Soon he cried: “My punishment is greater than I can bear.” Envy’s crop is always prolific.

Obedience to the commands of the Christ on the subject of forgiveness will go far in keeping unity among brethren. Jesus taught that both the offender (Matthew 5:23-24) and the offended (Matthew 18:15) should take the initiative in bringing about reconciliation. Because of the weaknesses of man, forgiveness both human and divine is among our greatest needs. How often shall we forgive? Until seven times? Jesus said “until seventy times seven.” Here the definite is put for the indefinite. Shall I forgive before he repents? Surely not, because even the Lord does not forgive until we repent. But the Lord expends great effort to lead us to repentance. Can we afford to do less? Often it is harder to lead the offended to exercise the right spirit toward the guilty one than it is to lead the offender to repentance. These things should not be. The tongue is a little member, but we must not judge its power for good and evil by its size. “A soft answer turns away wrath, but grievous words stir- reth up strife.” Though the tongue is capable of doing untold good, it is responsible for much of the woe in Zion today. An unbridled tongue indicates an unbridled heart. A divided tongue declares that there is a divided heart directing it. We need to watch what we say and what we imply by what we do not say. James: “The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be” (James 3:8-10).

Realizing that we shall be justified or condemned by our words, we need to ask the Lord to “set a watch upon our lips, that we sin not with our tongues.” The cross of Jesus Christ is God’s unifying power (Ephesians 2:11-22). Jesus said: “If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me.” The closer we get to the crucified and risen Lord, the closer we will be to one another. The cross is the unifying power of heaven and earth. The angels of God desired to look 'into the glory that was made possible by the suffering of Christ (1 Peter 1:12). Here God and divine justice were satisfied when they looked upon the travail of his soul. The cross of Christ is the unifying power of the ages because the “prophets sought to know of the sufferings of Christ and of the glory that should follow” (1 Peter 1:11).

Here racial, social and other human differences are destroyed (Colossians 3:11). Here individuals of different races beat their swords into plow shares and their spears into pruning hooks. The early church was a united church. “The multitude of them that believed were of one heart.” Memories of Calvary were still fresh in their minds, but events took place there which time cannot erase. There can be no strong circumference with a weak center. Their center was Christ and him crucified. They re-enacted Calvary. I do not mean they died for sin, but they died to sin—to self. The pressure of a hostile world could not move them from their center. With this strong center, the foulness of a perverted Judaism and the stench of a rotting paganism was changed into the fragrance of the New Jerusalem. They realized that the Christ of the cross could not be had without the cross of Christ. What does this cross mean to you? Is it merely a passing memory or is

it a reality? Is it just a historical fact or is it our glory?

Such a glory will impress us with the fallacy of glorying in anything else. From it we will learn that the way to step up is to first step down. It challenges us to possess all things by giving. It tells us that the secret of daily living is daily dying. It pleads, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

We may pass through our dark ages, but the Lord will be with us at midnight. We may pass through our fiery furnace, but the Son of Man will be with us in the midst of the flame. It warns there can be no peace between man and man until there is peace between God and man. We are rolling marbles today when we could be moving continents, if we make and then strive to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

THE CHURCH AT WORK IN GERMANY

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Gottfried Reichel

One spring morning in the year 1945 I was awakened by the loud noise of a motor. When I first opened my eyes I was surprised to find myself in our basement, but soon I remembered that my family had slept there for several days to seek protection from the artillery fire which was hitting our town. In order to discover the cause of the motor-noise which had awakened me, I peered through the basement window and there on the street in front of our house stood a big American tank. The operators of the tank had opened the hatches and were looking around, so that I could see them. These men were Americans, people who had come with an army to overcome my fatherland, breaking every resistance with bullets and bombs. Yes, this American army fought with the physical sword to bring the German nation into sub-mission. For this I, as a member of the Hitler youth, hated them.

Three years later in 1948 I met again with American soldiers. I was very much surprised to find out that they were of a different type. One of them asked me to attend a church service of the Church of Christ. At first I hesitated, being a Lutheran, but finally I accepted the invitation. In the following month, being an escapee from behind the Iron Curtain without home, work, and food, I experienced an exemplification of Paul's words: "Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Romans 12:20). Sergeant Carl W. McDaniel, reared in Boles Orphan Home, here in Texas, took me into his home, gave me to eat and to drink. He truly heaped coals of fire on my head, burning out the hate and prejudice against my former enemy. Through his teaching and Christian example, I was motivated to become his and your brother in Christ.

Through him, a sergeant of a secular American army, I was introduced to a spiritual army, also coming from the United States. This army likewise came with a sword, the sword of the spirit, to bring German people into submission, not under their own power, but under the authority of Christ. Love and not hate was the reaction of those they brought into submission to their King.

These soldiers of the cross were sent by you, Christians in America. It 'is the purpose of this address to inform you about the obstacles, the enemies and the victories of these missionaries. In 1947, the first small band of evangelists entered Germany. Like every army in a foreign country, they were confronted with obstacles, which needed to be overcome, before the enemy could successfully be at-tacked. To learn the German language was the first and one of the most difficult obstacles for the American workers to overcome. Almost all of them wrote their sermons in English, then had them translated into German and then read the translation to the German audience. I know it was a tremendous task, especially for the missionaries from the deep South to draw out the German words, but as a German listener, I assure you that the task of understanding them was many times even greater. (At times one felt the desire to have a long pair of tongs

available, to help the speaker by literally pulling out of his mouth some of the more difficult words he was using. Perhaps you would like to have a pair of tongs right now). However, at the present, I am happy to report that most of the missionaries have overcome the language barrier and are preaching in an effective way. A second obstacle consisted of the lack of adequate meeting places. Many German congregations started their meetings in taverns, no other places being available. I, as a former Lutheran, having been accustomed to elaborate church buildings, found it rather difficult to listen to the word of God in a hall in which just nine hours before the service, people drank, danced, and cursed.

Let me ask you Christians: Would you go to church, if it met in a beer hall? I am sure that most of you would, because you are not looking for a wonderful building, but the strength which comes out of Christian fellowship and the worship of the Almighty. But let me ask you another question: Would you, being a stranger to the simple gospel, look for the truth in such an establishment? No, and this has been just the answer of many German people when they were invited to the services of the Laim congregation of the church in Munich. But to a great extent also this obstacle has been overcome. At least this is true in three congregations whose own buildings were completed during the past year. The same thing will be true with four other congregations, whose buildings are already under construction and will be finished, we hope, in the near future. In Frankfurt after the completion of the new building between June and November thirty people were baptized. It is not the new building as such which helped them to decide, but it is the fact that a permanent church building shows the sincere willingness of the church to stay in Germany as long as God lets us stay there and that it is not merely an affair connected with the American occupation force. The German people after the times of war and uncertainty want security. Yes, security also in religion. You, our brethren in America have helped through your sacrifices to make possible those building programs proving to the German public the words of the missionaries: "The Church came to stay." As a German I want to give you the thanks of my brethren, with the sincere prayer that God may help us to prove that these expressions of gratitude are not empty phrases. The obstacles any army has to face in a foreign country weakens its efficiency. But the greatest hindrance to the accomplishment of any army's mission is its enemy. Yes, the very purpose of an army is to overcome the enemy. Who was and is the enemy of this army of Christ in Germany? Friends, wherever the soldiers of Christianity might go, may it be to Japan or to Italy, to America, or to Germany, they have to fight against the same adversary, Satan. His goal is everywhere the same, to lead man into sin and therewith to spiritual death. Considering the forces of evil in Germany, one could say that the devil divided them into two groups.

One resembles the apparent sins, which almost every civilized man considers as such, even though he might not escape from them. General immorality, indifference towards eternal things and social injustice, which are usually the fruits of war, are some of the apparent enemies of the church. At times these forms of sin try to creep into the Lord's body, but since they are easily discerned they are discovered and cast out. The second and more dangerous enemy of the church, stopping its progress more than anything else, is sin hidden under the disguise of Christianity. By this I think of the force which just one month ago caused the discontinuation of our radio broadcast over Saarbruecken. I mean the power which forced the radio-station-manager to write us the following- statement, and I quote:

I am sorry that I have to tell you that decision of government came through telling us that we are no longer allowed to broadcast the Church of Christ feature. I am hastening to tell you that yesterday, Friday, January 23, 1953, is your last time on the air. It would be useful if you could come to see the gentlemen in question who are responsible for this decision in order to talk to them and to try to convince them.

Brethren Gatewood, Bennett, Mingle, and Casmir went to see these officials and urged them to allow our broadcast to continue. At my last information the broadcast has not continued, but the next Friday, when our program was due to be broadcast, the radio announced that because of technical difficulties our feature would no longer be heard at that time.

What power would forbid the broadcasting of the saving gospel of Christ? It could not be a power which truly serves God. It could not even be a power which believes in religious freedom, as it is stated in the constitution of the Saarland, where we broadcasted. But, brethren and friends, it is the same power which told children in Munich one and a half years ago: "Don't go into the tent of the Church of Christ, because they believe not in the Christian God, but in the sun, the moon, and the stars." It is the same power which in Heppenheim threatened a little girl to be flunked in school, if she continued in attending the Sunday Bible school of the church. It is the same power which just a few months ago caused the closing of the meeting places of the church in Italy. To prove to you that this is not merely a wild guess of my imagination, I am going to read to you a paragraph from a letter, written by an official of Radio Saarbruecken. I quote: "For your private information, the chief difficulty with starting the program lay in the power of the local Catholic Church which is not interested in any rival religious teachings in South Germany." The Catholic church was not interested in seeing us start the broadcast, much less interested when she felt the sharp edge of the word of God, laying free the fallacy of its doctrine, tearing down this disguise of Christianity and exposing its real nature. And all this was not done through negative preaching, but, positive, merely proclaiming the teachings of the New Testament. But the Catholic hierarchy was not interested in any rival religious teaching, so we had to retreat. Has the fight of the church in Germany against its enemies always resulted in retreat? No, not by far. Wherever this spiritual army saw an opportunity to gain ground it did. It established forts in the land of the enemy. As most of you know through the religious papers of the brotherhood, fourteen German congregations have been established in ten major cities of my home country. I might mention the fact that one of these congregations already supports a full time worker. Others have taken full responsibility for all the expenses involved with their meeting places. I assure you that there is a sincere effort made among the German brethren to ease the financial burden which they are to their American brethren.

Eight English speaking congregations meet every Lord's day in different sections of the American Zone. I know it is a great comfort for many Christian mothers and fathers to know that their sons and daughters, far away from home, exposed to the dangers of military life, have an opportunity to worship God with fellow Christians. At this point I should also mention that some of the missionaries have contacted three native established churches, trusting that there are others in the East and West Zones.

Including all the above mentioned congregations, we find that there are now twenty-six churches in Germany. This proves that your Christian soldiers have won many battles. A natural result of

establishing new congregations throughout Germany, was the fact that it brought new soldiers to the cause. These new soldiers are natives, who know the country, the language, the people and are for this reason a great asset to the church in my homeland. Four of the eight young evangelists who are now active in the work were trained in the Bible Training School located in Frankfurt. I myself graduated from this school and owe its teachers a great debt. I think that this educational work of the church cannot be overemphasized. The future of the church in Germany depends to a great extent on its leaders. If its leaders are well educated so that they are able not only to reach the average people, but also the intellectuals, the growth of the cause will be faster. At least this is the principle which German history has taught about many new movements.

Since we just mentioned history, let me go into American history to illustrate a point. In the great move westward, many forts were established by the United States Army. The security of these forts depends to the greatest extent on the supply which they received from the home states. When the wagon-train with supplies did not come through it meant often the destruction of the fort. These forts were only able to survive and later grow into self-supporting territories and states when the motherland kept up its support. Brethren, that is true of the forts and the frontier army of the gospel in Germany. They need your support.

I must have been seventeen years of age, still living in the Russian Zone, when my father told me a rather meaningful story, which I would like to pass on to you for its value of illustrating a vital point in the Christian faith. An artist was asked to paint a picture, which would express a dying church. The artist went to work and after he had finished he delivered it to the church officials, who had ordered it. After they had thrown a short glance on the picture they all were highly astonished and somewhat angry. The reason was that the artist had painted a majestic cathedral with its door wide open, so that you could see into the building. The house was filled with worshipping people, the preacher was reading the lesson. "Is this the picture of a dying church?" the church officials asked. The artist answered, "Yes, look on the door post at the small box." The men saw a collection box, which bore the inscription, "Mission Work." And over the box the artist had painted spider webs, to show that this box never received any attention, much less contributions. The artist realized that a church without any interest for the lost in all the world is a dying church.

Churches of Christ in America in the recent past and at present do not have their contribution plates designated for foreign mission work covered with spiderwebs of indifference.

I, therefore, don't want to and do not have a right to scold you for not doing more. I am not here to scold, but to encourage you to continue and to do more in this work, which resulted in my hope of eternal life and the same hope of hundreds of my people.

However, foreign mission work resulted not only in the growth of the church in other nations, but in the great progress of the restoration movement in your own great nation. The church of our Lord is growing in your country, because it has come to realize that the great commission is not merely a welcome scripture to prove to some denominationalist that faith and baptism are required for salvation, but that Christ meant what he said: "Go ye therefore into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Because you endeavored to carry out his great commission he has blessed you richly. That is why I urge you—do more of this work and God can and will bless you still more. The church has been established in Germany. We know that it is

God's will that his church grow every-where. If he is for us who could be against us, but our own lack of prayer, labor, and sacrifice. Therefore, it is in your hands, yes, it is in our hands, whether the country of the great Protestant Reformation will become a land of New Testament Restoration. That this may come true is my earnest prayer. Amen!

EVERY MEMBER AT WORK

EVERY MEMBER AT WORK EVERY MEMBER AT WORK

James D. Willeford

One of the greatest lessons we need to learn is that the Lord expects every member of the church to work. He has expected work of his people since the dawn of time. When, he placed Adam in the Edenic garden he ordered him “to dress it and to keep it” (Genesis 2:15).

Against great odds the children of Israel rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem “for the people had a mind to work” (Nehemiah 4:6). They “laboured in the work . . . from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared” (Nehemiah 4:21). And the Lord blessed their diligent efforts with success. The New Testament further stresses the necessity of personal effort. The Lord depicted his church under several figures of speech, and each illustration used indicates that every member must work. Christ compares his church to the human body. We are all cognizant of the fact that every member of the body must function well if the body is to be efficient in its work. Paul said Christ is the head of the body and it is from him that “the whole body fitly jointed together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:16). Again the Lord stresses that every member must bear his own responsibility if the body is to increase in righteousness. The Lord compares the members of the church to soldiers and he says we must “Fight the good fight of faith” to lay hold on eternal life.” We are runners in the race and the inspired writer of Hebrews says “let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1). To be crowned each of us must run. Christ says his disciples are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Any member of the church who loses his savor or hides his light under a bushel is worthless to the Lord. Christians are leaven and a characteristic of leaven is that it works. We are living stones in the Lord’s house and as such each of us must support his share of the load. We are branches in the true Vine and Christ says we glorify the Father in bearing much fruit. Every figure used by the Son of God emphasizes the great responsibility of each member of the church.

Teaching The World

1. Every member of the church must obey Christ’s commission to “teach all nations” (Matthew 28:18-19). The Lord says we must “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:16). Christ did not exempt any Christian from carrying out this commission, and he did not suggest that we may stop at our own city limits! We must take the gospel to the far-flung outposts of the earth. During World War II the Allies were on a “big push” toward the German border. The artillery, infantry and tanks were all thrown into the drive. The driver of each tank was given a map of the sector in which he would fight during the day. About five o’clock in the afternoon one of the iron monsters stopped and an officer rushed up and demanded in vigorous language why the tank had halted. The driver replied “Sir, we’ve come to the edge of our map”.

Every member of the church should have engraved upon his heart, not a map of his ward, or city, or state, but a map of the entire world. Sir Cecil Rhodes, one of England's greatest explorers, was sent to Africa many years ago to look over that land and see if it would be worthwhile for Great Britain to obtain it. After returning from that continent and speaking before the great dignitaries of his homeland, he pointed to a huge map of Africa and said: "All this for England—that's my dream." Today, as servants of God, we should point to a map of the world and say: "All this for Christ, that's our dream." The question I would like to raise here is "What can the small congregation that cannot send a preacher elsewhere do with reference to this map of the world?" Time will not permit me to discuss the details tonight but let me say that if each member keeps the world map—"the over-all" good of the cause in clear focus, more can be done than is being done now; and it can be done scripturally too!

While it is most urgent that we take the gospel around the world it is also important that we take it to our next door neighbor. Once a young lady was fervently praying for the Lord to send her to China as a missionary. As she prayed the Lord opened her understanding, and suddenly it came to her that a family of Chinese lived in the flat overhead, and a family of Indians lived next door. She had her heart set on going to far away places when there were lost souls under her own roof. Of course the Lord expects us to take the gospel to China and India, but he also expects us to leaven people with whom we come in contact daily.

Members of the church have God's promise that their work of teaching will not be in vain. Much of the good seed sown will fall into honest hearts where it will produce fruit. God said, "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:10-11).

2. If we are to be successful in persuading every member of the church to carry out the Lord's commission we must get away from the practice of looking upon an evangelist as "The Minister." Every member of the church is a minister of Christ, and as such each must serve. Members will not serve well if they live under the delusion that a hired servant can be brought in to do their work for them. Luke says that the disciples of Christ were scattered by persecution, but this did not stop their teaching. "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Canon Farrar made this very pertinent comment regarding the work of all members of the church: "The great hope of the church of the future is that her work will be left less and less to a handful of ministers—wary, many of them, and poor, and sad at heart—but will be done more and more by the laity of the church, that is, by the vast majority who are beginning, thank God! on every side to awaken to their responsibilities" (Sermons of Canon Farrar, p. 88). The whole church will carry out its God-assigned task when each member is awakened to the awful responsibility resting upon him. In putting the church to work we must start with the individual. Do you remember that little story about the father who wanted to give his boy something to keep 'him busy for a while so he wouldn't be interrupted in his reading? He took a page of his newspaper that showed a map of the whole world, tore it up into small pieces, tossed them on the floor, and said: "All right, son, let's see if you can put the map together again." It was only a few moments later that the boy said: "There it is, Dad, all fixed." And, surely enough, it was. The father was amazed, and asked, "How in the world did you do that so fast?" "Oh, it was easy," the boy replied, "you see, there was a

picture of a man on the back of it, and when I got the man fixed, the world was fixed too." In the light of the Lord's teaching we may paraphrase the boy's answer and say, "When we get the individual fixed, the church will be fixed too." It is imperative that we thoroughly convert each member of the church, and impress upon him the responsibility of saving the world. And we cannot stop there. We must show each how to do it. This may require much teaching, and planning, and supervision.

3. Every member of the church is presented with an unexcelled opportunity of carrying out the great commission through the media of radio, the pulpit and the press. We must insist that our friends listen to the gospel over the radio, come with us into the assembly, and read good tracts and other publications. Much expended effort is wasted because members of the church fail to use the effort properly. Proper insistence on our part will persuade our helper at the work bench, or our partner in the office to listen when the gospel is preached. The Lord teaches that we must be persistent. When the guests who were invited to the feast failed to accept, the Lord told his servants to go 'into the highways and byways and constrain people to come to the feast. To constrain means to urge and insist until the invitation is accepted. So many times we may tell our friends where they can hear the gospel, but we fail to follow through with enough insistence. Our efforts are lost because we fail to show continued interest and enthusiasm. We should put our friends "on the spot" by telling them of a gospel sermon they should hear on the radio, and then asking them if they heard it. We should give them good literature and then ask for their comments on it. Persistence is the key to success in winning our friends. An unbeliever is reputed to have said "If I firmly believed, as millions say they do, that the knowledge and practice of Christianity in this life influences destiny in another world, Christianity would be to me, everything. I would cast aside earthly cares as follies and earthly thoughts and feelings as vanity. Christianity would be my first waking thought, and my last image before sleep sank me into unconsciousness. I would labor in its cause alone. I would take thought for the morrow and eternity alone. Earthly consequences should never stay my hands or seal my lips. I would esteem one soul gained for heaven worth a life time of effort. I would go forth to the world and preach Christ in season and out of season, and my text would be: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul" (Author Unknown). If every member of the church could catch this glimpse of Christianity the world would succumb (to Christ within a few years.

4. Every Christian can help carry out the great commission by properly using his money. We are the Lord's stewards and the goods he has entrusted to our care must be used in the cause of righteousness. We could all give up many of the luxuries and non-essentials to further the gospel. Unless we do make sacrifices to spread righteousness over the world we will lose our souls, and heathen hordes may destroy our bodies. I have labored 'in Wisconsin six years, and during that time members of the church in the United States have wasted more than enough to put an assembly building and a preacher in every city of that state! I know of a young married man, a so-called Christian, too, who rented a car and made a hundred and fifty mile trip to see a movie. The trip cost thirty-two dollars! How can he explain such a needless expenditure to the Lord?

5. Members of the church are needed who will prepare to earn their living with their hands, and then move into new fields and establish congregations. There are many compensations in being a tentmaker and church builder! A few years ago I lived in Pennsylvania, and everywhere I travelled I observed small but attractive church buildings in the little towns. Most of the buildings followed

the same pattern of architecture and so I inquired about them. I was informed that young preachers of a certain denomination had decided to concentrate their efforts in that state. They moved to the little towns without any means of support, and earned their living by painting, mowing lawns, and working at odd jobs. As a result they had built up churches everywhere. If they could earn a living during the depression and do a work of this kind, there is not a reason why it cannot be done today.

Brother Johnny Ramsey, who finished Abilene Christian College last year is now living in Neenah, Wisconsin, and doing a marvelous work. The small church of twenty-three members provide most of his support, but he does substitute teaching to help the family finances. Brother Robert W. Lawrence, an excellent song leader and preacher, is now living in Madison, Wisconsin, and helping with the Lord's work. He is also going to the university to prepare for the teaching profession that he may earn his living, and establish a congregation in some northern city. A letter came to us recently from Amberg, Wisconsin. The writer was appealing for a high school teacher to labor in that town and take the lead in the small congregation. Young men should not wait for definite commitments with respect to financial support. If you prove your worth "In action/" the Lord will see that you have financial support.

6. Every member of the church can work by bringing neighborhood children to Bible classes. A leading manufacturer once said in his publication that "Twenty-five million American boys and girls of each generation are not taught to read the Bible, go to church or pray." Think of the untapped resources we have! We can save the world by saving the children, and it is so much faster than trying to convert adults. Within six years spent in Wisconsin I have seen children grow into their teens, and obey the gospel. These young people are truly enthusiastic and they are willing to fight for Christ.

Some members of the church not only neglect to teach children of others, but they fail to bring their own to the Bible classes. The Christian Advocate, a denominational publication, declares that on a recent Sunday fourteen teen-age boys coming from excellent homes were in a Sunday-school class. The teacher asked them: "How many of you boys got your own breakfast before you came to Sunday School! and thirteen hands went up! What a terrible shame that boys who want to do right, and have started right have lazy parents who sleep away the Lord's day morning!

7. Every member of the church can work for Christ through his daily life. There was once a young Christian woman who worked as a stenographer. She discussed the Bible with her employer many times, but through his sophistry and deceptive handling of scripture she always lost the argument. This continued for several months, and then one Saturday the employer said "Jane, I want you to take my daughters to Sunday school with you. I want them to be young ladies just like you." She lost every argument but the last one! For four years Brother and Sister Howard Justiss traveled from Markesan, Wisconsin to Madison for worship. The distance was fifty-five miles each way. This one hundred and ten mile trip was made each Lord's day despite rain, sub-zero temperatures, and deep snows. During the four years the Justisses missed six Lord's days, and in that period of time they had two babies born into the family. Such an example of faithfulness is worth many sermons. An example of the gospel in practice is a powerful influence for good. Many times our life is all the gospel some will read. Annie J. Flint well expressed this truth when she

wrote: The World's Bible

"Christ has no hands but our hands

To do his work today;

He has no feet but our feet

To lead men in his way.

He has no tongue but our tongue

To tell men how he died.

He has no help but our help

To bring them to his side.

We are the only Bible

The careless world will read.

We are the sinner's gospel,

We are the scoffer's creed.

We are the Lord's last message,

Given in word and deed.

What if the type is crooked?

What if the print is blurred?

What if our hands are busy

With other work than his;

What if our feet are walking

Where sin's allurements is?

What if our tongues are speaking

Of things his lips would spurn?

How can we hope to help him

And gladden his return?"

8. In carrying the gospel we never know who may be a good prospect. When Paul and Silas were being- shoved into the Philippian jail by the goaler it is probable that they never suspected he would be a Christian ere the dawn of another day. We must not take for granted that a person is not interested, but we must work diligently to convert everyone.

Edifying the Church

Christ not only commanded members of the church to teach and baptize people, but he also gave us the task of “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20). In carrying out this part of the Lord’s commission members work in edifying the church. To edify the church is to strengthen and build it up in knowledge and life.

1. Every member must work in strengthening the weak. Paul said “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves” (Romans 15:1). In writing to the Galatian members Paul said “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Galatians 6:1). By inspiration James said “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins” (James 5:19-20). If every member is to work in edifying the newborn babes in Christ he must do more than greet the person when he is baptized and wish him well. We spend months and years in teaching and training a newborn babe in our family. We must spend much time in teaching and training those who are weak in the faith. A few years ago an Iowa City, Iowa newspaper carried this headline: “Mary Sue, five-week old waif abandoned here a week ago by her parents.” Mary Sue was one of three children being taken by her parents on an extended trip, and they had tired of managing her on a crowded bus. So they abandoned her in Iowa City. The world was horrified and a number of homes were eagerly opened, hoping to receive the little abandoned waif. Let us each with his own local congregation in mind, ask himself if the church bulletin could not often carry similar headlines. “Mary Sue, born into the family of God on such and such a date, was immediately abandoned by her entire family, because they tired of having to bother helping her develop in the midst of the crowded days.” The Southside congregation in Waco, Texas, keeps a watch on its members by placing their names on large buttons which are fastened to a board. This board is placed near the entrance to the auditorium, and as each member comes in for worship he removes his button and places it in a container nearby. At the close of the Lord’s day the elders check the buttons remaining on the board, and in this way they know all the absentees. On Monday calls are made to determine the cause of the absenteeisms. Thus the elders can catch the first step toward drifting away from Christ.

2. The elders can edify the church by giving work to new members. In Madison a newborn babe was given the opportunity of serving at the Lord’s table for one month. During that period he and his family drove fifty miles to visit relatives, but on the Lord’s day he drove back to Madison that he might carry out his assignment. He brought his relatives with him.

While it is important that the elders assign work for new members to do they should not assume a “do nothing” attitude until they are given some work. There is much to be done, and there are multiplied opportunities everywhere. Any strong member of the church may help by asking a weak member to aid him with some particular task.

3. Every congregation should have some method of teaching and training the novice. A few congregations have classes for new converts, and this is commendable. In Madison, Wisconsin Brother Robert Lawrence goes into the homes of new members for Bible classes. Specially prepared courses are given to strengthen these members, and to get them started doing personal work. Such courses cut down the number that drift away from Christ, and they stimulate great

activity toward the conversion of others.

4. The elderly women in the church may perform a great work in teaching the younger women. Paul said they should “teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children; to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed” (Titus 2:4-5).

5. The boys and men in a congregation should be used frequently in the worship services. We are living in an age of specialization, and that same spirit has seeped into the church. We feel that any man who stands before the congregation 'in some public way must be “letter perfect.” This spirit hinders the training of new leaders. It stifles progress, and it professionalizes public worship. We should strive for perfection, but we should continually develop a new reservoir of leadership. A few years ago we lost our song leader in Madison, and we had neglected to train new leaders. For a year or more we were crippled in our song services because we had no one who could direct singing. When we lost our leader we had to do something. Since we had no capable leader in the church to train our boys and men we went to our large vocational school and arranged for two hours of instruction every Friday evening. Fifteen boys and men took the course, and several of the fellows developed into fair leaders. This was done within a year. Our leadership would have been much better if it had been developed over a period of years. For several years now the Madison congregation has used thirty minute periods before Sunday evening and Wednesday evening Bible classes for singing. All boys and men who will lead are given two chances per week to develop their talents.

6. Every member of the church must work in promoting and maintaining peace within the church. We must all have the spirit of Abraham. When the section of land where he and Lot lived was not large enough for their many flocks “there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abram’s cattle and the herdsmen of Lot’s cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. And Abram said unto Lot, let there be not strife, I pray thee, between, me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we be brethren” (Genesis 13:7-8). Abraham refused to quarrel because he and Lot were brethren, and because their enemies were in the land. Contentions on their part would have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. One of the most profitable works we can do is to maintain peace in the family of God.

7. The Bible school teachers can do a marvelous work in teaching the children who come to them. This work is so great that it justifies the expenditure of much time and effort. The future of the world is 'in the hands of our teachers. This grave responsibility is reflected in the book of James where the inspired writer says the teacher “shall receive heavier judgment” (James 3:1). In view of this fact every teacher should be prepared to the fullest extent of his ability, and no child should be lost from his class through his neglect. A few years ago Horace Mann gave the dedicatory address at a new Reform School. In his address he said that all the time, effort and money put into the school would be worth it if it were a means of saving one boy. After his address a man in the audience asked Mr. Mann if he really thought such a huge expenditure of time and treasure was justified to save just one boy. Mr. Mann replied, “It certainly would be if it were my boy.” The salvation of one soul is worth a life time of work.

Every word the Bible school teacher utters in her teaching makes a lasting impression upon the heart of a child. An unknown author has well said in a poem entitled, A Piece Of Clay

“I took a piece of plastic clay
And idly fashioned it one day,
And as my fingers pressed it still,
It moved and yielded to my will.
I came again, when days were passed,
That bit of clay was hard at last;
The form I gave it, still it bore,
And I could change that form no more.
I took a piece of living clay
And gently formed it, day by day,
And moulded with my power and art,
A young child’s soft and yielding heart.
I came again when years were gone,
It was a man I looked upon.
He still that early impress wore;
And I could change it nevermore.”

8. Every member of the church can work through his influence. One of the best means of having a good influence is through sincere and regular worship. The worship was designed by the Lord to help us. If we do not have sufficient interest in the Son of God to be regular in our worship of him our influence upon the world is detrimental. The story is told of a man who had searched the New Testament diligently and then set out to find the church he read about in the word of God. He was looking for the church which Jesus purchased with his own blood. Each week he visited a different religious group but he always came home disheartened because none of them seemed to preach and practice full New Testament Christianity. Finally, one Lord’s day he came to the building where the church of the Lord met to worship. As he entered the building he noticed that it was packed to its capacity, the singing was zestful, the prayers scriptural and touching, and the sermon was challenging and true to the Book. He went home that day a very happy man. At last his search had ended. He had found the New Testament church. He decided to go back that night and check again to be sure. Much to his dismay only one-third of the auditorium was filled, the singing was not spirited, and the sermon had lost its zest. The man said, “No, this isn’t the church of Christ—for if it were, everyone would be back tonight, and have someone with him.” This indictment may be truer than some of us realize. Suppose we do restore the Lord’s church in doctrine and worship, but the enthusiasm and zeal of New Testament Christians is lost. Unless each member has an ardent love of souls, and an overwhelming desire to do right he is not true to Christ. And his failure is a reflection on the Lord he professes to obey.

Helping The Needy

1. When Paul and Barnabas were ready to take the gospel to the Gentiles the apostles admonished them to remember the poor (Galatians 2:10). And Paul said “this I was forward to do.” Every member of the church can work in visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction (James 1:27). In Carlsbad, New Mexico, a family had an invalid son. He became seriously ill and for weeks he needed the constant care of his mother. During this trying (time two Christian ladies went into the home every day with food. They cleaned the house, washed the dishes and clothing, and prepared the meals. In this way almost every lady in the church worked to help someone in need. The ladies were made better by this experience, and the mother was able to sit by her son constantly till the end.

There is an excellent opportunity now for Christian women to become trained “homemakers.” In the event of illness on the part of the mother a trained worker goes into the home to provide for the needs of the children. In this way a trained worker can fill the gap left by the hospitalized and she may prevent the scars that can be left on children by many strangers looking after them. Further, the Christian worker obeys the Lord’s command to “serve one another” (Galatians 5:13). Oftentimes a father is able to pay for this service as it enables him to continue working at his livelihood. If the father cannot pay, let the congregation render this service through one of its members. In the same city in New Mexico a large family was in dire need due to the permanent illness of the father. The men in the church came together and built a home for the family as a gift which they were to use as long as it was needed. Such examples of church members at work bring joy to our hearts, and an inspiration that spurs us all to greater activity.

2. There is a wonderful opportunity today for members of the church to prepare themselves as social workers. Members who qualify by getting the Master’s degree in social work can do much toward getting orphan children into Christian homes. We need enough Christians in every state to qualify as case workers in the child welfare field that we may have child placing agencies across our country. These groups could help Christian families adopt children, or secure foster children to board and offer them love, security and Bible training. There is no better place to rear a child than in a Christian home. And there is no greater work to be accomplished! We have completely overlooked this approach to Christ’s command in James 1:27. The congregation should help needy foster parents to take care of orphan children by paying for their board. In this way the church is “visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction.”

3. In helping others we may be helping Christ. He said “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:40). We may never know the far-reaching effect of just one act of helpfulness. By inspiration the writer of the Hebrew letter said, “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares” (Hebrews 13:1). In helping a stranger we may be helping our own. In Grant Park at Atlanta, Georgia, is the famed Cyclorama. On the eighteen ton canvass is a painting which portrays graphically the Battle of Atlanta. At the height of the battle when the Northern and Southern troops are in close combat near the Hurt House a Federal soldier hears a wounded Confederate crying for water. The Union soldier pauses long enough to give the wounded man a drink, and as he raises the sagging head he discovers that the man is his own brother. These brothers were named Martin and this incident is a matter of historical record. This story touches our hearts and it makes

us realize how important it is that we work in helping others.

Back of all we have said about every member working is the reason for such work. It is done to glorify our Father and to lead many to Christ. Only God can build the church, and he builds it by adding the saved to it (Acts 2:47). It is our privilege and opportunity to lead our friends by letting our lights shine before men that they may glorify our Father in obedience. In doing the Lord's work we are wise and Daniel says, "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Daniel 12:3). In the New Testament we are told that "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister" (Hebrews 6:10).

Let us follow the Son of God for he knows the way. The story is told of a man traveling in a distant country. His journey led over high mountains and he sought a guide who could direct him. One man offered his services as a guide, and the traveler asked him: "Have you been to the village where I wish to go?" The man replied: "No, but I have been part of the way, and I have heard others talk about the rest of the way." The traveler answered, "You will not do." Another man came and offered his services as a guide. The traveler asked him too, "Have you been to the village where I wish to go?" The man replied: "No, but I have been to the top of the mountain and have looked at the village." The traveler said, "You will not do." A third man came and offered to guide the traveler to his destination. He was asked the same question, "Have you been to the village where I wish to go?" And he answered, "Sir, the village to which you are going is my home." The traveler took this man as his guide at once, for he wanted someone who had gone the whole way.

Christ is the only one who can truthfully say, "I am the way, the truth and the life," and he can say it because he has been the whole way.

“GOD’S FELLOW WORKERS”

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Carl Spain The Lord’s church is faced with a tremendous opposition as she seeks to do the will of Christ in a sinful world. She is called to a high calling in a world of low living. She cannot use carnal weapons in contending for “the faith once for all delivered to the saints”. When persecuted she cannot retaliate. She can only pray for those who spitefully use her. While others are depending on false propaganda spoken in hate, she can only rely upon truth spoken in love. While mighty forces that oppose her are depending on their concentrated wealth and political power, she must trust in the living God, and the truth of the gospel as the only “dynamite” that she can lawfully employ against the enemies of righteousness. The apostle Paul said: “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds) ; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). The following scripture is especially comforting to us as we go into all the world under the commission of our Lord:

“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (Romans 8:31-32; Romans 8:35; Romans 8:37).

Two Great Themes In One:

Our subject divides itself naturally into two major considerations: (1) We are God’s Fellow-Workers, and (2) God is our Fellow-worker. There is a work that God has given us to do, but the Lord was careful to remind us that “without me, ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). Paul exclaimed: “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase” (1 Corinthians 3:6). Yes, in everything we are workers together with God, because it is his business.

I. Who Are God’s Fellow Workers?

The little negro boy who named himself “George Washington”, and later fell heir to the name Carver when he was a slave on the Carver plantation, stood one day with a hand full of dirt and another full of peanuts and exclaimed, “Lord, shew me what’s in that dirt; shew me what’s in them peanuts!” To which, as the simple negro would relate it, God answered: “Nigger, you got a brain; you find out!” A beautiful garden of flowers and vegetables is a reflection of the partnership between God and man. God was careful not to do everything for man. In his wisdom he left something for the children to do. A wise parent will leave something for the child to do in order that it may learn the nobility of work. In God’s family unlike many modern families, there is a job for

everyone. Jesus said: "My Father works, and I work" (John 5:17). He does not reward indolence, nor does he put a premium on laziness by promising salvation to one who is not a faithful steward. 'It has been said that piety is no excuse for stupidity. And we add just here that negative goodness which consists of vices not indulged in, will not justify one who in spiritual and physical laziness leaves the Father's business undone and neglected. The moral and spiritual integrity of the church at Thessalonica was in danger of collapse because many members, in their misdirected zeal for the coming of the Lord, had become idle. Paul said to them: "If any would not work, neither let him eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies" (2 Thessalonians 3:10-11).

People who think of work as a penalty are very busy trying to secure more leisure time. Let us realize that before Adam and Eve had committed the first sin, God had dignified the place of work and attested to its nobility by charging them with the responsibility of dressing and keeping the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15). In the ministrations that are to be performed by the church he was careful to stress the nobility of work and ignominiousness of laziness. For example, look at his instructions concerning the widows to be assisted by the church, in which he warns the church to assist only those widows who were "well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have diligently followed every good work" (1 Timothy 5:10). The Master of us all said: "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing" (Matthew 24:45-46).

He also said: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them" (Revelation 14:13).

Jesus, Our Example to Work:

The Lord Jesus Christ, unhampered by physical fatigue, spends every hour of heaven's fadeless day in busy activity in the interest of his kingdom and the performance of all the duties pertaining to his position as the head of the church. Verily, if an elder or a gospel preacher is kept busy in the work of a single congregation, answering calls for help, looking for lost sheep, feeding the flock, preaching the gospel, think how busy Christ and God must be. From his throne God rules the universe, and from his right hand Christ rules and reigns over the kingdom, with thousands of congregations and hundreds of thousands of Christians, each one asking an audience with the King, placing their problems before him and asking for his help. Not to a single one does he ever say, "I don't have time for you and your little problems." Wherever two or three are gathered in his name he is in their midst. Think of the appointments he must not forget! And wherever his ministers go to preach, he goes along with them. Whenever someone is saved, he must enroll their name in the Book of Life and keep a daily record of their words and deeds. If our small area of activity in the universe can provide work enough and to spare, how busy the Christ must be! And, what do you suppose he thinks about a lazy Christian or a lazy church that folds its hands in a world where so much needs to be done which is within their power to do! Let him speak his own mind: "Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire . . . for I was hungry and you did not give me to eat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not" (Matthew 25:41-43).

How many Christians and how many churches have buried their talent of responsibility and hidden it away under a heap of excuses? To how many of us will Christ say: "Thou wicked and slothful servant!" How many of us will hear our eternal doom sealed when he says to his angels: "Cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness" (Matthew 25:26; Matthew 25:30)? Our duty is to preach the gospel in word and deed, that through precept and example we may work with God in bringing men to repentance, transforming them by the renewing of their minds, that they may prove what is "the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2).

God's Power in Us:

The gospel is God's power to save (Romans 1:16). The exceeding greatness of the power is of God and not of ourselves (2 Corinthians 4:7). But God has called us to the work of taking this transforming power into all the world, to every creature (Mark 16:15). This gospel is the seed of the new birth (1 Peter 1:23-25). Without a new birth no man can enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:5). Hence, brethren, the urgency of the Lord's great commission: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Furthermore, brethren, the above helps us to realize why Paul was in such earnestness of spirit when he warned us not to pervert this gospel, the seed of the new birth, nor to add to or take from it (Galatians 1:8-9; see also Revelation 22:18-19). It is just as dangerous for Christians to pervert the gospel by their lives as it is to pervert it from the pulpit! In either case, it is a perverted gospel and it will not save.

Thus is our job! It starts with the neighbor next door and extends to our neighbor around the world. We must give ourselves to the unsaved within our reach, and we must give our moral and material and spiritual support to fellow Christians who are within reach of others. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen" (Ephesians 3:20-21). The Work of the Ministry:

God's definition of a full-grown man is "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). To achieve this growth in man God has called the church to the great work of teaching. He charged us not only to baptize the nations, but also to "teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20). The church does not use enough hours of each week in this work. Our expensive building facilities go unused too much of the time. But, in addition to such facilities, the work of teaching must be done at home. All the houses where Christians live, with all their rooms, must become an integral part of the Bible School facilities of the church. Each parent must become a teacher, with the kitchen and the living room and the rest of the house as a Christian school where the way of Christ is taught, demonstrated and experienced. Not until the child's first school, the home, is more dedicated to the teaching of God's word—not until then can the church really accomplish the great work of moulding Christian character. The work of the ministry cannot be done by one man in each congregation. God's purpose cannot be achieved except through the effective operation of God's plan. May the Lord deliver us from the narrow concept of the "Ministry" which includes only the preacher, and lead us into the glorious ministry of Ephesians 4:11-13, where "the work of the ministry" is assigned to evangelists, elders and teachers. When an elder enters upon his work of oversight as a shepherd, he enters the ministry ordained of God. The same is true of a teacher who enters the classroom to teach. The Christian ministry must be expanded to the proportions that God first gave it. All the

excitement about Phoebe being a mere “unofficial servant” or a “Deaconess” (Romans 16:1) will subside when we come to understand the meaning of the word “minister” which is here rendered “servant”, and free it from the narrow limits of its popular connotation. The Power of an Idea:

The power of the gospel can be partially explained by a simple recognition of the power of an idea. Though we have never seen an idea, just as we have never seen the soul of man or the life in a grain of corn, and can never see one through the strongest microscope, yet we know what tremendous power 'dwells in an idea. An idea can cause a man who is sitting quietly at home to leap suddenly from his chair and rush out the door and down the street. He just thought of something! But, how it makes him move. An idea can make men happy or miserable. An idea can damn a man or save him. It can bring peace on earth and good-will to men, or it can turn this earth into a scene of bloody strife. “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). Communist Russia seeks to control the mind of her people in order to achieve through them certain goals. An idea in the mind of a Hitler caused world conflagration. But the church believes that a good idea is as powerful as a bad one. God taught us to believe this. A word is the means of conveying an idea. When the word of God became flesh (John 1:14) in Bethlehem, a transforming and redeeming idea was sent forth into the world. Through the word God speaks to us, conveying his thoughts to us, that we may be changed into his likeness (2 Corinthians 3:18). Jesus is God's word, and through him he speaks to us in these last days (Hebrews 1:2). We challenge all Christians to become teachers, so that our Lord Jesus Christ may rule and reign in the hearts and lives of men. Take your choice. Our only other alternative is to leave education to the forces of anti-Christ, and they will use it to lead this world to deeper ruin and damnation.

I. Build A Highway for the Lord:

The church today needs to catch more of the spirit of those who heard John the Baptist crying in the wilderness: “Make ye ready the way of the Lord”(Luke 3:3-6). He was calling them to the big job of building a highway for Christ. There are valleys to be filled, mountains to be moved, crooked ways to be made straight, and rough ways made smooth; in fact all that road building in a wild place demands. Of course, his figure is easily understood. Constructing a highway for Jesus, whereby all men may see his salvation, is a tremendous project in a wild world like this, where the moral and spiritual condition of the masses is in such a wild and rugged state. The moral and religious conditions that prevailed in John's day made it a dangerously insecure world in which to live. And building such a highway called for courage and faith to remove mountains, pulling down high places and filling up the low places. But the response of the people was good (Luke 3:10-14). When the multitudes heard John they said: “What must we do, then?” When the soldiers and tax gatherers heard him they cried the same. And they were told what they could do in the construction of this smooth, straight and level highway of salvation. “If you have two coats, and your neighbor has none, give him one of yours!” Bring down the high place and fill up the low place! Again to the publicans guilty of many moral crimes: “Extort no more than that which is appointed you.” Straighten up that which is crooked. Again to the soldiers: “Extort from no man by violence, neither accuse anyone wrongfully; and be content with your wages.” Make the rough way smooth. Yes, dear neighbor, there is something we can do in this great work of the salvation of man. God has provided us with gospel dynamite to do the work. With all our very appropriate emphasis on the great question, “What Must I Do To Be Saved?”, we must also, as noble workmen, ask “What Must We Do, Then?” Too many people are interested in being saved, or

riding along the highway of the Lord in peace and security to see his salvation. But, too few are interested in a job on the construction gang! They are looking in vain for salvation by faith apart from work. To become a Christian means to become God's fellow worker.

II. God is Our Fellow-Worker

With all our emphasis on the work which has been assigned to us, let us not forget that God is with us. In hours of human extremity God finds his glorious opportunity for helping those who are helping him.

We do not serve a mere mythical Santa Claus god, who comes down our chimneys once a year to fill our baskets. Nor do we serve a goddess like Athena who sits dumb and helpless in an overcrowded room in the Parthenon. Democracy is not our god, because a majority can be wrong. We do not serve the god "Science" nor the god, "Welfare State". Our God is not a fallible Roman Pontiff.

Elijah! How proudly the man Elijah must have worn that name. Every time people called his name they said: "Jehovah is my God!" Every time he

signed his name he wrote: "Jehovah is my God!" And Christians wear the name "Christian" in joyful salute to the Son of God. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is our God and Father! And, as amazing as it may seem, we are h'is children. It should cause us to burst into sermon and song, and say with John: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God. And such we are" (1 John 3:1) He has not forsaken his children nor will he forsake them. He is not far from any one of us. No matter where we may go in this big world, whether into the depths or heights, through light or darkness, behold our God is there! Let us sing with Israel's sweet singer, "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shalt thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me" (Psalms 139:9-11).

Let us find comfort in the truth that our God is light, love and spirit, and that he is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient! The God of all power, all knowledge, who fills the universe with his presence, (has done and will do for us all that Fatherhood requires that he do for his children. Abraham, in the hour when human faith took him as far as human strength and will could go, said, "God will provide!"

Each of us can enjoy his presence and providential care no matter where we may be on the earth. How can God be near to so many? Give three million people a compass each, containing that magnetized piece of steel, and scatter them throughout the world. Every compass will point due north, each one sustaining the same relationship to one spot on the earth. Is it strange, then, that even though Christians be scattered all over the earth, each one can enjoy the same relationship with, the one God? Our God Is Able:

Long ago and far away, there were three men who stood against all the powder of pagan religion and the strength of political dictatorship. They stood erect on the plains, while all others bowed to the graven image. They were very conspicuous as they stood there. Many Christians do not like to be conspicuous in their discipleship, especially if there is danger of persecution or ridicule. But

these old heroes, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, put us to shame with the strength of their trust in God. When threatened with death in a fiery furnace made seven times hotter in the bitter wrath of their accusers, they calmly replied: "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us!" (Daniel 3:17). Whereupon they were pushed into the fiery furnace. But, when the enemy looked through the furnace door, they saw not three, but four! God was with the Hebrews in their hour of fiery trial. This dramatic event may serve as a figure or parable for us in the Christian age. Simon Peter spoke of the fiery trials that would come upon Christians in a wicked world (1 Peter 4:12). The world still has its methods of putting Christians through fiery tests: ridicule, sarcasm, physical pain, and mental agony. But we can know that Christ is with us when the world throws us into the fiery furnace of persecuting wrath. He will not forsake us. With God All Things Are Possible :

Often we hear skeptics say: "That is impossible. It cannot be done. God can't do it, even if there is a God." Most of them pride themselves in their "scientific" attitude. Yet, if their logic is erroneous, how can they be scientific? Scientifically, every conclusion must be backed by logical thinking, consisting of: major premise, minor premise, and conclusion. For example: The Jews concluded that Jesus was not the Christ. Here was their logic:

Major premise: The Christ is to be from Bethlehem.

Minor premise: This Jesus is from Nazareth.

Conclusion: Therefore, he is not the Christ.

It is easy to see why their conclusion was wrong: Their minor premise betrayed their ignorance of his birth in Bethlehem. Again, some reached the same conclusion, based on the following logic:

Major premise: The Christ is not to be from Galilee.

Minor premise: This Jesus is from Galilee.

Conclusion: Therefore, he is not the Christ.

Again, we see that their conclusion was wrong, this time because their major premise shows an ignorance of the Messianic teaching of the Old Testament. Now, all of that to say this: What is the logic of one who dogmatically affirms the conclusion: "That is impossible!" or "God can't do that!" Here it is:

Major premise: All things are done by natural laws.

Minor premise: We know all the natural laws.

Conclusion: Therefore, that is impossible for man or God. A ridiculous minor premise? Yes, indeed! But the conclusion is impossible until one can say that he has discovered them all. Is there any fool so blatant in his egotism that he will affirm the minor premise? And, is there alive one so smart as to be able to do so? How can any man say what God can do or can't do, even if he does all things through natural laws, unless we can first say that we have learned all the natural laws at God's command? God has laws other than laws of nature. They do not necessarily violate each other. The God of the natural and the God of the spiritual is one God. Can God Answer Prayer? If So, How? Many people will not pray to God for help until they figure out just how God can do it if he decides to do so. This is the kind of reasoning that shipwrecks one's faith. Jesus told of the

farmer who planted the seed and watched it grow, but he knew not how! If we can plant corn in order to reap grain for bread without knowing how it grows, why can we not pray for divine help, without having to know how God will be able to do it?

How can a Christian pray to God if he binds God to the narrow powers and limitations of man's knowledge and power? Would his answering make it necessary for him to "violate" or "suspend" natural laws? Of course not. We do not have to "violate" or "suspend" the law of gravity to keep an expensive watch from falling to the floor. God might easily, according to superhuman knowledge and power, do something we cannot do, without violating any law he has made. The purely rational approach to matters of faith often results in complete frustration. Suffice it to say that God has commanded us, even invited us, to bring our requests to him, with the promise that he will answer in harmony with his righteous will and his love for us in giving us what is best. God will not violate his revealed will to answer our prayer. Neither will he violate his unrevealed will! (See Deuteronomy 29:29.) Our prayer must be according to his will. He has revealed all of his will for us, but he has not revealed all of his will for himself. He has limited himself in many things. He has left himself free in many other things. Ours is to pray in faith. If our request is not in harmony with his will, revealed and unrevealed, we need not expect him to, nor should we want him to answer it according to our will or wish. Our security is in the fact that God knows the present and the future, and he will answer our prayer in the way that is eternally best for us. We can believe this. We need not know all the questions of "how". Christians accept many facts by faith, even though they do not know "how", or even "why". If God says so, that is reason enough to believe it and trust it (Romans 10:17).

We marvel at man's knowledge and power and creative genius when we see a jet propelled plane carry a hundred people rapidly and noisily through the sky, while the passengers themselves eat and sleep and play or work in pressurized comfort. True, they are in danger of death by swift destruction. Yet we do not stand in awe as we should of God's power and knowledge, when he sends the earth through space at a speed of 65,000 miles an hour, spinning like a huge "flying saucer" at the rate of 1,000 miles an hour, with some 3,000,000,000 passengers on board, eating, sleeping, working and playing in pressurized comfort. There is no fear of collision as it slips silently through space, always on its course, always on time! Our God is so able!

We can go to the phone in this building and talk to a friend in South America. If the straight lines are busy, we can just as easily send our message through an amazing gadget in New York, where it will be fired across to England, where its diminished strength is boosted again, and fired across to South America, to a little village somewhere. And when our friend says "hello", we hear him the split second he says it! Not by our power, but by the power of God which we have just learned to control for our benefit. Why should we find it so hard to believe that we can speak to God with the assurance that he can hear us?

We can talk to men in distant places by aiming our messages at the moon. It is possible to change the course of history in such a way and open doors of opportunity in world affairs. Why, then, do we find it so hard to believe that a Christian can, in harmony with God's will, bring things to pass in distant places by way of the throne room of the universe? We cannot do this by our power and knowledge, but by the power and knowledge of the God of all grace. If God should answer our prayer, it would not become us to boast of our achievement. Simon Peter, in working special

miracles as an Apostle of the Lamb, was careful to give God the glory in these words: “Why look ye so intently upon us as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man to walk” (Acts 3:12-13). Not until we reach the measure of God’s stature in knowledge and power can we say what God can or cannot do. He has limited himself in many matters pertaining to human life and human affairs on earth. But, wherein he has not limited himself, we do not claim the power to limit him. Rather, we depend upon his superior power and knowledge, just as our children depend on us for providential help beyond their strength and wisdom.

Paul wrote from Rome to distant Ephesus requesting that the church pray for him (Ephesians 6:19). This was not requested in order to produce a desired psychological effect in their heart and life, nor merely to obey a command of God. Paul needed God’s help in his efforts to spread the gospel. He urged them to pray to God! The Spirit’s Intercession

Christians are helped of God, not only through the intercession of fellow saints (James 5:16; 1 John 5:16), and the intercession of Christ our advocate (1 John 2:1), but also through the constant and abiding intercession of the Holy Spirit. In Romans 8:26-28, we read the following words of comfort: “And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered; and he that search- eth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose.”

We must never forget that we are begotten of the Holy Spirit in the new birth (John 3:5). Just as Isaac was begotten of Abraham through a fleshly seed according to the flesh, even so we have been begotten of the Holy Spirit in a spiritual re-birth through an incorruptible spiritual seed which is the word of the gospel which was preached to us (1 Peter 1:23-25; 1 Corinthians 4:15; John 1:13). As surely as Isaac could say that he was begotten of Abraham, Christians can say that they are begotten of the Holy Spirit. Our relationship to the Spirit as children of God is as real and vital and as personal in a spiritual way as was that of father and son in a physical way.

All of this explains the abiding concern of the Spirit for Christians. Only through the word did he operate in making us children of God. This is as direct as his operation will ever be—only through the word. But, after we have become Christians, we enjoy the providential benefits of his intercession, a thing which is between the Spirit and God in words and groanings that are unrevealed to us and unknown by us. Nevertheless, our future happiness depends greatly upon the outcome of these deliberations in our behalf.

Parents provide for their children in many ways not realized nor fully understood by the children themselves. While they are asleep, or at play, or busy at work mother and father often stay awake and spend many hours in planning how they can best provide for their children for the present and for the future. Things work together for good for their children as the result of this prayerful planning. Even if the children overhear the conversation, they cannot fully understand all that their parents know so well. Many of us are beginning to realize that our present happy estate, with its abundant spiritual and material blessings, reflects much planning in our behalf back in days when we were too small to appreciate what our parents were doing for our good. When we stand serene in our heavenly home, we shall know more fully how much the Spirit’s intercessions with the Father have given to us providential blessings without which we would have been helplessly lost in

the confusion of our own mistakes and poor judgment. The church of Christ must teach America and all the world the meaning of the words on our money: "In God we trust." Especially in this day when we, like others, are beginning to trust more in the feeble security that the uncertain value of money can provide.

Babel or Pentecost?

Long ago on the plains of Shinar (Genesis 11) God's children met to do great things: to build a name for themselves and make of themselves a great nation by building a tower to the heavens. They did not concern themselves with God's will for their life on earth, nor did they seek his guidance and help in this matter. They were working at cross-purposes with God. God confused their language and defeated their plan and purpose. Men cannot break God's laws. They can only break themselves in the effort.

Centuries later a small band of disciples spent many days in prayer, waiting to receive the leadership of his Spirit and the divine help he could so ably give them (Acts 1). They wanted his will done on earth as in heaven. They wanted to magnify his name and that of his only begotten Son. They were willing to be sacrificed for the glory of God and the accomplishment of his eternal purpose. They wanted to work with God and Christ in the building of that great spiritual building called the church (Matthew 16:18), that man might truly have the hope of reaching heaven. This little band could not rely upon their political influence, academic achievements and financial wealth. These are the things we trust in so much as we seek to do our part of the Lord's work. God help us to use our educational advantages, our "political pull", and our financial resources for his glory and honor. But may he deliver us from trusting in such things to guarantee victory.

God helped those disciples because they were doing his will. He removed the language barrier for their sake and the sake of the work they were trying to do which he had asked them to do (Acts 2). With all our new devices and helps in doing the Lord's work, let us not forget to pray and seek his help. If what we are doing is something we cannot honestly pray to him about, or something that he would be unwilling to endorse and to help, then, chances are, we ought to leave it alone and occupy our energies with things he has promised to bless.

"Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and grace to help us in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

Conclusion:

Our God has a purpose, and a plan to achieve it. He has revealed the purpose and the plan to us and has called us to work with him. He has not left it all to us, but he has placed upon our hearts and in our hands that part which he judged wise for us to do. In love for him because of the gift of his only Son, let us do with our might what hands have been given to do.

". . . to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:10-11).

EXAMPLES OF WORKING CHURCHES I HAVE KNOWN

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Willard Collins The growth of the church during the past 60 years has been amazing. During* the latter part of the life of the beloved L. S. White, he told some of his friends in middle Tennessee that when he preached for the church in Gallatin, Tennessee, and Brother Jesse P. Sewell was preaching for the Pearl and Bryan congregation in Dallas, Texas, that so far as he knew they were the only two preachers in the brotherhood, south of the Ohio River from coast to coast, doing full-time local work with one congregation. There may have been one or two more full-time preachers not known to Brother White, but these facts are mentioned to show how much the church has grown during the past half century.

Other Examples of Growth

Sister J. E. Acuff of Nashville, Tennessee, who is attending this present lecture series, remembers as a small girl how digression divided the downtown con-gregation in Nashville and a handful of faithful brethren went to south Nashville and started the old College Street Church. There were only two other congregations meeting in Nashville then. Now there are some 56 in the city and 101 in Davidson County.

Think of the growth of the church of the Lord in this lady's lifetime!

Brother John T. Lewis, who is still an active gospel preacher in Birmingham, Alabama, wrote on January 24, this year, that when he went to that Alabama city years ago there were 24 members meeting in Fox's Hall. Brother Lewis at that time was the only gospel preacher giving all of his time to preaching within 100 miles of Birmingham. The congregation paid him \$207.90 one year, \$185.30 another and finally in one six-year period he received \$6,000. But the twenty-fourth congregation has just been started in the Birmingham district—this in one lifetime.

James E. Laird, who now lives in Rockmart, Georgia, has been preaching forty-seven years. He remembers when the members of the church in Memphis could get on one elevator at the same time. He remembers when there was only one congregation in Dallas and only one in Houston. Think what has happened in these forty-seven years!

O.D. Bearden and his wife began conducting services in their living room in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1905. Now just 48 years later there are 15 congregations in that city.

These are but indications of what has been happening across the southern part of this nation in the past 60 years. From Gallatin to Lubbock

May we take a mental journey tonight from Gallatin, Tennessee, where Brother L. S. White formerly preached, to Lubbock in West Texas. Nashville and Davidson County have been mentioned with their 101 congregations. From Nashville to Lubbock you can find hundreds of churches with scores

of full-time gospel preachers giving their full time to the lord's work. In Memphis there is Union Avenue with 1,000 members and with an average weekly contribution in 1952 of \$1,584.00. We pause on this mental journey at Little Rock at Sixth and Izard and find a church of 967 members with a contribution of \$1300 per Sunday. At Skillman Avenue in Dallas we find a beautiful new building, a congregation where there were 252 responses in 1952 and an average of \$2,236.90 per Sunday. In Fort Worth we think of the Polytechnic church which is enlarging its auditorium to seat 1400. There they have over 600 studying the Bible every Sunday morning and a contribution of \$65,894.62 for 1952. Our journey ends in Lubbock where we find an auditorium which seats 2100, a Sunday School attendance of 1100 per Sunday and a 1953 budget for \$200, 200. These are but a handful of the many faithful congregations which are at work along the way. Perhaps this surpasses the fondest dreams of the late L. S. White as he traveled from Tennessee to Texas in the distant past.

Church Must Be Aggressive

The church was aggressive in the New Testament period. Members looked for opportunities. In Acts 11:29 Luke tells of the disciples in Antioch who decided to send aid unto the brethren in Judea. It seems they rejoiced in such work.

Christianity is unique in that it takes the initiative in seeking to save the lost. Christians must be alert, aggressive and enthusiastic.

Disciples of Christ should have vision and determination to accomplish great things for Jesus who said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). A congregation of God's family should be aggressive in personal evangelism. Even when the church had the apostles to preach, the members did not depend entirely upon their public proclamation of the gospel because Luke says, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). In Dallas the Cedar Crest congregation is -an example of what can be done through an energetic program of personal evangelism. Frank J. Dunn, who preaches for the Peak and East Side church in that city wrote in his church bulletin on January 11, 1953, "Cedar Crest, here in Dallas, where Brother Fred Bandy works, has the most amazing record I have read."

Since the beginning of that church five years ago there have been 1218 responses, including 572 baptisms. Of those baptized, 265 were former members of the Baptist church, 223 had never been affiliated with any religious body, 81 were children who had reached the age of accountability and the others were members of various churches.

Centers in Personal Work

In describing the work at Cedar Crest Fred Bandy wrote, "As to our program of work, it centers around personal work. We also try to have an active teaching program. One Sunday not long ago we had 15 men out filling appointments." It is my understanding that Brother Bandy spends as much as eight hours in a day teaching from house to house. This gospel preacher says, "We believe in impressing our people over and over of the need for work and service." When C. E. McGaughey was preaching in Washington, D. C. a plan of personal work was devised which was very effective. This plan included sources for new contacts and a follow-up work program.

New Contacts

I. Source

A. Visitor's register.

1. Have qualified greeters at door to welcome all visitors.
2. Have membership taught to introduce guests and have them to sign guest

(It is tragic for visitors to attend and no name be secured.)

B. Have members to turn in names of people who might be prospects.

C. Get names of new-comers in city from Chamber of Commerce, Utilities or whatever source is available.

D. Keep a record of all visitors in Bible School.

E. Secure names of all students in Bible School who are not members.

F. Keep a record of all people in different families of the church who are not members.

G. Funerals preached give excellent contacts with non-members.

H. Marriages give names of many new prospects.

II. How worked.

A. All visitors should be written a personal letter.

B. All visitors should be personally contacted by local evangelist or members.

C. All prospects should be visited.

D. All names should be filed.

E. The file should be kept alive and worked.

F. Reports should be made by those who visit and information recorded.

G. Efforts should be made to win prospects by bringing him to services, to Bible classes, by private teaching, by giving literature and by inviting into homes for building up friendship.

H. Never give up.

Membership and Work

I. All membership divided into groups, number of groups dependent on size of congregation.

A. Elder over each group.

B. Deacon to assist elder.

C. Teachers and supervisors to assist elder and deacon.

II. Purposes:

- A. To become acquainted with each other and help each other.
 - B. To study some particular lesson, conducted at the convenience of the group.
1. To look after the sick.
 2. To give special attention to prospects.
 3. To give attention to delinquent members.
 4. To carry emblems to the sick.
 5. To send packages to those in service.
 6. To look after the needy.
 7. To do any other of the many duties found in churches.

Other fine examples of churches at work in personal evangelism include the Harris and Irving Church in San Angelo, Texas, the Nineteenth and Herring congregation in Waco, the Twelfth and Drexel and Culbertson Heights churches in Oklahoma City. In San Angelo, 250 men and women have pledged two hours per week for church visitation. In 1952 there were 308 responses to the invitation. In Waco the Nineteenth and Herring Church has a full program for contacting prospects. It includes the following according to Max Neel, the preacher for them.

“We have access to a Newcomer’s List furnishing names of almost every prospect that comes to our city. We have a folder that is left with every newcomer in our section of the city, regardless of religious affiliation. This - is followed by a personal letter to all whom we deem as prospects. This usually is followed by a call, either by someone in that zone or myself. Our zone work is set up in such a manner that the ladies during some months have made as many as 600 personal contacts. A card file is made of prospects, a copy is handed to the ladies and also a card that is left if they do not find the prospect at home.

“We write personal letters to new parents, as we 'have access to this information. We also write letters of sympathy to those in the city who have lost loved ones. This information is obtained through the newspapers.

“We have been planning for some time to begin a Visitation program using our younger married couples, with two couples going together at night and visiting prospects or delinquent members.

“The ladies in their various zones frequently will have a Coffee, inviting several of their neighbors for discussion and fellowship in connection with getting them interested in the church.

“We have Christian Fellowship cards that are given to various members with a name of a new member for whom they assume responsibility over a period of six months. They are to encourage them in regular attendance, etc.

“We have a very fine chorus that frequently goes to the hospital, old folks’ home and to shut-ins to sing.”

More Planning Needed

Elders should have the initiative to make plans for the future in local congregations. Jesus gave his followers a big job to do in trying to convert the entire world to Christianity in each generation. In San Angelo, Texas, a group of elders have the foresight to be planning a ten-year program for the church there. The elders of the Broadway Church in Lubbock, Texas, recently met 20 hours in one week in planning for the Lord's work. Norvel Young has aptly suggested that if the directors of a bank need to meet every morning to plan for the business then elders of a local congregation certainly need to meet more often than once a month.

Out of the planning in Lubbock has come a four page attractive folder showing, The Church at Work in 1953. It includes page one, a letter from the elders to the members, on pages two and three a diagram of what the church plans to do this year, a message on giving, and a challenge for more work written by the preacher. The budget is listed on page four. In Lewisburg, Tennessee, the elders of the Church Street Church prepare an annual calendar which is given to each member with the activities of that local congregation for a year. The services and other activities are listed by the week and month. For example during May the 1953 calendar attractively advertises the Vacation Bible School as well as all the regular services. In June a mission effort that church is helping with in Maine is discussed. July lists all the meetings in the congregations of the entire county. The church in Burbank, California, publishes an annual report of what was done in the past year and the plans for the New Year. It is an attractive mimeographed booklet of 40 to 50 pages.

Working in the Sunday School

Since 80 to 85 per cent of the ones baptized in many congregations are first taught in the Sunday morning Bible School this work is having more attention focused upon it. There are two congregations which will serve as our examples in this phase of the work; Church Street in Lewisburg with an average of 700 per Sunday and Broadway in Lubbock with an attendance now of around 1100 per Sunday.

There is one word which accounts for the growth of the Sunday School in these two places—work. Both churches have a full-time man helping in this work besides the elders and the regular preacher. More and more congregations are employing a person to give time to the educational program of the church.

It is interesting that the preachers for these churches left their native sections of the nation to preach. Avis Wiggins, a native of New Mexico, moved to Lewisburg, in middle Tennessee, and Norvel Young left middle Tennessee and came to West Texas, a place very near the home of Avis Wiggins.

This plan for pushing the Sunday School has worked for the church in Lewisburg, Tennessee.

I. Methods:

1. Place this work under direct supervision of elders.
 - a. Eliminate a general assembly.
 - (1) Have a devotional in all classes thus putting more people to work.
2. Enlarge facilities—must have room to grow 'if we expect to grow.

3. Give attention to visitors and absentees.
4. Set forth the importance of Bible study.
5. Keep the church informed.
6. Hard work on the part of many members.

Attendance jumped considerably in Lewisburg when the church started a men's class in the local theater.

Here is the plan as outlined by Avis Wiggins:

II. The class downtown:

1. This class began because we need the classroom space at the building.
2. We took one class of men with an average attendance of about 35 to the theater as a beginning point for the class.
3. We advertised the class in the local papers, over the radio and passed out printed invitations.
4. We advertised it purely as a Bible class—no literature, no roll calling (or keeping), no pressure for regular attendance, and no collections. Undenominational.
5. We have had as many as 200 present. Our average attendance has been about 100. Six or eight have been baptized who were attending the class. There are two men who have not missed a class meeting, except for illness, who have never been to church. One day we believe they will come. I suppose about 10% are not members of the church. Many of the men are coming to Sunday School who never came before. The class has an appeal for business men.
6. We have a box of New Testaments and song books at the theater which are used by this class. We provide each man with a Testament to use while he is there.
7. We use the song books for a devotional period of three songs and a prayer before we begin each morning.

Growth in Lubbock

Bible school growth at the Broadway congregation in Lubbock has been outstanding. What is the formula?

1. A group of elders with unusual vision who believe in planning.
2. A full-time worker.
3. Work.

4. Evangelistic fervor upon part of the members.
5. Use of direct mail and other promotional material. This can be obtained by writing Alan Bryan or Norvel Young.
6. A well organized school.
7. Regular meetings of teachers each month. A smaller congregation in Bremen, Georgia, has done a great job in Sunday School. In a six-year period the attendance grew from an average of 68 per Sunday one month to an average of 258 per Sunday in 1952. Howard Carter, who preached for the congregation during this period of growth stressed the assignment of goals with publicity through the church bulletin and a teaching program from the pulpit on the importance of Bible study.

The church bulletin is an effective medium to use as a "pusher" in the local church. C. J. Garner, Madison, Tennessee, is perhaps the father of such publications in the eastern section of the country. His book, *How to Mimeograph a Successful Church Bulletin*, has helped many. With the use of the bulletin he laid the foundation for the great growth of the churches in Old Hickory and Madison, Tennessee. After 25 years of experience he believes it is a better "news medium" than a "teaching medium" and that it should be mailed and delivered during the week before the Sunday services. Of course, it is the gospel which changes people. This is the one message of salvation. Whatever the method, the loyal congregation is teaching the gospel 'in order to save souls.

Looking Ahead to the Meeting

A gospel meeting is an effective way to harvest souls. Nothing gives more enthusiasm to a local congregation than a great harvest of souls during a well- planned and inspiring gospel meeting. Such a meeting took place in Old Hickory, Tennessee, in 1949 but the elders and the local preacher really began work on this effort two years before. In this 12 day meeting 111 were baptized and 55 were restored.

Here are some specific steps which were taken before the meeting, according to Rufus Clifford, who was then the local preacher at Old Hickory.

1. Two years before this meeting the church arranged a three months course on "Personal Evangelism."

Each, pupil was given a copy of C. J. Sharp's book on the subject. The average attendance during this course was 478.

2. In 1948 a course entitled "Examples of Conversions" was taught in all the classes from the fifth grade

up for three months.

3. During 1949 for two months before the meeting the local evangelist preached on "How to Do Personal

Work." Sunday School teachers were assigned to talk with members of their classes about obeying the gospel.

4. A personal worker's campaign was started two months before the meeting with a long list of prospects

being visited by the members of the congregation.

During and after so much personal work the gospel can be preached and there can be a great harvest. Brother Clifford sums up his observations by saying "Gathering the harvest during a meeting depends in a large measure upon the preacher—style, manner, type of sermons and attitude."

But behind all of this effort there is the example of Christianity as practiced in the local congregation and the power which is generated by gospel preaching and singing in the spirit of love for lost souls. The gospel is the power. It thrills me tonight to be able to reach into a so-called mission field and inspire you with an example of a working church.

Church in Frankfurt

Otis Gatewood writes of a working church in Frankfurt, Germany, "there are more than fifty Bible classes taught in this building every week. This includes the teaching of practically 150 children which are brought in buses from the Bornheim section of Frankfurt every Sunday at 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. In addition to this, of course, you know that we are having a daily Bible school here in which approximately 25 young men and women are taught the Bible daily. Since coming to Germany, approximately 20 native German boys have been prepared to give their full time to the gospel preaching of Christ. Most of them have attended our daily Bible school here in Frankfurt. The school is not conducted as the Christian colleges in America but is part of the work of the church, and we teach only religious subjects. If any of the students desire to take secular subjects, they go to the university of Frankfurt which is just across the street from our building. Several of them are taking special courses in the university and several of the university students are taking courses in Bible with us. In addition to this school, we have a daily kindergarten here which has just started and at the present time only eight children are enrolled of preschool age. However, already two of the mothers who have brought children to the kindergarten have been converted. We feel that this will be a good avenue through which to preach the gospel."

Brother Gatewood recommends a weekly work evening in the local church as the West End Church in Frankfurt is using. He says, "One of the most interesting phases of our work here in Frankfurt in the West End congregation is a work evening. Every Tuesday evening we select certain members of the church which we ask to come together and then go out under our direction to do personal work. In this way, we are able to supervise the work that is done by members of the church. It helps us in contacting many people who would not otherwise be interested in the church. We have about 16 personal workers who engage in this activity every Tuesday evening. It's paying big dividends and I am very much sold on this idea of a work

evening. I feel that it changes the history of any congregation in which it is used, and I would like to recommend it to other congregations."

It is profitable to make specific assignments to the members. The Charlotte Avenue Church in Nashville uses 184 men each month in the work of the church on specific jobs. Each man signs a work card and a committee makes the assignments and records on a master file what is done by

each person. It has really helped the work of that church.

Certainly it is inspiring to think of the growth and activity of these congregations which I have mentioned. However, at this time I think of Haldon Arnold, a young preacher in the mission field of Augusta, Maine. He began there in September 1950 with five present at the first service. The first convert came forward two months later. I heard Brother Arnold tell about this scene during the Lipscomb lectures this past January. He could hardly speak because of emotion. As I heard him talk, with tear-filled eyes, about how 52 had attended a service there, I realized that in our nation there are many such little bands who may be working harder than some big congregations. Maybe in the sight of Almighty God such groups are better examples of working congregations than others I have named. Much sacrifice has preceded the present larger churches. The church is growing because local churches of Christ are interested in reaching the lost. I think of Highland Avenue and the "Herald of Truth" over 241 stations, of the College congregation in Abilene and its training program for young people who will go out across the land, of the Fourteenth and Vine congregation in Abilene and the Newspaper Sermons, and of the Pecos, Texas, church with its fine program of teaching the Latin Americans. I could speak of Central in Houston with its large budget for mission work, of the congregations pushing the work in Germany, Japan, Africa, and Belgium but it can be said today that the church is spreading so rapidly that the sun never sets on local congregations in the kingdom of God. More and more churches are practicing a motto uttered by the late Hall L. Calhoun, "Spend as much away from home as you spend at home."

Dynamo Behind It

Prayer is the dynamo behind this great work. O. D. Bearden, now past his 80th year, told the young preachers at Lipscomb one year ago, "Begin and end each day with prayer." I know a gospel preacher who goes to his office each morning, sometimes by six or six-thirty. Before he begins his work he prays. At first he prayed only about five minutes but now he sometimes talks to God for an hour. Such men are helping turn this nation toward Jesus the Christ, our only hope and the one way of salvation (John 14:6). A few days ago I clipped an article from the Nashville Tennessean. The headline read, "Unbearable, Unthinkable, Unspeakable The Facts May Be!" It told about the horrors of the Hydrogen bomb. This article said, "Under test the H-bomb developed the unexpected and unprecedented power of three to five million tons of TNT." Listen to this sentence, "There is the virtual certainty that the American monopoly of hydrogen bombs cannot endure for very long." Then the authors of the article, Joseph and Stewart Alsop wrote, "It looks like being in an intolerable situation, when two vast competing world systems will both be brandishing this fearful weapon."

What Is Ahead?

Do we stand tonight on the brink of World War III with its devastation or a period of the "golden years" of great growth for the church? I like to think that those in this room can help frame the answer. Doesn't the condition of this world, the love of God for man and the crucifixion of Christ at Calvary make you desire to go home and work like you have never worked before in helping make this world a united one?

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, the symbol of unity and the way of salvation must be placed in the hearts of men through the teaching of the gospel which produces faith and obedience. The Touch

of the Master's Hand

"Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer

Thought it scarcely worth his while

To waste much time on the old violin,

But he held it up with a smile.

"What am I bidden, good folks?" he said;

"Who'll start the bidding for me?" "A dollar! A dollar!" then, "Two!"

"Two dollars! and who'll make it three?"

"Three dollars, once! Three dollars, Twice!

"Going for three?" But, No!

From the room far back, an old gray-haired man

Came forward, and picked up the bow.

Then, wiping the dust from the old violin

And tightening the loose strings,

He played a melody, pure and sweet

As the caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer

In a voice that was quiet and low

Said, "What am I bid for the old violin?"

And he held it up with the bow.

"A thousand dollars! and who'll make it two?

"Two thousand! and who'll make it three?

"Three thousand once! Three thousand twice!

"And . . . Going . . . and Gone!" said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,

"We do not quite understand

"What changed its worth."

Swift came the reply,

"The touch of the master's hand."

And many a man with life out of tune,
Who is battered and scarred with sin
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd,
Much like the old violin.

A mess of pottage, a glass of wine,
A game,—He travels on.

He's going once! He's going twice!

He's going—and almost gone!

But the Master comes! and the foolish crowd

Never can quite understand

The worth of a soul, and the change that's wrought

By the touch of the Master's Hand!

—Anonymous May you dedicate your life in teaching others what the Touch of The Master's Hand
can mean to them.

WHAT GOD HAS DONE IN FRANCE

WHAT GOD HAS DONE IN FRANCE WHAT GOD HAS DONE IN FRANCE

Maurice C. Hall

Picture of France

I wish that with words, I could paint you a picture of “outer spiritual darkness”; could bring utter blackness before your eyes; could cause the chains of religious ignorance to echo in that blackness; then you would know the spiritual condition of France. Then I wish I could crowd a mighty company of 50,000,000 souls into that picture, and have all these lost and depraved souls plead for help to remove the chains; beg for the key that would unlock their shackles; ask for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Tennessee has one church of our Lord for every 2160 people; in Texas there is a New Testament church for every 3060 people, but the country which I come to describe to you and from which I report has one church and one preaching evangelist for every 25,000,000 people. France is a country near the size of Texas but with about four times the population of Texas. .

Brother Melvin Anderson and I went to France in 1949. We knew something of the problems that would confront us. The country was 98% Catholic, yet only 29 % of the Catholics were practicing; it was largely pagan and very immoral. As we approached France we felt greatly the task that was ours, and we recognized also that more workers were needed for France, for two workers could never sow that great land in gospel seeds. I wrote Brother Owen Aikin of the need and he came in February, 1951 to join us. There were some American embassy and army people there. I wish I had time to say all the personal things that I would like to. I want publicly to express appreciation for all of them.

Finding A Meeting Place A Problem

Our first problem was to find a place to hold public services. During several months we met in a room at 84 Rue de Grenelle, which we could rent for one hour on Sunday mornings. The management moved us from time to time to hold parties or dances in our room, but several valuable acquaintances and good people were met during this period, and before we left this address, three had been baptized into Christ. The change was made in June 1950, to 11 Rue des Martyrs, Paris 9, where we could have permanent quarters with the possibility of teaching classes any hour of the day or night.

Present Meeting Place

In some respects our present meeting place is very undesirable. It is located between two red light-districts, about three blocks from the “Folies Bergire,” notorious nudist show and center of lasciviousness, and only four blocks from “Pigalle” of World-wide infamy. An American sister, of French nationality, was shocked when she visited the services in Paris, to find the room in such a

location. We could do no better with the funds available.

Immorality A Problem

France is notorious for its immorality. Unofficially it is estimated that 500,000 couples are residing in open, flagrant adultery in the city of Paris alone. Sometimes one sees fifteen to twenty fine appearing young women standing on the same street corner trying to entice men into wickedness. Oftentimes they chide and tease one who will not accept their propositions. We have had to deal with this problem within the church by withdrawal; seven cases have come up for disciplinary action.

Customs Extremely Difficult

We are hoping to find preachers to help us in the French work. I tell you of physical conditions there, not to discourage you, but to educate you to what may be expected. Upon arrival in France, we were disappointed to find that bathroom facilities were almost non-existent. During the past 16 months, we lived in a French house where there was no bath, and we shared the half-bath with a French family of three. We had only one bedroom for the four of us. These accommodations cost us nearly \$75 monthly.

Food was an item of change for us, too. The French are known for their very excellent cuisine, but certain items were very different from that to which we had been accustomed. Practically no dry cereals were available, corn-meal was not obtainable, canned foods, to which one must resort in winter, were expensive and of little variety. Green beans cost \$.85 per can, pineapple, \$1.60 a can, and a can of sour-kraut and weiners cost \$1. Bed sheets, of heavier quality than our American ones, were \$21 each, and gasoline was \$.65 per gallon. I am speaking in American dollars, not French francs. Yet someone has feared that the A-mericans in France were getting rich and living in luxury, on support ranging from \$240 to \$350 monthly-

One must learn in France to accommodate his diet to that of the Frenchman. I have learned to eat the plain, ordinary snails which the French love and serve in season as a delicacy. Paul teaches that we ought to eat such foods in silence. We did so, to the best of our ability, though we could not completely control the contortions of our stomachs. In the same meal in which I was introduced to snails, I engaged six live oysters in a battle to the death; yet the French people would not think of eating a dead oyster, for fear it would make them sick. After these six live oysters, I had a length of scaly, smoked eel, and a piece of a two pound roast beef that had been "heated", not cooked, the entire amount of five minutes. All these "customs" were appreciated to our fullest ability, and then we tried to teach the people the love of God as expressed in the gift of his son.

Progress

In November, 1949, when Brother Melvin Anderson and I arrived in France, there was no church among the French people. When I left, in July 1952, 72 had been converted to Christ. These people are from all walks of life. Some are day laborers, some are foremen in industries, some are home owners, some rather "well-off" from French standards, some very poor. Of the total of 72 converted since June, 1950, I would like to mention four by name. Mr. Messenger, was 86 years old when we met him in Paris. For 86 years he had been a Roman Catholic, but when he heard the truth and we asked him, "What are you going to do about it?" He replied with simple, childlike faith,

“There’s only one thing to do, I must obey it.” The second person that I mention is Julian Enquinos, who has a brother here in A. C. C. Julian studied for 16 years to be a Catholic priest. During a short trip to Spain, I got the address of a man who knew Julian. I wrote him, inviting Julian to come to Paris. He stayed in Paris a short time, went to Germany and studied with our brethren there, came back to Paris, and shortly afterwards was baptized. He attended A. C. C., graduated at the head of his class, then went to California where he 'is studying for a Master’s degree, and helping with the Mexican work in Los Angeles. As a result of his coming to America, Brother Treet and others here arranged for Enrique to come to A. C. C. He, too, is now a Christian. Perhaps these two are the first two Spanish people that have been converted to the Lord in modern times. They can go back to Spain, one day, and teach the gospel to their people.

Let me mention now, Tao Chen Hsia—a native Chinese. He holds an Economic Degree from the Uni-versity in Chunking, a B. A. degree in Economics from the University of Missouri, and a Master’s degree from Columbia. Wanting to hear English spoken, he came to the church services in Paris, and now hopes to go to China as a missionary.

Lastly, I tell you of Epi Bilok. Epi was born in that part of Russia known as the Ukraine. As a child he learned Ukrainian at home and Russian at school. He speaks these languages fluently. When the fear of revolt came in the Ukraine, Epi’s father took him and fled to Poland. They were there several years, and Epi learned Polish, too. When the war came, they were put in a Displaced Person’s camp in Germany. Then his father found work in France. Epi, now 24 years old, will be awarded a B. D. degree from a Protestant school in France this June. He preaches each Sunday in French and teaches the Bible to his Russian and Ukrainian friends in weekly classes. He speaks and even preaches to some Polish people whom we know in the North of France and he speaks excellent German. He reads his New Testament in Greek. You sent the gospel to France, now France is ready to send the gospel to Russia, Spain, and China.

Why Did We Choose France

“Since the world is our field, why did you choose France”, some have asked. I have but one answer. They were the sickest, spiritually, of all the people of the earth that I knew about. Jesus said, “It is not the well, but the sick who have need of a physician.” France surely was the sickest nation in Europe to which we had not gone with the gospel. No one had gone there. We felt we had to go, or face God with these people’s blood on our hands.

In spite of almost unsurmountable difficulties, God has blessed us. We found the people to be very re-ceptive. Never have I been refused entrance to the home of a French person to whom I would go with the Bible. There are people in awful spiritual ignorance. Brother Anderson and Brother Owen Aikin tried unsuccessfully to buy new Testaments in the Roman Catholic University City of Lille, France, a city of 600,000 people.

Description of Present Meeting Place

The meeting place of the church in Paris is at 11 Rue des Martyrs, Paris 9. People, recently visiting Paris, have great difficulty finding the place of worship. As you approach this address, you look back into a long dark corridor. Now my wife tells me that there are rats in that corridor “A foot long.” She’s exaggerating. I’ve never seen one that I thought measured more than 11 inches. This long corridor leads about 60 feet to a small courtyard. There 'is a choice to be made now. A

stairway leads up to the right into an apartment building facing the street, or there is a plate glass window in front of you on which two figures are painted in position of fighters, grappling with each other. A yellow streamer announces this to be the room where one learns the art of attack and defense. By going through this room, one comes into the entrance to the Jui Jitsu Club. He approaches a narrow stairway, and then turns up the staircase to the left, back up another to the right, a third to the left, and a fourth to the right, and he comes to a doorway with a sign on it announcing that this is "L'Eglin dee Christ." On going inside, he turns to the right, passes a skylight on the right, comes to another doorway and enters it, finding a neat room of 21 by 24 feet. This is where the saints gather in France. Needless to say, a building is needed.

People oftentimes ask, "When will the church in France be self supporting?" The church in Paris, established in June, 1950, thus only two and a half years old, now pays all its expenses. It pays the rent on the meeting place, pays for its utilities, its communion supplies, and in addition to that has put aside \$1900 during the past year for its own building fund. This is a lot of money for these French people, and this shows their interest in establishing the cause firmly in France. We can build a small building, large enough to seat 250 people and with two apartments for our American brethren to live in for about \$16,000 We need help to do this. This is one of our greatest needs, but not the greatest.

Greatest Need

The greatest need in France today is for gospel preachers. When people are converted to Christ, they will meet anywhere to worship him who has redeemed them from all "ungodliness." But, the need is great to go, and reach lost, dying people, whole nations, where no preacher has gone.

Oh, that we, as preachers, would but open our eyes to the need of "place making" instead of "place seeking." I heard of a small church in Texas that a young man was leaving where more than 15 letters were received from preachers, looking for the "place." Paul never had troubles finding- a place to preach; he preached where there was a need. No Visa or Persecution Problem

During the past three years, I have been able to obtain visas from the French government without difficulty. This visa is stamped officially with the French seal, permitting me to carry on the work of an evangelist in France for a three year period. Brethren Anderson and Aikin have incurred no difficulty. Two other young men, Donald Daugherty, supported by the church at Danville, Illinois, and Floyd Davis, sent by the Westside Church of Cleburne, Texas, have recently sailed for France. I expect no difficulty for them obtaining proper visas. The lady who issues visas occasionally comes to the home of one of the workers and has dinner there. We are on the best of terms with these people.

Conclusion

We have sought excuse to keep from helping with this kind of work. We have heard it said—"We're building a building and therefore cannot help". Will we cease to preach the gospel to lost souls that we might worship in comfort? We've said, "We're doing all we cany Brethren, you know this is not so. Have you given up one meal, that the gospel might be preached in France? Have you sacrificed one package of cigarettes, one package of gum, one piece of candy, or one Coca-Cola? Have you given up a new automobile or one new television set? Have you gone hungry that the gospel might be preached?

Now, a story and I'm finished. "Back during the days before the second World War, a missionary to China had taken passage on a river boat to go up the river above Canton to see about some families there. As they prepared to cast off anchor, the boat hit the dock, and from his point of vantage of an upper deck, the missionary saw a "Coolie", stumbling against the ropes and falling into the river. He expected the people to call out "man overboard" but no such sound came.

Looking across on the other side of the boat, he saw a Chinese fishing boat, with its nets attached to long poles. He cried out to these fishermen, "Sweep out your nets and catch the man before he drowns." They looked back with blank expressions. Then one said, "How much will you give us?" "I'll give you all I have in my pockets," replied the brother. "How much 'is that," the Chinese demanded. Hurriedly examining the contents of his pockets, he found he had two or three dollars in his pocket. He told them in Cantonese how much it was. They immediately went into action for that represented a lot of money to them. They swept out their nets, and the very first time they brought out the man. They laid him on the deck, but the man was dead. This is what the missionary said: "While we argued about money, a man died." And brethren, while we argue about money, tell ourselves that we can't do anything more, men and women are dying all over the world. In Germany, Japan, Italy, Islands of the Sea, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Spain, South and Central America, Africa, England, India, Russia, and France, men are dying.

There may be individuals in this audience who would like to help in some of the needs of this work. If so, I'll be down here, and you can see me.

Thank you. May God bless you. Pray for us, especially.

WORLD EVANGELISM

WORLD EVANGELISM WORLD EVANGELISM

Claude A. Guild

Introduction

“Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? And how do ye see it now? Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?” (Haggai 2:3). The language of Haggai the prophet is an applicable text to the general theme of our lectureship, “Back to the Old Paths”, and is apropos for my specific assignment, “World Evangelism”. The house addressed in the text was God’s house of the Old Testament, Israel. “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the (house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Je-hovah.” (Jeremiah 31:31-32). We will address our remarks relative to this text to God’s house of the New Testament, the church of God. “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15).

Aged brethren enjoy dreaming dreams or having- reminiscences of days past. They like to recall experiences they had in the church in its first glory. It is my purpose in this address to take you back beyond the days of aged brethren to apostolic times. The church in its first glory is revealed to us in the New Testament. Our principal concern today is, what is the glory of the church today in ‘World Evangelism’ as compared to the first glory of the apostolic church? We will name three reasons why the glory of the New Testament church does not shine forth in all its splendor today like it did in apostolic times in “World Evangelism” The church was a sacrificial church:

“And all .that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and. parted them to all, according as any man had need” (Acts 2:44-45). “And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, Son of exhortation), a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race, having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles’ feet”. (Acts 4:36-37). “And this, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and us through the will of God.” (2 Corinthians 8:5). Love for the brethren and for the cause they had subscribed to, caused the early church to know no bounds to their liberality. The spirit of David in liberality was comparable to the spirit of the New Testament church. “And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will verily buy it of thee at a price; neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto Jehovah my God which cost me nothing”. (2 Samuel 24:24).

David was seeking a threshing floor from Araunah, the Jebusite, to use for an altar for burnt offerings. The Jebusite was responsive to the king’s desire. He offered the threshing floor free of cost, but David said, “Neither will I offer burnt-offerings unto Jehovah my God which cost me nothing”.

In this unselfish expression from David, we see well expressed the attitudes of about four classes of brethren in the church today:

Firstly: "I will not give."

This attitude is in opposition to the song we sing, "I Surrender All"; but this niggardly, selfish attitude is not only expressed in a few individual Christians but is expressed in some congregations in the whole, relative to "World Wide Evangelism". Their response to dying souls to date is, "No, I will not give!" They need a lesson from the man who was to be baptized and the preacher noticed he had his watch in his pocket and suggested that he leave it with someone on the bank. The old fellow said, "No, I have both my watch and pocket-book. I'm baptizing all of it!" He wanted his time and money, as well as himself, to be used for the propagation of the gospel.

Secondly: "I will not give unto the Lord."

Brethren will consume funds given into a common treasury for buddings, air conditioning, church towers, paved parking lots, padded pews, flowers and quilts for quiltings, but when it comes to missions, they say, "Count me out!" They have become selfish in their thinking.

Thirdly: "I will give unto the Lord a sacrifice".

If a gift into the treasury of the Lord is from our abundance, we will give it, but if it calls for sacrifice, we are restrained. The following story has warmed my heart many times: Bro. Lyle Delzell was ministering for the church in Wieser, Idaho. They had about thirty members and were meeting in the basement. Bro. Delzell and the members had exhausted all the funds they could gather to get the building on top of the ground. They had the walls and rafters up. Winter was coming on and they just couldn't see how they could get the roof on the building. A Christian family was traveling from Texas to British Columbia to be with Sister Guild and me in the work there. When they reached Idaho on their long journey, they ran out of funds. They picked prunes to continue their journey. They started toward British Columbia again and the first night found them in Wieser and they stayed with the Delzells. Bro. Delzell related his plight—no funds, no roof and winter drawing near. After they had gone to bed, unknown to Bro. Delzell, this traveler stole into the front room, found Bro. Delzell's Bible, opened it at 1 Corinthians 13, and laid \$60.00 in it.

They had breakfast and when the goodbyes were being said, this traveler told Bro. Delzell how to get the roof on the building. He said, "Bro. Lyle, go into the house and read First Corinthians, thirteenth chapter, and you will see something in it you have never seen before!" You know the rest of the story: they were able to get the roof on their building. These funds came as a sacrifice from prune picking wages.

Fourthly: "I will not give a gift which costs me nothing."

This should be the attitude of every Christian. In the days when the church did nothing, it cost nothing. Today, we are catching a vision of our world wide responsibilities and it is going to cost us something, however, it is regrettable to know that the responsibility of "World Evangelism" is carried by only about ten percent of the members in congregations doing mission work, and only about ten percent of the congregations in the brotherhood are missionary minded. A vast majority of brethren are hitch-hiking on the efforts of others. The first glory of the New Testament church was a sacrificing church.

2. The Apostolic Church had faith in God; less faith in funds:

Although apostolic brethren were liberal, their faith was manifested in God, not money: Luke said, "Now after these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome" (Acts 19:21). Members of the church were carrying the word forth: "They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Today, members of the church are going everywhere, but not preaching the word. (A good many of them are going to the devil!). In business meetings conducted by officers of most congregations, ninety-nine percent of the time is spent talking about funds. You would think we were in the banking business! Some of their time is consumed in preparing a soft way to say "no" to missionary appeals. One percent of their time is used discussing souls.

Preachers are (not in the absolute), looking for guarantees, fixed salaries and vacations with pay. . . If these things are not forthcoming, a good many preachers are not interested. We have very few tent-makers among us today. "And because he was one of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their trade they were tentmakers" (Acts 18:3). There is an unseemly market in the church of Christ today. Churches are playing these shameful markets by bidding for the best talent among us in preaching. Too, preachers are present at this market, selling their talent to the highest bidders. Mission fields cannot compete with this market. A good percentage of this trade is the manifestation of a lack of faith in God and a demonstration of faith in funds.

Brother Chas. Roberson taught in Abilene Christian College when I was a student, "The big preachers in the brotherhood are those who will go where others won't go!" I hope this is still being taught in Abilene Christian College. Paul was a great preacher, but some of the greatest pulpits he ever filled was a whipping post or cell-block in Rome's prison house. An infidel once said, "If I firmly believed, as millions say they do, that the knowledge and practice of Christianity in this life influences destin-ees in another world, Christianity would be to me everything. I would cast aside earthly thoughts and feelings as vanity. Christianity would be my first waking thought and my last image before sleep sank me into unconsciousness.

"I would labor in its cause alone. I would take thought for the morrow and eternity alone. Earthly consequences would never stay my hands or seal my lips. I would esteem one soul gained for heaven worth a lifetime of effort.

"I would go forth to the world and preach Christ in season and out of season, and my text would be, 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' "

3. Passion for Souls; not passiveness:

The reason the apostle Paul could say, "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister" (Colossians 1:23), is because he had a deep passion for lost souls. He found no rest, day or night, until he had done his part in preaching the gospel world-wide. "That I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart; for I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Romans 9:2-3).

We cannot find rest until they are saved in Asia, New Zealand, South America, Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Israel and the islands of the sea! We should pray God that he will grant us time for repentance! The church in its first glory had one congregation, three thousand members and twelve preachers! In forty years, every creature under heaven had heard the gospel. This is the question: How did they do it? The answer is simple; the brethren sacrificed, they had faith in God and a deep passion for the lost. Today, we have one million members, seven thousand congregations, three thousand preachers and maybe ten percent of the world has heard the gospel. We should be ashamed!

Haggai, the prophet, wanted Israel to come to re-pentance. He entreated them, saying, "Be strong, all ye people of the land, saith Jehovah, and work; for I am with you, saith Jehovah of hosts" (Haggai 2:4).

God has promised to be with us if we will be strong and work for him (Matthew 28:20). It is my prayer that God will stay the day of retribution until we have made an honest effort to evangelize the world!

“IF GOD BE FOR US”

“IF GOD BE FOR US”

“IF GOD BE FOR US”

Everett Ferguson

It was with a mixture of pride and humility that I accepted the invitation to speak on this occasion—pride, because of the great responsibilities attendant with such an opportunity as this. I pray the Lord that the things said will help the church to do more work in the future. In Romans the eighth chapter we have many words of comfort and assurance for the Christian. Paul begins that chapter with the statement that there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. He defines the ones in Christ Jesus as those that mind the things of the Spirit and not the things of the flesh. Then he declares that it is by the Spirit of God in our hearts that we cry, “Abba, Father.” Next we are assured that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed. Verse 28 contains the great promise, “We know that to them that love God, all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose.” The climax of the chapter is introduced in verses 31, 32. “If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?” In connection with this verse I always think of Php_4:13, “I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.” Our attention is then challenged with the questions, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect” and “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” In tribulations, in persecutions, in life, in death—“in all these things we are more than conquerors.” My soul rejoices with every reading of this great chapter. And the key thought is expressed in verse 31, “If God be for us.” To that idea we want to direct especial attention. The best commentary on this last paragraph of Romans 8 is the story of the spread of the early church throughout the world. That story provides history with its most thrilling chapter. How a religion whose first adherents were poor and ignorant fishermen captured the imagination of the cultured Greek world, how the followers of a lowly citizen of a despised race preaching a gospel of humility and love overcame the proud Romans, how persecution fanned the fires of evangelism, how the blood of the martyrs became the seed of the church—it’s an amazing story! The early Christians were indeed more than conquerors! Their faith overcame the world; their hope sustained them with blessed promises; and their love carried them to the ends of the earth and melted the hearts of stone. But that chapter of history would never have been written if God had not been with them.

I am here this afternoon to tell you that we can do the same thing today, for the same reason—because God is with us! We can win the world for Christ! Immediately I hear an objection, “But they had miraculous gifts, and we don’t.” In answer to that, I ask you to think with me for a moment concerning what their message was. They taught that a poor Jew (a member of a despised and subject race), rejected by his own people, a Jew crucified (the death reserved for the lowest and vilest of criminals), that such an one was the Son of God! No wonder the cross was a stumbling-block, a scandal to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks. It would be comparable to

my going into the deep South preaching that a Negro (and they would call him a “N Word”) lynched for treason or some such crime was the Son of God and the Savior of the world. Do you think I would get any kind of hearing with a message like that? Preposterous! I would be run out of town, if not stoned like Stephen and Paul. And you think we have a hard time selling the gospel! From a purely human viewpoint, they had to have miracles! But look what we have today that they didn’t have:

(1) We have the benefit of 1900 years in which the leavening influence of the gospel in one form or another

has been at work. Nineteen hundred years have blotted out the scandal of the cross.

(2) We have methods of communication that greatly facilitate the preaching of the gospel—Radio, Television,

and the printing press.

(3) We have means of transportation that can carry us from one continent to another in a matter of hours.

(4) But above all else, as did the early church, we have God on our side!

God has two ways of accomplishing his purposes. He can work through either supernatural laws or natural laws. The former we call miracles, which are a departure from the present ordinary course of nature. They were necessary at one time to certify the revelation. However, God works through the latter, that is, natural laws, now. From our human viewpoint we would consider miracles the greater work. Hence, let me say, “If God can do the greater work, he can do the lesser.” It is a reflection on the power, wisdom, and providence of God to reason that because we do not have miracles we are handicapped in doing the Lord’s work. Let us not doubt that God can work as effectively one way as the other. He can “work all things together for good,” that is he can overrule the affairs of men for the accomplishment of his purposes.

I am sure that I don’t have to convince this audience that God is for us. I am confident that you give at least intellectual assent to that truth. But I may have to say something to make that truth a real, living, vibrant principle of action in your lives. When Avon asked me my subject and I answered, “If God be for us,” he replied, “What I want to know is why is that ‘if’ in there.” And Avon had a point there; this is something about which there is no doubt. In the Greek this is a first class conditional sentence, or one in which the condition is determined as fulfilled. The condition is stated as a fact. It might be rendered, “Since God is for us.” God is, indeed, for us; he spared not his own Son. Since he has done that, is it not reasonable to conclude that he will freely give us all things? Would it not be unreasonable to assume otherwise? Hebrews 13:5 quotes from Deuteronomy 31:6 the promise, “I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee.” As a manifestation of his being with us and for us, God has given us many advantages in doing the work of the church. Although we do not have miracles, when we consider all that God has placed at our disposal for doing his work, we should be ashamed of not having accomplished more. In a few minutes over at the church building Wesley Reagan will be speaking on “What do ye more than others,” emphasizing that with superior blessings we have produced more inferior results than our religious neighbors. Without infringing on his subject, I want us to consider some of the

blessings God has provided for our use, because these things are an essential part of God's being with us. They can all be summed up in the one word—Power. The Christian life is a life of power. 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness, but of power, and love, and discipline."

(1) We have the power of faith. Matthew 17:20—"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Dr. Stanley Whitacre brought me some mustard seeds from Palestine this past summer. They are extremely tiny. I could lose several under my finger nail. But they produce one of the larger plants of Palestine. An equivalent exercise of faith coupled with God's grace enables us to do above our ordinary ability. This verse is modified, of course, by other gospel statements, but too often we modify it until we rob it of its meaning, too often we modify faith until we rob it of its power. In Matthew 13:58 concerning Jesus' ministry around Nazareth we read, "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." The clear implication is that if faith had been present, many mighty works would have been done. Faith produced mighty works. Faith will produce mighty works, though of a different kind, in our own lives. "I can do all things in him (or through (him) that strengtheneth me."

(2) Again, we have the power of prayer. "Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matthew 7:7 f). "The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working" (James 5:16). Prayer moves the hands that move the world. There is power in prayer.

(3) Again, we have the Power of the Word. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth." The gospel we preach is dynamite unto salvation. It is a powerful message we preach. It is powerful to the transforming of the lives of individuals. The only power in the world that will change a sinner into a saint is the power of the gospel. "The weapons of our warfare are not of flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds" (2 Corinthians 10:4). We have in the gospel a message that is the answer to the world's longings. It will satisfy the hopes and dispel the fears of every man. If we believe this, we can sell the gospel. You realize that the good salesman must believe in his product. However, if we don't believe in the power of our message, we just don't know it very well. The gospel will stand every test; it will bring peace and joy to the believer. God has put power into the gospel—powerful motives to its acceptance and the power to sustain us in the Christian warfare. Luke 1:37 teaches, "For no word from God shall be void of power."

(4) Again, we have the power of the Spirit. We have not only the instrument of the Spirit, the Word, but also the Spirit himself. Among the promises associated with baptism in obedience to God is the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; Acts 5:32). Then 1 Corinthians 3:16 states: "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" That indwelling is nothing mysterious, but the presence of the Spirit is still there to guide, strengthen, encourage, and intercede. His role in the life of the Christian is one of the main subjects of Romans 8. And the Spirit is always associated with power in the Bible. Power is one of his most distinguishing attributes. Notice Micah 3:8: "I am full of power by the Spirit of Jehovah, and of judgment and of might to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin." Romans 15:3: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the

Holy Spirit.” Although we may not have the miraculous power of the Spirit, we still partake of his power.

(5) Again, we have the power of Christ. “I am with you always even unto the end of the world,” he assures us. Galatians 2:20 is very meaningful—“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself up for me.” Yes, Christ lives in us; his power radiates through our lives.

(6) Which is all to say, we have the 'power of God. We can all exclaim with Jeremiah, “Ah, Lord Jehovah! behold, thou hast made the heavens and the earth by thy great power and by thine outstretched arm; there is nothing too hard for thee” (Jeremiah 32:17). Surely, if the Creator of the universe is for us, none can be •against us! We do indeed have power to do his will. My brothers and sisters, if God is for us, if the power is with us, we can win the world for Christ! even as the early church did. I know this because if God is for us, certain 'important things follow.

(1) We need not be anxious concerning material things. Hebrews 13:5 —“Be ye free from the love of money; content with such things as ye have: for himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage we say, The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: What shall man do unto me?” Matthew 7:9-11 reads: “Or what man is there of you, who, if his son shall ask bim a loaf, will give him a stone, or if he shall ask for a fish, will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” Knowing that God will provide for our material needs, we can concentrate our energies on the spiritual.

(2) Second, there is no limit to the good that we can do. Remember Paul’s words, “I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me.” I can do all things—that are good, of course. I am convinced that we have set our sights too low in the Lord’s work. “He who builds beneath the stars builds too low.” If we were depending solely on ourselves, we could not do much. But our work is “in him.” He strengthens us for the task. We excuse ourselves by saying that we have so few numbers, so little ability, so little wealth, and so little influence. However, realizing that is [the first step to succeeding, for “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.” But let us not forget that God can use and multiply that which we have. As God used David’s skill with the slingshot to win a great victory for his people in the long- ago, so in all ages God has used insignificant things for great purposes. 2 Corinthians 8:9 is a verse that has grown in meaning with every reading to me, “And he that supplieth seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness.” Our efforts will accomplish much for it is God that “worketh in us both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Php_2:18). The church at work is nothing more than God working through us. And if God works with and through us there is no limit to the amount of good we can do.

(3) Next, if God is for us, there is no doubt about the outcome. Ultimate triumph is assured. Romans 8:37 declares, “We are more than conquerors.” Tribulation, anguish, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword may be ours; but we will conquer. “This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.” The outcome is sure; the victory is certain.

(4) Finally, if God is for us, there is no reason to hold back. The church has done much work. What we have done with so little means should convince us that we can! All that has been accomplished, however, is but a drop in the proverbial bucket. I do not say that to disparage the things done. I thank God daily for the progress of the gospel. But certainly we haven't done enough to be complacent about the situation when the whole continents of Asia and South America have hardly been touched. Many in this audience are college students, young like myself. For their especial benefit I say this—a large measure of the work that has been done in the last decade by way of evangelizing the world has been done by youth. God has often used youth—Joseph, Ruth, Daniel, Timothy—young men and women. If God is for us, we can accomplish much in our youth. There is no reason to hold back. We have the zeal and the energy to give; and our faith and devotion to the letter and the spirit of the word of God can compensate for much that is lacking in wisdom and mature experience. Our text verse also poses the question, “Who can be against us?” Can man? Psalms 118:6 quoted in Hebrews 13:6 asks in return, “Jehovah is on my side (or is my helper) ; I will not fear: What can man do unto me?” We have nothing to fear from man, who can only kill the body. Can Satan of the spiritual hosts of wickedness avail against us? Romans 8:38 f replies, “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Satan's powers are limited. When God is for us, who can be against us?

I'm not saying that winning the world will be easy; the Devil is still powerful. The gospel is demanding and many will think it too hard. But our greatest need is for more faith—the kind of faith that produces activity. I wish to inspire in your hearts and mine a firm conviction that “we can.” One of the prime reasons we haven't done more for the Lord has been a fear of failure—a fear stemming from a feeling of inadequacy. To counteract this, we need a firm belief that God is with us—helping us, blessing us, prospering us. That faith will produce activity —powerful activity—soul saving activity. It will be difficult—but “if God be for us, who can be against us?” If God is for us, we can concentrate on the spiritual knowing that he will care for us; if God is for us, there is no limit to the good we can do; if God is for us, there is no doubt about the outcome, we cannot fail; if God is for us, there is no reason to hold back. The significance of all this is that if God is for us we can take the world for Christ.

I have deliberately saved until now a few words of a more practical nature. Before God is for us, certain things must be true of our lives. God is with, in a providential way, only those who are his people, his children. Children partake of the nature of their parents; so in the spiritual sense, to be children of God we must partake of the divine nature. The two principal qualities of God's nature are holiness and love. “But like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living” (1 Peter 1:15). Holiness carries with it the idea of separation from sin. To be children of God, for God to be with us, we must preserve our body and minds from the stain of sin. Also, “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love” (1 John 4:8). To be partakers of the divine nature we must have that “will to do good” to all men. These ideas of holiness and love undergird the other things essential to claiming God's providential assistance.

First, we must have faith— “for without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing unto God.”

Second, we must be true to the Book— true in faith, doctrine, and practice. Both in word and in manner of life we must follow the divine pattern. 2 John 1:9—“Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God, but he that abideth in the teaching hath both the Father and the Son.” If we ever cease to be true to the Book we will have no more mission in the world, no reason to exist as a distinct body. If we ever cease to be true to the Book, we will fail. In the third place, if God is to be for us, we must be preaching the gospel. The church at work is primarily an evangelistic church. Before Jesus gave the promise of being with us always, he gave the command to “go and make disciples of all the nations.” As long as we are engaged in that work of teaching all nations we can be assured that God through Christ is working with us. But if we are not going and teaching, we have no assurance of the presence of Christ with us. When we cease to preach we begin to die. When the early church thought there were no more worlds to conquer, and sat down to debate the fine points of the-ology, ritualism developed and apostasy set in. When the early church lost its evangelistic fervor, it suffered from a hardening of its theological arteries. There will always be a work for the church to do. When we believe that God is with us, we will not hesitate to hand out that tract or say that word to a friend. Finally, if God is to be for us, we must completely consecrate our lives to him. A half-hearted effort will not do the job. “So because thou art lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth” (Revelation 3:16). We must be on fire for the Lord; we must lay our bodies on the altar of God’s service as a living sacrifice—willing to spend and be spent in behalf of souls. If we build a life of faith, a life true to the book, a life of evangelism, and a life of dedication on the foundation stones of holiness and love—God will be with us, individually and collectively. And God and one man constitute a majority in any battle. Of course, God is himself omnipotent, but he has chosen to work through human instrumentalities. That’s where the one man comes in. He has committed the treasures of the gospel to earthen vessels. A high honor has been bestowed upon man, but with it goes a fearful responsibility. Of ourselves, we would fail. But God has not left us alone. The church at work is nothing more than God working through individuals. And if God performs the work, • we are assured of success. “For it is God who worketh in you to will and to work according to his good pleasure.” For “I can do all things in him that strength- eneth me.” For “if God be for us, who can be against us?”

PREACH THE WORD

PREACH THE WORD PREACH THE WORD

Avon Malone

“I was glad when they said unto me let us go up into the house of the Lord.” These, the words of the psalmist David written in the long ago express my feelings today better than I could in language of my own. Truly I am glad to have this privilege to speak. I am deeply grateful for it. I am glad now to be in the house of the Lord, to worship him, to sing praises to his name, to unburden the petitions of my heart .to him, and to study his word. I trust that you share with me in these feelings and surely now our minds are attuned to and focused on those things which are eternal in their nature and therefore just now we can study a portion of God’s word with a great deal of profit. In 2 Timothy 4 beginning with the first verse we find the valiant apostle Paul writing to Timothy, his son in the gospel, and saying, “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, - out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap unto themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn their ears away from the truth and shall be turned unto fables.” This passage of inspired truth well introduces the theme we want to discuss today—preach the Word. We want to talk not only about the public proclamation of the gospel, but we also want to talk about the various other avenues through which the gospel is preached.

First of all, though, let us consider the preaching of the word in a public way. Right now I am addressing myself to many who are public preachers of the gospel; that is, you teach the truth publicly from a pulpit, and therefore this particular phase of our consideration is very appropriate. In an age when human opinions and doctrines, travelogues, book review, social gospels and political prognostications in the pulpit are gaining public favor and popularity we need, as never before, to hear Paul’s inspired command—“Preach the word.” Not human opinion, creeds or dogmas, not prophecies and current events, not travelogues and book reviews, but Preach the Word. Why is it so important to preach the word? Here’s why. The word is the weapon—the sword of the Holy Spirit. “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit joint and marrow, and discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). Why preach the word? The word is the seed which when planted in a good and honest human heart brings forth fruit. That beautiful fruit being a Christ-like personality— a life that is molded and shaped by the living principles of our Saviour. Why preach the word? Here is why. “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). Just here let me emphasize that faith today is generated and stimulated only upon the hearing of the word of God. Christianity is a taught religion and we need in this day of spiritual confusion to herald boldly the divine truth, “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.” But then again why preach the word? Paul said, “The time will come when they will

not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears and they shall be turned aside from the truth and turned unto fables.”

Why preach the word? Paul said, “the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.” I want to submit this for your consideration—that time has already come, and I am not referring primarily to the error-filled denominational world round about us. I am now talking about the condition which we find existing in our own midst among those who profess to be members of the Lord’s body. The time has come where, in some places, we will not endure the sound doctrine but rather we heap to ourselves preachers and teachers after our own lusts who will tickle our ears and placate our own uneasy consciences. For instance there are some congregations of the Lord’s body where this passage of scripture is seldom if ever discussed, “They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement and to put her away? He (Jesus) saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication and shall marry, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery” (Matthew 19:7-9). The teaching here recorded of our Lord Jesus in regard to marriage and divorce is scarcely mentioned in some places by some preachers. The challenging, vital subjects of worldliness, church leadership and even sometimes the undenominational character of the Lord’s body are given a back seat in preference to more popular, palatable themes. Brethren, these things ought not so to be. We need to preach courageously on marriage and divorce, worldliness, the moral and doctrinal purity of the church and kindred subjects. We need not only to cry “back to the old paths” in doctrine, but we need, just as fearlessly, to sound that clarion call, “back to the old paths” in regard to practical, pure, everyday Christian living.

I would like, just here, to use a statement made by one of the greatest statesman England ever produced. Edmond Burke, the statesman, made this statement in regard to the responsibility of a member of Parliament to his constituents: “He owes you not his industry only, but his judgment, and he betrays rather than serves you when he sacrifices it to your opinion.” I would like to paraphrase this statement to illustrate the point we are now considering. The gospel preacher owes you not his industry only, but the judgment of God’s word and his own judgment as it is based on divine truth, and he betrays rather than serves you when he sacrifices it to your opinion. It is, then, the responsibility of the gospel preacher to meet issues, problems, and particular situations squarely, never swerving from or sacrificing the truth. The classic definition of what preaching should be is found clothed in the language of Paul in Ephesians 4:15, “Speaking the truth in love.” Yes, speaking the truth for real love will impel us to speak the truth. If we really love a man we will tell him the truth no matter how violently it may clash with his opinion. So preacher friend, your sublime responsibility and mine is to Preach it! Preach it! Preach it! Preach the truth fearlessly in all its condemning power, in all its redemptive force, never sacrificing for a moment divine principle—yet ever preaching from the depths of a loved heart. A preacher who was working in what we would call a difficult field once said, “I’ve converted more people over the dinner table than I have from the pulpit.” This statement well serves to introduce a discussion of personal work—personal evangelism— one of the finest ways to preach the gospel since it meets the individual with his problems in a personal, intimate way.

Few of us realize as keenly as we should the power of personal evangelism nor do we recognize as we should our own responsibility to spread the gospel in a personal private way.

Let me stop here to ask you a question. When you see someone approaching you on the streets what do you see? Do you just see a physical body containing enough phosphorus to make 800,000 matches? Is that all you see? Do you just see a body of clay containing enough carbon to make 96,000 pencils? Is that all you see? Do you just a body which physically contains enough sugar to make sixty large lumps? When you see someone coming down the street, do you just see a body which contains enough iron to make a spike strong enough to hold its own weight? Do you just see a body that chemically is worth \$2.57? Is that all you see? I hope not. I sincerely hope and pray that that is not all I see. I hope we see more than just a physical body. I hope we see an individual endowed by a loving creator with a soul which will never die—a soul whose salvation is vitally dependent on obedience to the gospel. I hope, too, that we realize, that we can take the gospel to him and thus an awesome, fearful responsibility is ours—we must spread the gospel at every opportunity.

We sometimes sing the song, “I love to tell the story.” You know, when a fellow says he loves to do something that means that he thoroughly enjoys doing it and he does it at every opportunity. If I pray I love to eat, I mean that I enjoy it immensely and I do it quite often. We sing and have been singing for years, “I Love to Tell the Story” but friend, let me ask you—how many times have you told the story that you love to tell so well? How many times have you told the story—that you love so well—the story of a Saviour’s dying love?

“I love to tell the story because I know ’tis true”. Sometimes I wonder if we really believe this—if we really believe that the gospel story is true—if we really believe that the souls of men cannot be saved apart from obedience to the gospel. If we really believe it is true, how can we remain motionless and inactive while living souls all round about us are being lost for all eternity? Just here, let me call to your attention the oft quoted statement of an infidel. Here is what he said he would do if he really believed the story is true: “If I firmly believed, as millions say they do, that the knowledge and practice of Christianity in this life influences destiny in another world, Christianity would be to me, everything. I would cast aside earthly cares as follies and earthly thoughts and feelings as vanity. Christianity would be my first waking thought, and my last image before sleep sank me into unconsciousness. I would labor in its cause alone. I would take thought for the morrow and eternity alone. Earthly consequences should never stay my hands or seal my lips. I would esteem one soul gained for heaven worth a lifetime in effort. I would go forth to the world and preach Christ in season and out of season, and my text would be: “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?” This man said that if he believed the story (as you and I say we do) then Christianity would be his first waking thought, his last image before sleep sank him into unconsciousness. He would labor in its cause alone. He would esteem one soul gained for heaven worth a life time of effort.

You and I believe the story is true, yea, through the eye of faith, we rest in full assurance of the story’s validity and truth, and yet is heaven our chief thought and concern? Do we labor in its cause alone? Do we esteem one soul gained for heaven a lifetime of effort. We ought to. We ought to have a sincere passion for the souls of men and we ought to give ex-pression to this concern by being personal evangelists, personal workers for the cause of the master. Jesus

worked much in a personal way, the early disciples did likewise—and you and I must do the same if we are to fulfill the sacred sublime responsibility placed directly on our shoulders by the God of heaven. You must be a personal herald for Jesus in your own little world—or sphere of influence.

Public preaching and personal teaching are vital, yea indispensable to the spread of the gospel, but now I want to consider with you an avenue of approach which, at least in some ways, may surpass them in clarity and force.

I would like to introduce this by saying that the preacher's spoken sermon is quickly forgotten. It very soon loses much of its original impact and quickly becomes muddled and indistinct in the ears of its auditors. The preacher's most eloquent words, his most forceful gestures and even his most profound thoughts are soon forgotten. Why is this? Here is why. Beautiful words and classic gestures are easily effected and therefore easily forgotten but Christ-like lives are not easily developed nor are living gestures of love and kindness soon erased from the memory. Therefore the point I want to make is this: the greatest sermons are not limited by the confines of a church building. The finest sermons are not developed in a study and delivered from a pulpit. The greatest sermons, the sermons that continue to stand out with unmistakable power-packed clarity are those which are preached by the devoted consecrated lives of humble Christians.

"I would rather see a sermon than hear one any day, I would rather one would walk with me than merely point the way."

Preaching by living then, is the third and final avenue of spreading the gospel which I would like to discuss with you today. But just here you might ask this question. "Well, I realize that I preach with life and I know too that I just have one life to live and hence just one living sermon to preach—but now I would like to know just how do I make that sermon what it ought to be— what I so badly want it to be?" In answer to your question let me submit a simple two point plan by which we can preach with our lives as we should.

First of all, let us do all we can for the Lord in a positive way. Despite the fact that the New Testament is brimming with positive commands—things that we must do—there are members of the Lord's body, and their name is legion, who seem to think that Christianity is just a list of do nots and therefore they base all their hopes for pleasing the Lord on the things they do not do. They might say, "Well, I do not dance, I do not drink, I do not curse, I do not lie, I don't commit adultery, I don't commit all those obvious, overt acts of wrong and therefore I'm a pretty good fellow and I'm pleasing to the Lord." Don't you see what he's doing. He's basing his hopes for spiritual success on the things which he does not do. I want to say this and I want you to mark it: in no other realm of human endeavor would man's reasoning be so faulty. In nothing else but religion would man base his hopes for succeeding on what he did not do.

Take, for example, a housewife, and suppose she would greet her husband at the door after a long day by saying, "Honey, I didn't burn the house down today, I didn't spill food all over the house, I didn't break the washing machine, I didn't beat the children unmercifully." He in turn, might say, "Well, that's fine but what did you do today? Did you prepare me a good supper?" "Well, no," she would say, "but I didn't burn the house down, I didn't break the washing machine," etc.

We see how ridiculous that is. No housewife, in fact no one, expects to succeed simply on the basis of things not done. No one, that is, except some professed members of the Lord's body. In

James 4:17—“Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.” Thus we see most clearly that we sin against Almighty God not only by our committing of that which is wrong but also by our failure to seize all our opportunities for good—and thus do all we can that is right.

In Ephesians 2:10—“We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” If this teaches anything at all it teaches this—We must do something. We have a positive work to do. You and I then as Christians, in order to please the Lord, must grasp our opportunities and work unselfishly and tirelessly with our time, talent, money, energy, and, in fact, with all that we have at our disposal.

So, in answer to the question, “How can I preach best with my life?” we first would suggest

(1) do all you can in a positive way for the Lord and then our second point would be

(2) do not do anything which would weaken your influence or weaken, yourself either physically or spiritually. In other words, let us flee the very appearance of evil. In Romans 12:9 we read, “Abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good.” It is in 1 Thessalonians 5:22 that we find: “Abstain from (or flee) the very appearance of evil.” So we see that the New Testament teaches that we as Christians are to get as far away from sin and sinful practices as possible.

Despite this very obvious truth, many professing to be members of the Lord’s church seem to say, “Well, I’ll get over here just as close to the line between the church and the world as I can, I’ll enjoy the sensual, devilish pleasures of the world and at the same time I’ll be a partaker of all the rich spiritual blessings to be found in Christ.” They try, then, to walk with one arm wrapped tenderly around the waist of the world and with the other hand they try to hold to the wounded palm of Jesus. But I want to tell you, friends, it can’t be done. Jesus himself said, “No man can serve two masters for either he’ll hate the one and love the other or else he’ll cleave to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24). He also said, “He that is not for me is against me—he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad” (Matthew 12:30).

We need so badly today, Christians who are resolved completely to flee the very appearance of evil. As long- as people who profess to be Christians listen to the same obscene talk, take part in the same questionable activities, are addicted to the same strength sapping, influence-weakening habits, in short as long as we continue to live, look and act just like the world about us—we can never lead a lost world to Jesus.

We need people today who will preach Christ with their lives. You can begin now to do that if you will do all you can in a positive way for the Lord and if you will make every effort to flee the very appearance of evil.

I do not think this lesson on preaching the word would be complete if I didn’t take this opportunity to emphasize, “there’s a call comes ringing o’er the restless wave—send the light.” There’s a world lying out before us virtually untouched by the saving gospel of Jesus. There are whole nations that know him not. William Jennings Bryant said, “I know of a land, deep set in shame, of hearts that faint and tire and I know of a name—a name that would set that land on fire.” You know of that name and I know of that name—the body of Jesus, our Savior. May God grant us the faith, love and stamina of body and soul to take it to every nation.

You and I as New Testament Christians are responsible before God to fulfill the great command as penned by Paul to “Preach the word.” Let us resolve right now to devote our heart and soul, every nerve and fibre of our being to the discharging of that obligation. Let us “Preach the word” fearlessly from the pulpit. Let us “Preach the Word” patiently, tirelessly in a personal intimate way to our friends and neighbors. Let us “Preach the Word” in an unforgettable way by the humble devotion of our lives. Let us preach it! preach it! preach it! and let us live it! live it! live it! May we preach it to all men. Let us take it to the shriveled beggar on the street. Let us take it to the wealthiest of this earth. May we preach it to the humble and the proud. Let’s take it to the moral and with it let us lift the depraved.

Let us begin at Jerusalem (or in other words right here) and go then to Judea, Samaria and on to the uttermost parts of the earth. May we be quick to respond to the Macedonian call—may we take it to this world’s far flung corners until earth’s remotest people have heard Messiah’s name. May we all resolve right now that we will utilize every means at our command and devote the remainder of our lives to fulfilling Paul’s command—“Preach the Word.”

LIVING SACRIFICES

LIVING SACRIFICES LIVING SACRIFICES

Paul Earnhart

I am greatly humbled as I am confronted by the responsibility which this occasion holds forth. Yet, I am also deeply grateful for the opportunity for good which it affords. It is my prayer that I shall speak forth words of truth and soberness and that each word shall be calculated to build up the cause of our Lord. In all the history of the world there have been many causes to which men have attached their efforts and influence. Many have been tragic hoaxes deluding many honest and sincere men, while others have been to a greater or lesser degree worthwhile to humanity. Regardless, however, of their ultimate value, great homage has always been paid to the men who give their all that a cause might live. If a soldier pours out his life's blood on some far flung battle field in a deed of heroic daring, he is said to have served above and beyond the call of duty. If some noble individual pays the supreme price as a human guinea pig for medical science that others might be spared the ravages of disease, his name is not soon forgotten, lest he be praised too little for such uncalled-for devotion. Indeed, the world enthrones with honor all who give the last full measure of devotion out of love for a cause. Such, however, is not the case with the one great cause of all times. While other callings praise as beyond the call of duty the devotion which leads a man to give his all, Christianity demands and expects it. The purposes of Christianity make it the noblest and greatest cause. Its demands on its followers make it without a doubt the most challenging. Paul writing to the church at Rome made this urgent exhortation, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your spiritual service." Herein is embodied the urgent scope of the demands of our Lord's cause, that all who aspire to the name Christian should come and present themselves without reservation as living sacrifices unto God.

We cannot be astounded by the extremity of this appointed theme of Christian endeavor when we realize that the captain of our salvation called us unto him not simply by giving much, but by giving all—for he emptied himself, he became obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross.

In the face of such devotion early Christians were constrained to give their all—heart, soul, life—to him. Adversity and suffering they accepted with rejoicing, thankful that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. Paul told the Corinthians that he had been in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, 'in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Nevertheless, the aged Paul reviewing his life, shed not one tear of regret for such an unselfish sacrifice of self, but rather said, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ.

Not any threat, no power, no force, was sufficient to stop the mouths of early Christians as they proclaimed to all the glad tidings of the gospel. Men like Peter and John prayed only, for greater courage to speak and the record says “they spake the word of God with boldness.” Stephen poured out his life with every word as he preached Christ crucified to an enraged assembly whom he sought to give the words of life.

The lives also of these early Christians were living sermons. Paul wrote to the Romans that their faith was “proclaimed throughout the world” and to the Philippians that they were “seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of truth.” The early church gave not only of their labor and ability, their effort and energy, but also of what the Lord had blessed them with in a financial way. The churches of Macedonia, who, Paul says, first gave themselves to the Lord, gave out of the abundance of their joy and deep poverty which abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

I think we can all see in the self-sacrifice of our Lord and early Christians the path which our own devotion must take if we receive the crown of right-

eousness. The tragedy of the church today is that we have too often purposely blinded our eyes to what Christianity demands of us. Many times instead of being big enough to admit that we are not willing to pay the price, we have attempted in our own minds and in the minds of others to dip low the lofty standard of Christianity and have dragged the blood-stained banner of our Lord in the dust of human standards. That is the reason there are so many members of the body of the Lord everywhere here in the South who look on trying to be present at every service of the church as the challenge of Christianity. That’s the reason that so many are still struggling with the first principles of Christianity though they have been Christians for 10, 20, 30 years. Because of our unwillingness to preach in word and present in life the real demands of the gospel, we have raised up and are raising up in the South a group of hot house Christians who could not stand to be exposed to the full challenge, of Christianity. Thus it is that every person we convert is deluded into thinking that our own indifferent attitude is the thing to which they are to aspire.

Here, therefore is the crux of the matter—that unless changes are made we are going to bring into existence another generation of lukewarm disciples of the Lord who shall in their delusion lose their souls, and by their example destroy the influence of New Testament Christianity. Now, unless we want to be responsible for the damnation of many souls and the destruction of the influence of the gospel, we need to realize there’s an important decision which faces us—and couched in simple and almost rude terms it is this: “Get in or get out.” Now, I may be one who ought to get out, but that doesn’t change the truth of this matter. It is very far better that members of the church who are determined to render only half-hearted service get out and quit wasting their time, for in addition to dunning themselves, they delude others and destroy the influence of the gospel. The present situation is made apparent in several symptoms. One is the great number of unhappy Christians. That’s a contradiction, isn’t it?—a Christian who is unhappy. Nevertheless, the situation is a real one, and the reason for it is that many have not been willing to become living sacrifices for the Lord. These people are in a miserable state, indeed. They have too little religion to enjoy serving the Lord and too much religion to enjoy the pleasures of a worldly life. The man who has never espoused religion and is an avowed worldly is in a pitiable sense happier than the indifferent Christian, in that he enjoys earth’s fleeting pleasures without the terrible pangs of conscience. If

we could all but realize the truth of the words of a song we often sing:

“For we never can prove the delights of his love,

Till all on the altar we lay.

For the favor he shows and the joy he bestows

Are for those who will trust and obey.” The church today is the only stronghold of New Testament Christianity. Think now what it would mean if she apostatized. Think of the millions of souls yet unborn that might never hear a gospel sermon. Yet today we’re playing with the fire that could consume the church in apostasy. We hear on every hand, “If you can’t get men who meet all the qualifications of the elder get the best you have.” I have observed that in almost every small congregation for which I have preached that at least one or more so-called elders do not meet the qualifications. This trend has been created by a lack of men qualified for the eldership and ultimately a failure of Christians to be living sacrifices. It is because we do not have enough men who are willing to strive earnestly to be qualified for this great work. It is because we do not have enough mothers and fathers who impress upon their young sons the nobility and importance of the work of an elder and consequently cause them to aspire to it. Until this situation be changed the doctrinal soundness of the church rests on very shaky ground.

Paul told the Philippians that they were “seen as lights in the world.” But today the world cannot see our lights oftentimes because they’ve become so coated by the smut of worldly living. Too many times we cannot be distinguished from the people of the world because we look and act just like them. There ought to be as great a difference between the lives that we live and the lives of others as there is between the gospel we preach and the gospel of others. Instead we’re still compromising with the world—trying to walk through life with one arm around the waist of the world and the other clasping the nail pierced hand of Jesus. Our young people in many instances are engaging in unchristian activity because of a failure to teach and instruct them along the lines of Christian recreation and entertainment. Men and women in the church have embroiled themselves in every sort of marital morass because teaching on marriage and divorce has been avoided or misrepresented. We need to come to that attitude of mind which Paul expressed when he said in Romans 12:9, “Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.” I wonder if the fleeting pleasures of this world mean so much to us that we are willing to damn our souls and destroy the influence of the gospel by engaging in them. Are temptations so alluring?

Do earth’s pleasures so enthrall That I cannot love my Savior Well enough to leave them all?

Though we are not threatened here in the South with prison or sword we are not preaching the gospel with boldness. We cannot even say that our mouths have been stopped by the slightest persecution. If we’re honest about it we will have to admit that we’ve been put to flight by only a slight social pressure. Out of a fear of being looked on as “religious fanatics” we have become ashamed of the beautiful words of life and now avoid the embarrassment of speaking them to others. We need again to listen to Paul, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation,” and to read again of the church at Jerusalem who when they were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the gospel. This is the challenge of Christianity that everyone should go everywhere preaching the gospel. Yet, with this truth facing us, and with many areas of the United States and the world as a whole untouched, we have been complacently

content to stay in the South. Many young married couples have been unwilling to make the sacrifice of leaving loved ones in order to move to areas where the church is weak or nonexistent. Many fathers and mothers have discouraged their children from making such a decision because they are unwilling to sacrifice the nearness of their children and grandchildren for the sake of the gospel. While gospel preachers on the far flung gospel battle fields work nearly around the clock to meet at least a portion of the demands upon them to speak, qualified teachers and preachers sit in the audience in the South listening to someone else. We must scatter the over concentrated resources of the South to other areas, but it will take men and women who are willing to be living sacrifices. Are we big enough for the task? The Lord is calling us to come and take up our cross and follow him. The call is for men— tall men, sun crowned, who live above the fog of this world's deceptive beauty. The call is for consecrated, devoted, godly Christians. Shall we not all this day as Abraham of old, gather together everything that is near and dear to us, every talent, every capacity, every nerve, every sinew and go to the altar of self-sacrifice, that unseen trysting place of God and man, and lay ourselves down with these words, "Here am I, Lord, send me." "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."

WHAT DO YE MORE THAN OTHERS?-

WHAT DO YE MORE THAN OTHERS?- WHAT DO YE MORE THAN OTHERS?

Wesley Reagan

“What do ye more than others?” As the Lord looked about him he saw men in religious error and others that did not even claim to be religious doing as much and being as good as those that were his disciples. It is likewise true that we can look about ourselves and see those that are motivated by religious error and some that claim no religion at all being as enthusiastic and devoted as we are as members of the body of Christ. While we are complacent and indifferent others have been zealous and active in living moral lives and propagating their beliefs. We should not and must not go into competition with the denominations but we must awake to the fact that we should do more for the truth than others are doing for error. As members of the Lord’s church we have been blessed above all the people of all the world. I do not mean because of the fact that we are Americans, because we have plenty to eat, good clothes to wear, and fine homes to live in. I am speaking of the superior blessings that we have because we are Christians.

We, as members of the Lord’s church, have the only perfect implement with which to work. While others are preaching and teaching the imaginations of men, we have the powerful gospel of Christ which will save men’s souls (Romans 1:16). While others struggle with the crumbling weapons of human invention we have the invincible sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17) which is “living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). We work with the wisdom of God as opposed to the foolishness of men and the strength of God against the weaknesses of men (1 Corinthians 1:25). We proclaim the liberating power of truth while others preach the enslaving shackles of error (John 8:32). As darkness flees from light even so error flees from the devastating power of the gospel of Christ.

What a tremendous disadvantage it would be to try to indoctrinate people with error while the truth stares them in the face every time they open their Bibles! The church of the Lord is the only group in all the world that can preach the gospel with nothing to hide, nothing to fear, and nothing to be ashamed of! Not only do we have the only perfect weapon with which to fight but we have been blessed with infinitely more help than anybody else. Paul confidently said in Php_4:13 “I can do all things” but he quickly added that it was because he worked in Christ “who strength- eneth me.” In James 1:5 we are told “If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” The Lord even goes farther than that and says in Matthew 21:22 “And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” We believe that we have the privilege of prayer; we believe that God is our Father; we believe that the Creator of the universe has promised to bless us personally with every good thing that we ask for in faith. As though even this were not enough, God has promised in addition to giving us the things that we need, to control even the circumstances around us for our benefit. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:13 “There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is

faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it.” Romans 8:28 says “And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose.” When we go forth to carry out the commission of our Savior we do so with all the power of the pure gospel of Christ. We do so with God’s promise that he will give us everything that is good for us and that the world around us will be adapted to fulfill our needs. We have power over weakness, truth over error, and wisdom over foolishness. Yet with the greatest blessings known to mortal minds we have produced only inferior results.

Last year in the area around the Graham Street congregation here in Abilene a group of students took a religious census. Many of the people we contacted said very politely “Yes, we’ll give you the information but you could get it from the Baptist church —they were here a few weeks ago.”

We contacted the Taylor County Jail to ask permission to go down there to do personal work among the prisoners. They said ‘We’ll be glad to have you come any afternoon except Monday. The Life Service Band from Hardin Simmons comes down then.’”

One afternoon some of us were out at Hendrix Memorial Hospital, a Baptist hospital, and found in the lobby a variety of tracts teaching Baptist doctrine. A few things like these make it seem that instead of following in the footsteps of the Lord we are following in the footsteps of the Baptists and even then we are often far behind. In the face of the advancements made by sectarians we have largely languished in idleness. We have a constant problem to get even our brethren out to worship services. We are continually plagued with the problem of being intensely spiritual instead of ritualistic in our worship. Our attempts to do personal work among the lost have been erratic and feeble. We have carelessly squandered our time as though we had an eternity to do a lifetime’s work. A pathetic lack of Bible study has resulted in pitiable ignorance of God’s word. A self-respecting hypocrite would have done as much and a good sectarian would have done a lot more. The colored brethren here in Abilene made an indelible impression on me with the singing of “Wasted opportunities, good you might have done;

Had you not stood idle, some soul you might have won.” The situation has been like two men digging a base-ment. While one uses a steam shovel the other works diligently with a teaspoon. We are working with the shovel and those with spoons have dug a hole which we would get lost in while we have been idle.

It is much like the fable of the Hare and the Tortoise. The Hare ridiculed the short legs and slow pace of the Tortoise. The Tortoise laughed and challenged the Hare to a race. On the appointed day they started together. The Tortoise never for a moment stopped, but went on with a slow but steady pace straight to the end of the course. The Hare, trusting to his native swiftness stopped by the wayside and fell asleep. When he finally woke up he ran as fast as he could only to find the Tortoise dozing comfortably just beyond the finish line. We have all the advantages and true Christianity ought to spread through the world leaving far behind all human doctrines, but having fallen asleep by the wayside we awake to find those in error exceeding our efforts to preach the truth. The situation is bad in Texas, Oklahoma, and Tennessee; it is pathetic in surrounding states; and the cause of Christ is almost unknown in some states in our own country. Someone may say “But I know of a congregation that is doing more than the sectarians are doing.” Surely every congregation ought to be doing better and it ought to be the rule and not the exception.

We ought never to be satisfied with doing as good as others, and yet many times we are content with being second, third, or fourth—not only in numbers but in zeal and in work. It is all right for sectarians to have more eloquence, oratory, and display but when the time comes that they have more sincerity, stamina, and spirituality than the Lord's people there is something wrong with us. While they preach "faith only" we practice it—and a small measure of faith it is that will compel a man to be baptized and will not cause him to work at the job of living Christianity.

We preach and believe that the man who is not a Christian does not have the truth with which to convert people, cannot call on God as his Father, and does not have God's abiding promise to bless him in his work. When others can do as much without the help of God as we can with it there must certainly be something wrong with us. There is something either decidedly wrong with our doctrine or drastically wrong with our lives.

This being true that while our blessings have exceeded those of any group in all the world we have yet had inferior results, there must be some way which we can accomplish what we ought. What I believe to be the solution consists of two steps. The first is simply that we must start doing more than the sectarians are doing. The constant challenge of the New Testament is to do the very best that we can. Romans 12:1 says "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service." In Matthew 6:33 the Lord tells us to "Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness." One of the highest standards any place is found in Php_1:27 where Paul exhorts us to "let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ."

We must work with such consistent zeal and enthusiasm that even though others might match our human efforts they cannot surpass them. We must work with such thoroughness that any religious effort by others will of necessity be where we have blazed the trail with the pure gospel.

UNTIL WE DO MORE FOR THE TRUTH THAN OTHERS DO FOR ERROR WE DESERVE TO PLAY SECOND FIDDLE TO THE DENOMINATIONAL WORLD!

Even when we do all of this, however, others will always be able to match our human efforts. Therefore the second thing that we must do in order to realize our dreams and accomplish our task is to start depending completely upon God. Every time we can say a word of truth a sectarian can say a word of error, every time we do something for the church of the Lord they can do something for a denomination. Our only hope then lies in help from above for "If God is for us, who is against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:31-32).

We must not try to do ourselves what only the Lord can do, but on the other hand we must supply our part that we might work together with God and have a part in preaching the gospel to the whole world. As many have said before, we need to work as though it all depended on us and pray as though it all depended on God. We have fallen so far behind what we could have done that nothing short of all our consecration and devotion to God will bridge the gap.

One time the king of Syria sent a great host of horses and chariots by night to surround the city of Dothan and capture the prophet Elisha. As Elisha's servant rose early and beheld the great army he was terrified and cried, "Alas, my master! what shall we do?" Elisha answered in words that ought to be our battlecry, "Fear not; for they that are with us are more than they that are with

them.” Then he prayed that the servant’s eyes would be opened and the young man saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire around Elisha.

I want us to realize that we have been blessed above anybody in all the world. If we do not accomplish the work that God has set out for us it will be because we have blocked the grace of God instead of being channels to make it known to all the world. “They that are with us are more than they that are with them.” “If God is for us, who is against us?”

Yet as long as others can continue to appear to the world as devoted and consecrated to error as we are to the truth, and as long as they can convert as many people to their doctrines as we can to true Christianity we will not do what we ought to be doing. Though our minds may not be bound by creeds yet our ankles are chained with slothfulness and selfsatisfaction. With all of the blessings that we have we ought to be ashamed that the gospel hasn’t been preached to every man on the face of the earth. Not many months ago Brother C. E. McGaughey stood in this church building and told of preaching the gospel to people in Vermont who had never heard it before. He told how that those people who were starved for pure New Testament Christianity asked in pleading voices “Where have you been so long?” They have been up there all the time, we’ve had the gospel all the time. We know they don’t have it and we know that they must have it or die lost.

While this question was yet ringing in our ears some of us heard Bogus Lollar at Herndon Chapel explain the great blessings of Christianity and the huge opportunity that looms up in front of us and then ask the question, “Brethren, what are we waiting for?”

Now let us ask ourselves the questions. Brethren, where have we been so long? What are we waiting for? We will never be able to answer the first question in a way that is acceptable to the Lord and to the thousands that will be lost because of slothful church members, but we can answer the second one— not in words but in our lives. Where have we been so long?

What are we waiting for?

What do ye more than others?

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IN INDIA—Preston Kharlukhi

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Prenshon Kharlukhi

There are at present five faithful congregations with a total membership of two hundred fifty persons. Four years ago we had twelve congregations with five or six hundred Christians. The majority of the congregations have now aligned with the digressive group in doctrine, organization and worship.

India, as you probably know, is an ancient country with a population of over three hundred fifty millions. There are different communities and tribes.

The two hundred fifty Christians in India belong to a hill tribe known as the Khasi tribe, with a total population of four hundred thousand. They inhabit an area of six thousand square miles in the eastern part of India.

Historical facts and religious teachings of the tribe were handed down by our ancestors to their successive generations. Socially we follow a matriarchal system. Family name is derived from the mother's side. Females retain mother's family name even after married. There is no caste system among the Khasis. Women have equal rights and privileges as men in most respects. In fact women monopolize family property and we men-folks have no claim whatsoever to ancestral property. Perhaps nowhere else in India, women enjoy such privileges socially, economically and even politically as the Khasi women.

The Khasis who have not been converted to Christian denominations still follow their primitive religion called Animism. The primitive religionists believe in one God; theirs is however an unknown God. They also believe in gods and goddesses to be subordinate to the one God. The Khasi religion is replete with numerous superstitious beliefs, and the rites and rituals are so complicated that the majority of them got tired of their ancestral religion. They offer animal and fowl sacrifices in worship. In their own religion, the Khasis, especially those in the villages, are intensely religious. This same spirit prevails in the rural villages of India. In certain sections of Khasi Hills, each family spends about fifty percent of the produce of the land in performing customary rites and rituals. Each family and sometimes groups of families have a family priest who acts as a mediator between man and God.

One striking point to be noted is that the Khasi people have been expecting for generations for one perfect mediator between them and God. When and how that perfect mediator will come they do not know. That is one of the main reasons denominational churches won many followers among the Khasis qIUcker than in other parts of India, because these denominational churches, despite their man-made doctrines, preach that Christ is the long-desired perfect mediator between man and God. Many were convinced that Christ is their mediator, and accepted the new religion

unconditionally. They are ardent and steadfast in their present faith. Both the Protestant and Roman Catholic Missions have good following

among the Khasis. There are a good many Khasis men who have qualified themselves in theological schools and colleges to become denominational preachers generally called Pastors. We Christians of the New Testament faith do not identify with any of the two religious groups. We refuse to be called either Protestants or Roman Catholics. The Baptist Mission came to our land over 130 years ago to preach their doctrines. They were superseded by the Welsh Presbyterian Church who brought their doctrines 110 years ago. The Protestant missions by mutual consent have assigned geographical regions in Assam to carry mission work. They co-operate between them in many common matters. In Shillong there is one youth Christian council of denominations. This local council is subordinate to the Assam Christian council. The latter is a limb (of the all India Christian Council which is a part of the world Christian Council. We do not cooperate with such religious organizations. The Presbyterian church in Assam has ecclesiastical bodies called Presbytery, Assembly and Synod, with well-defined powers for each body. We Christians of the church of Christ in India have no such ecclesiastical bodies to exercise authority over the congregations whether small or large.

The Protestant Missions took much pains in translating the Bible into Khasi language. With all its many defects some of which are serious and misleading, we now have the Bible in Khasi. For this they deserve our appreciation.

Some of the outstanding leaders of the Restoration Movement in India have died. The leaders of the churches of Christ in Khasi Hills, particularly those of the Mawlai congregation, were Presbyterians. The Restoration Movement got started at Mawla' Village. A little over twenty years ago, a few leaders of the Presbyterian church at Mawlai, 'imbued with religious fervor, preached the gospel from house to house to the village folks of Mawlai village. They took the Bible only with them and exposed with all vigor the unscripturalness of man-made doctrines. The Presbyterian ecclesiastical body saw in this movement a formidable challenge to their denominational plea. They sought to suppress this infant movement. It should be remembered that at that time these pioneers did not intend to break away from the Presbyterian church. Their aims were to expose the evil of man made doctrines and their divisive nature to their fellow church members. Thereby they had hopes that other sincere-minded Presbyterian leaders would, in course of time, cast away any semblance of unscriptural teachings in the church. They had such sincerity as to think that the Presbyterian ecclesiastical body will also share their views. But as it happened the consequences were on the contrary. All leaders of the movement were debarred from leadership in church affairs. All hindrances of the Presbyterians' highest ecclesiastical body could not in the least dis-hearten the movement to press the work with more vigor than ever. Village folks of the low strata of society were influenced by this movement and some decided to join the Presbyterian church. For some plea or other these new converts were not accepted into church fellowship. Some of the actions of the orthodox Presbyterian leaders, in so far as the movement was concerned, were against the provisions of their church creed of which they were supposed to be the custodians. With a view to put an end to this rebellious movement the Presbyterian Assembly constituted a Committee consisting of the leading men of the "Assembly." They were endowed with full powers to call the leaders of the movement to explain for their conduct which was against the church discipline. Being the custodians of the church creed, these committee members

considered and gave their verdicts adversely against the movement. To an impartial spectator they could not stand the forceful arguments of the pioneers of the movement who referred to the scriptures. The leaders of the reformation movement were, however, condemned and warned for their un-Presbyterian teachings, namely:—

1. because they tried to convert people into Presbyterians without paying proper attention to their knowledge and pledge of full acceptance of the church creed.
2. because they did not care to differentiate between literate and illiterate, good and bad people before they recommended them as fit persons to be accepted into church fellowship.
3. because they refused to abide by the principle of majority decision in church affairs including acceptance or non-acceptance of converts in the church.
4. because they had over-stepped their limited powers in preaching.
5. because they taught that penitent converts must be accepted into fellowship without specifying usual time limit and without having regards to special days fixed by the ecclesiastical body for acceptance of new converts.
6. because they challenged the decisions of the ecclesiastical body as unscriptural.
7. because they had no respect for the church creed called the Constitution.
8. because if their plea to follow only Bible teachings were accepted, the church constitution would be non-existent—its non-existence would mean the deathknell of Presbyterianism.
9. because without the constitution the link with the mother church would be broken.

Having been convinced that they will never get opportunities to plead for restoration to the New Testament form of religion within the Presbyterian fold, those seekers of God's will finally broke connection with the Presbyterian church. They resolved themselves into a scriptural church called CHURCH OF CHRIST. (Matthew 16:18; Romans 16:16), accepting Christ as its only head (Colossians 1:18). They adopted these principles which were not necessarily another set of man-made creeds:—

(1) to accept the Bible in its entirety as the infallible word of God, and the court of appeal in all matters

concerned with religion (James 1:25, Psalms 19:7, 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

(2) to formulate no other human creed whatsoever (Revelation 22:18, Galatians 1:6-9, Dent. 4:2, Matthew 15:9).

(3) to accept the New Testament as the complete rule of faith and final court of appeal in matters concerning

the church and individual Christians (2 Timothy 3:16-17, 1 Corinthians 13:10).

(4) to study the word of God appreciatively in order to enable one to rightly divide the truth (2 Timothy 2:15).

(5) to draw no conclusions from any teaching that concerns doctrine, organization and worship whenever

the New Testament is silent on it.

(6) to constitute no ecclesiastical body. The movement gained momentum as time went by.

Mistakes were committed. However, because it was based on the sure foundation, we profited by mistakes. For some years, with all those bright and hopeful developments, they remained a denomination. Never-theless, there was a fine spirit of mutual love and singleness of mind among the entire body. They strived with zeal to spread the truth in the neighbouring villages. Other orthodox Presbyterians joined the movement. The word of God was studied with prayers on Lord's day and in the evenings of the week. Up to that time the leaders of this movement believed they were Christians according to the New Testament. When afterwards, people of primitive Khasi religion expressed their desire to have fellowship with them, a question arose as to how to make them members of the church.

It took two or three years to arrive at a decision on this question. It should not be wondered why it took such a long time to give scriptural answer to

this question, if you consider it from this standpoint. First, because the leaders of the movement had been for years influenced by denominational teaching and interpretation of the meaning and importance of baptism; second, in the Khasi Bible the word baptism is used without giving Khasi equivalent meaning of the word. Third, none of the leaders had any idea of the original Greek meaning of the word baptism, and fourth, they did not desire to take hasty steps without being satisfied that a departure from the old practice of baptism by sprinkling has full and clear scriptural evidences. They studied this question in the light of the New Testament. They gave answer to this question on the strength of the scriptures, viz:—Baptism according to the Bible should be immersion (John 3:1-5; Romans 6:4-5; Colossians 2:12).

Penitent converts are the proper subjects for scriptural baptism (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:36-39; Acts 22:16).

Infants are not proper subjects for baptism in the first place because they are guiltless, (Mark 10:14; Luke 18:15-17; Matthew 19:13-15) and in the second place because they have not the capacity to: hear and understand the preaching in order to enable them to: believe, repent, and confess their faith in Christ which are the prerequisites of penitent converts being immersed. The leaders of the restoration movement were baptized and so were new penitent converts. One section of the movement which pleaded sprinkling, including infant baptism seceded from this movement. In the course of time congregations were organized at other villages. By the time Brother E. W. McMillan came to India we had twelve congregations.

Before the division which occurred in 1950, five con-gregations had elders. The Mawla'i congregation had four elders and the others had two or three elders. The New Testament teaches

plurality of elders (Acts 20:17; Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 3:2-7). The qualifications of elders and their functions are recorded in the scriptures. The elders do not wear honorific titles of "Rev." etc. They do not exercise authority over the congregation of which they are not elders. They are not heads of the church for Christ is its head (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23). They are Christians appointed to do the work for which they are qualified. Those elders were appointed by the collective choice of the members of the congregation, not necessarily by majority votes. Some congregations had qualified men to be appointed as elders but none had appointed elders up to 1950. The rest had not yet developed enough to find men suitable for eldership.

These congregations are independent of one another. There was no central organization or ecclesiastical body to act as co-ordinating link between the congregations. There is no mother church. They are bound together by the same faith (Ephesians 4:5; Judges 1:3). They have the same head which is Christ. The members of the church at each place meet on the first day of the week in a common meeting house for worship. We meet three times on that day. In the fore-noon we have Bible discussions. Before starting the classes some Christian man reads some passages from the word of God and offers prayers. The meeting begins and closes with singing. In the afternoon meeting we have singing, prayers, reading the word of God, preaching the gospel, collections and close with prayer and song. Up to the year 194,9 we did not partake of the Lord's Supper every week.

We, the members of the Lord's body in India do not claim that we are perfect in all we teach and practice. As individuals we have many failings and pitfalls. As a church we have many things to learn from the word of God. Our objectives are to identify with the early church of Christ—The church that was founded by Christ at the scriptural place, Jerusalem.

We knew that the Bible had been translated into many languages and circulated in millions to the various corners of the world. We thought and pondered over this wonderful success. We concluded unknowingly that there must be a body of people somewhere on earth who have at least the same objectives as we have. We tried to find some clue where they might be found. Seven years ago, one Khasi gentleman, a denominational preacher, who had been to the States told someone about the churches of Christ in America. Those who are now in the digressive group, doubted whether the church of Christ in America follows scriptural teachings. Some discouraged an idea to write to America. Yet we decided to do so. After long and arduous search we got an address of the church of Christ, Abilene, in an old forwarding letter addressed to the Public Library in Shillong. Consequently we wrote a letter to which a reply was received from Brother Glenn L. Wallace. In this letter Wallace gave information of the churches of Christ in this great country. The news thrilled the hearts of Christians in the Hills of Assam. In that same letter Brother Wallace told us that the churches of Christ in America partake of the Lord's Supper regularly every Lord's day. We studied the scripture references and discussed the subject in detail. We were convinced that it is scripturally right to partake the Lord's Supper every first day of the week (Acts 20:7). The first day of the week was a day of regular assembly of the early church (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). We accordingly decided to observe it every Lord's day. Others stood in the way. They warned that they would 'create division if we failed to obey them. We were accused as men-pleasers. Surely we did not seek to please men. Of course it was a new thing to us, but we considered it imperative that we practice it if we are to strive after the pattern of the New Testament church. The first week we decided to begin the regular observance of the Lord's

Supper, someone put this question. Who has the right to preside at the Lord's Supper service? There were two opinions on this question. The one was that only elders can preside and no one else; and the other was that any leader of the congregation can do that. The reason which gave rise to this question was this. If the elders are the only persons who can preside then in case all of them failed to attend on any Lord's day, the Christians assembled for the worship service will not be able to partake of the Lord's Supper for that day. We therefore waited till the arrival of Brother McMillan, who gave us a satisfactory reply. The first Sunday following Brother McMillan's visit, we began partaking of the Lord's Supper regularly. For some weeks only a very few of us partook of the Lord's Supper. After that the number increased.

It was most unfortunate to tell you brothers and sisters that the people who are now the backbone of the digressive group took advantage of the introduction of this memorial service as one of their weapons to bring about the division in the church into two opposing groups. If the history of the Restoration Movement in India is to be written in detail, this unfortunate event will receive a prominent place. It will throw ample evidence on how the faithful Christians stood for the truth they hold so dear to their hearts. For sometime after the divisive element were faced with a personal sense of frustration. To our grief they renewed their vicious move to misrepresent facts with a view to gain personal honour and position in the church.

After Brother McMillan returned to the States, we received good news that the brethren promised financial help to support four whole-time preachers. In fact, the money was received soon after from Brother Wallace. This was brought to the notice of the congregations. Two preachers who already spent whole time with their own support were opposed by the digressive leaders to receive financial support from America. The other two preachers who were backed up by the digressive leaders were right willing to accept the support provided they were allowed free hand to accept into church fellowship denominational people without obeying the gospel. The latter two preachers' stand with regard to the plan of salvation and regular partaking of the Lord's Supper was the same as that of the digressive group who sought to bring in one unscriptural teaching after another.

Early in the year of 1950, an American Missionary of the Christian church from America, Ben Schiller, visited Shillong. This missionary gave us to understand that the church with which he identifies is the same as the faithful churches in the States in doctrine, organization and worship, excepting in one "unessential matter" namely, the use of instrumental music in worship. It should be noted that the question of instrumental music was taken up more than fifteen years ago and the congregations in India do not use it because it is contradictory to the simple Bible teaching on Christian worship. His argument in favor of instrument has not the least appeal to the mind of the faithful. He was in the defensive position because he has no relevant scriptures to support his argument. In the month of March, 1950, division among the churches of Christ in India was in the offing. The digressive leaders accepted into church fellowship more than thirty denominational members without scriptural baptism. They would have readily obeyed the gospel had it not been for the new plea of the digressive leaders that the church of Christ will accept into fellowship unimmersed people. The digressives went further as to refuse fellowship with immersed penitent converts. All sort of un-Christian-like tactics were used by them to interrupt the progress of the church. They pleaded that no penitent converts should be baptized without majority decision of the church, no printed gospel material should be distributed without the permission of their newly constituted central organization which they styled "As-sembly."

According to the views of the digressives, our fellowship with the Christians of the New Testament faith in America and other parts of the world is invalid and unconstitutional unless their central organization approves. Those of us who pleaded for unity among all Christians of the New Testament faith were accused as agents of the American churches. We who pleaded for simple Bible teachings knew nothing such as a central organization. It is a sheer brain wave of the digressive leaders. In order to meet their own selfish purposes they, by sheer force of their childish arguments, sought to shift all the powers of congregations to their fantastic "Assembly." They were indirectly encouraged to carry on all these denominational and unscriptural teachings by the Christian Church Missionary who very often had correspondence with them. He entirely championed their actions for reasons best known to him. The last stage of division occurred on the second and third visits of the same missionary in May-June 1950. One Sunday when this missionary was present, a denominational preacher was invited to preach to the Christians. True to his denominational beliefs he preached hundred percent denominational teachings including baptism by sprinkling and infant baptism. Naturally, the faithful Christians opposed such an action. The trouble makers stood with one voice with the help and under the instigation of the Christian Church Missionary, that if we differed with their teachings we must quit from the vicinity of the church meeting house.

Soon after his departure from Shillong, the digressive party who now cooperate with him wrote a lot of unfounded statements which they circulated to all congregations. The main points mentioned in their statements are these:—

1. That the churches of Christ also known as Christian churches are one and the same as the churches of

Christ with which Brother McMillan identifies in so far as doctrine, organization and worship are concerned.

2. That the churches of Christ in America cooperate with denominations in certain matters including exchange

of preachers in pulpits.

3. That we who pleaded for purely scriptural teachings do not like non-Christians to attend at gospel

and that we want to preach only to Christians.

4. That Brother McMillan fully endorsed their de-nominational stand and that he was very displeased with our

unprogressive plea for simple gospel teachings.

5. That we who pleaded for true worship including regular partaking of the Lord's Supper and vocal music will

soon ex-communicate all Christians who do not partake of the Lord's Supper every week.

6. That we had already broken connection with the church and that we did not like to explain to the

congregations the reasons why we had drifted away from the faith.

7. That the digressives had used all means to per-suade us to do away with all our wrong teachings in order to

bring in unity and that, they claimed, we refused to listen to their loving plea for unity.

8. That we have misappropriated thousands of dollars sent from the States and would soon be arrested along

with all those who should stand with us.

All these were unfounded statements.

Three weeks after the Christian Church Missionary left Shillong we who had been partaking of the Lord's supper regularly were told to worship elsewhere. In fact we were threatened physical punishment if we did not listen to their verbal warning. One Sunday they locked up the doors of the meeting house in order to interrupt the regular worship service including partaking of the Lord's Supper. The last day we met together for worship with the digressive group was a Sunday. It was a fairly big meeting. Among the attendants were relatives of the digressive leaders who came to the meeting not to hear the gospel but to attack the faithful Christians should they dare utter a word against their unscriptural actions. A denominational preacher did the preaching and he used that occasion to bolster his denominational church. We foresaw the unfavorable circumstances that would arise should we continue to meet and work together with the unfaithful Christians who have not the slightest desire to maintain faithfulness in the church. The digressive group had other advantages because they had wittingly the trusteeship of the church property transferred to them, and secondly an American Missionary of the Christian Church was immediately sent to Shillong to champion their cause with his experience in creating division and with money from his sponsors. The faithful Christians from that time onward held meetings separately in the homes of Christians for some weeks, and then in a shed placed at the disposal of the church by a faithful Christian man who is one of the staunch leaders of the Restoration Movement. For the last three years the digressives used their time and money to create division in the ranks of the faithful Christians. Some babes in Christ fell prey to their enticing words only to be neglected soon after. They use this with the help of their mercenary preachers who are objects to be pitied for their total lack of the word. At present many of the sincere Christians who have been identifying with the digressive group saw their mistakes and we have every hope to restore them to the truth.

During the last three years we have been able to preach the gospel as never before in the villages and in the big town of Shillong. Despite the limitation in money and time, we have not refused to respond to the invitation of any group of people or individuals who desire to hear the good news. The church in India encourages all Christians to be active leaders according to their abilities and resources.

We try in all possible ways to follow the New Testament teachings. The Christians in India are very grateful to the Christians in the States for their demonstration of love and moral and financial support. Specific mention may be made namely:—That you have sent Brother McMillan and Brother Tinius to visit India. Brother McMillan is well known among the digressive congregations. We are sure that if he could make another short trip to India some congregations would be

restored to the truth. Brother Tinius has robed the hearts of the faithful Christians in India. We are confident that he will be one of the fittest preachers from this country for the Indian mission field. That you have recently responded to our request for help to print Christian song books. Through Brother Wallace we always learned that the Christians in America remember in prayer their Christian friends in India and that they are anxious for the progress and prosperity of the church in India. The future of the church in India is most encouraging. The thousands of denominational members among the Khasi tribe hunger for undenominational Christianity. Giving the scriptural teachings by intensive preaching and religious tracts, we hope the hundreds will rally to the banners of Christ in no distant date. We are optimistic about the future of the church although discouragement may come up with every step.

H«lph L. Starling-

Evangelist

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