THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

Commitment

I am part of the fellowship of the unashamed. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ.

I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still. My past is redeemed. My presence makes sense. My future is secure. I'm finished and done with low living, slight walking, small planning, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tame visions, mundane talking, cheap living, and dwarfed goals.

I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits, or popularity. I don't have to be right, first, tops, recognized, praised, regarded, or rewarded. I now live by faith, lean on His presence, walk by patience, lift by prayer, and labor by power.

My face is set. My gait is fast. My goal is heaven. My road is narrow. My way is rough. My companions are few. My guide is reliable. My mission is clear. I cannot be bought, deluded, or delayed.

I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy, or meander in the maze of mediocrity. I won't give up, shut up, or let up. . . .until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up, paid up, and preached up for the cause of Christ.

I am a disciple of Jesus. I must go 'til He comes, give 'til I drop, preach 'til all know, and work 'til he stops me. When He comes for His own, He will have no problem recognizing — my banner will be clear!

(Found tacked to the wall of an African preacher's home)

The Voice of Truth International

Staff:

Editor-in-Chief: J.C. Choate
Managing Editor: Byron Nichols
Layout Editors: Betty Burton Choate
Barbara A. Oliver
Typesetting: Gay Nichols
Eulene Ramsey
Art Consultant: Steven B. Choate
Computer Consultant: Bradley S. Choate
Promotion: Dale Grissom, Oran Rhodes, Mark Posey, Buck Davenport, James Warren, Ken Willis, Don Hinds, Roy D. Baker, Chuck Forsythe, Alan R. Henderson, C.O. Patterson, Roger Mills.
Distributors ***for Foreign Editions:***
Sunny David, **India**
Roger Dickson, **South Africa**
Reuben Emperado, **Philippines**
Reggie Gnanasundaram, **Sri Lanka**
Henry Kong, **Singapore**
Ong Chong Fatt, **Malaysia**
Loy Mitchell, **All-Africa**
Bill Nicks, **Trinidad and Tobago**
Stephen Randall, **Australia**
Keith Sisman, **United Kingdom**
John Thiesen, **Malawi**
Rod Kyle, **New Zealand**
Dan McVey, **Ghana**
Mike Nix, **Caribbean**
Robert Martin, **Pacific Islands**
J.C.Choate, **All-Asia**
Bob Dixon, **Nigeria**

The Voice of Truth International is published by **churches of Christ** as a non-profit effort. **J.C. Choate (editor)** P.O. Box 72, Winona, MS 38967, U.S.A.; Phone: 662-283-1192; Fax: 662-283-1191; E-mail address: choate@worldevangelism.org.

In lieu of a subscription rate, a gift of **$4.00** is suggested for single issues, **$12.00** for four issues. Make checks payable to **World Evangelism Foundation,** and mail to **Byron Nichols, (Managing Editor) 2148 N. National, Springfield, MO 65803;** Telephone: 417-833-5595.

Please send articles for publication and changes of address to **Byron Nichols** in Springfield, **including both old and new addresses so that our records can be corrected.**

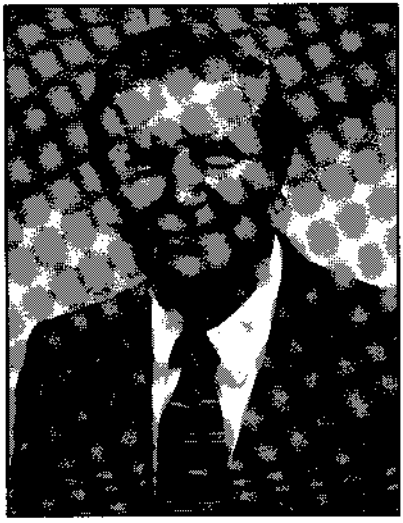
Staff Writers:

George Akpabli	W. Douglass Harris
W.T. Allison	Ray Hawk
Robert Ball	Parker Henderson
Rex Banks	Gordon Hogan
Leon Barnes	Al Horne
Wayne Barrier	Wayne Jackson
Roy Beasley	Ancil Jenkins
Maxie B. Boren	Jerry Jenkins
T. Pierce Brown	Jimmy Jividen
Ron Bryant	James Judd
Salvador B. Cariaga	Dayton Keesee
Jack W. Carter	Dalton Key
Ron Carter	Michael L. King
Frank Chesser	Mack Lyon
Betty Burton Choate	Joe Magee
Jeril Cline	Cecil May, Jr.
Charles E. Cobb	Bill McFarland
Glenn Colley	Colin McKee
Willard Collins	Jane McWhorter
Owen Cosgrove	Hollis Miller
Sunny David	Loy Mitchell
Jerry L. Davidson	Kevin Moore
Hans Dederscheck	Peter Mostert
David Deffenbaugh	Bill Nicks
Clarence DeLoach, Jr.	Fenter Northern
G. Devadanam	Don L. Norwood
Roger Dickson	Owen D. Olbricht
Bill Dillon	Basil Overton
Bobby G. Dockery	Frances Parr
Hershel Dyer	Max Patterson
Earl Edwards	Clayton Pepper
Demar Elam	David Pharr
Reuben Emperado	G.F. Raines
Allan E. Flaxman	Keith Sisman
Al Franks	John Thiesen
Royce Frederick	Betty Tucker
Albert Gardner	Ken Tyler
E. Claude Gardner	Don W. Walker
R. Gnanasundaram	Bobby Wheat
Gary C. Hampton	Jon Gary Williams
Jack Harriman	Tex Williams
John Harris	William Woodson

18 Editions

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

The churches of Christ salute you (Romans 16:16).



LOOKING FORWARD

J. C. Choate
Editor-in-Chief

What an exciting time to live, to have lived in one century and then to see a new century ushered in! As for the church of the 20th century, we saw gains and losses. Many mistakes were made and, sadly, we did not rise to the occasion of evangelizing the world.

We can't help but think of what might have been, but we must take the attitude of the apostle Paul when he said, *"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 3:13,14).

We look forward now to the 21st Century with great anticipation and hope. Jesus has asked His people, the church, to go into all the world to preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15,16). He has also promised to be with us and to help us to accomplish this task (Matthew 28:19,20). Our goal must be to obey Him, setting our minds with determination. We can be assured that He would not ask us to do something He knows we cannot do, so we can forge ahead with confidence. We also know that we have the greatest message in the world, the good news that Jesus died that we might be saved and have the hope of eternal life. It will change men and women, families, countries, and the world. With the world in such a hurting mess, what an incentive to motivate us to work!

And with such backing and support, how can we fail?

✔ There are many other reasons why we can reach His goal. **The church** is found all over the world. Though, admittedly, we are few in number in comparison to the great majority, there is a sufficient number of Christians to carry out this great command.

✔ We also have **the funds** with which to do the work. We need only the priority of evangelism in our hearts as we decide how to budget the Lord's money.

✔ We have **a currency,** the American Dollar, used by the majority of Christians, and accepted throughout the world. This is not true of the currencies of most nations. How blessed we are not to be hindered by the lack of useable funds with which to work.

✔ We also have **a language,** the English language, spoken by most members of the church, and by most educated people everywhere. This opens doors so that we can at least begin and continue in English until we can learn the local language.

✔ There are many types of **transportation** to enable us to quickly get to our destination. How blessed we are to have jet planes that go around the world in a matter of hours. Locally, there are cars, buses, and trains, and most of them are available everywhere.

✔ We are experiencing the greatest **communication** revolution known to man. While radio, TV, the cable system, satellities, phones, tape recorders, the printing press, the Postal system, faxes, and e-mail facilities may help the secular world to get its message out, we as the Lord's people can also use all of these mediums to enable us to quickly get the Gospel out to the masses. Endless possibilities are there and we need to be constantly exploring ways in which we may more effectively use them to the furtherance of the Lord's cause.

✔ Finally, there is relative **peace** throughout the world which makes it easy for us to go into most nations. Even where there are wars and local conflicts, these may be powerful tools to open doors that would otherwise be closed.

✔ Not going along with the religious world and the doctrines of men can present obstacles, but on the other hand, preaching the **oneness** of the church, the **unity** of all believers, wearing the Lord's name, and staying with the Bible on all subjects, can have its own appeal. Certainly, we cannot improve on the Gospel as it was given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

It might be argued that there are now more than 6 billion in the world, with the expectation of that number doubling within a few years. The weak-hearted might ask, "How can it be possible for the Lord's small church to evangelize such numbers?" But wait just a minute! We've already seen the tremendous tools God has provided, through His providential timing. Can't

we realize that He knew how many people would be in the world today, and what tools would be needed to reach them? He has abundantly provided *everything* necessary for teaching *all of the people* on earth today, and we can be sure that as the population doubles and triples, or whatever, God will continue to provide the means with which to reach every soul with the gospel. **Even at this very moment it would be possible to reach the majority of the people of the world with one sermon, via satellite!** The question is, do we want to preach that sermon enough to set the goal and reach for it?

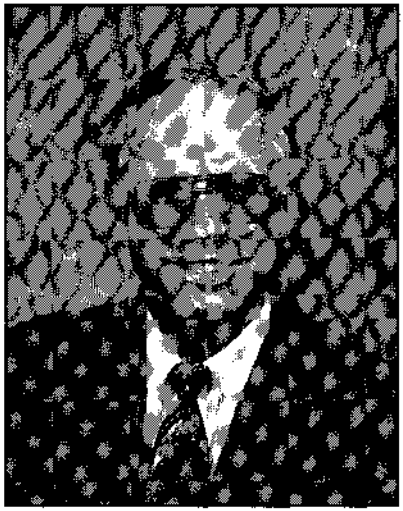
We must not underestimate the Lord and His people and what they are capable of doing. The sad thing is that, for the most part, we have allowed others to use these tremendous methods of communication, when actually God has provided them for the use of His own people in evangelizing the world! What are we waiting for? Why not lay hold on these God-given tools and move quickly to carry out His great commission?

Think about this, too. As we preach the gospel, more and more will obey the Lord so that there will be more laborers to do the work, and more funds to pay the costs involved. How can you beat that?

There are pulpits, personal work, literature, radio and TV sermons, schools, student centers, relief work during times of disaster, aid to the poor, and countless other ways to teach and influence souls for the Lord. We need to be looking for any and all ways to reach the lost, and we need to be busy using them.

The more we do, of course, and the more who are taught and converted, the more we will have opposition from the world, even from the religious world. But opposition and persecution will bring publicity, helping others to know of the church and its work, to learn its message, and to create a desire in honest hearts to obey the Lord and to be a part of His great work. This is what happened in the first century, according to the writings of the New Testament, and the same will follow in the 21st century when we put the Lord first in our lives and evangelize the world.

My! What a joy to obey God, to be saved, to worship Him, to follow and serve Him, and to see His will being accomplished! As His children, we therefore look forward to the 21st century and all that we will be able to accomplish with Him. This will change us and it will change the world. With Christ, we *expect* victory. With Christ *there will be victory!* ✞



"JESUS, OUR . . ."

Byron Nichols

Most, if not all, who are inclined to read these words would agree that Jesus Christ is the most dynamic, life-changing, powerful personality to ever enter this world. These are only a few of the adjectives that could be appropriately used to describe Jesus of Nazareth. No one has ever had the impact upon humanity that Jesus had and has. Far more books have been written concerning Him than any other of the great number of outstanding men and women who have lived. It is just as the apostle John said, *"And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written"* (John 21:25).

Perhaps it would be helpful and enlightening for us to briefly consider just a few of the relationships that we have with this one who is called Jesus.

Jesus Is Our . . .

1. Creator. John 1:1-3 shows clearly that Jesus was in the beginning with God and that He was a vital part of that creative force that brought the whole world into existence from nothingness. This corresponds with Genesis 1:26.

2. Friend. What a marvelous thought that we can claim Jesus as our friend! He said that we can do this if we do what He commands of us (John 15:13-15).

3. Lord. The Bible repeatedly identifies Jesus as our "Lord." If He is our Lord we are submissive to His direction and His authority. Without this, He cannot and will not be our Lord.

4. Savior. Surely we cherish the idea that Jesus is our "Savior." He has saved us from the guilt of our sins and from the punishment reserved for those who reject Him.

5. Redeemer. Jesus has bought us back, He has "redeemed" us (Titus 2:14). He has become our redeemer in that He has purchased our freedom from sin.

6. Lamb. The Mosaical sacrifices were specific. Among those sacrifices was that of a lamb with no spots or blemishes. Only Jesus could qualify as our sacrificial lamb (1 Peter 1:18-19).

7. Propitiation. John says that Jesus *"is the propitiation for our sins"* (1 John 2:2). This means that Jesus is the means of getting us back into the good favor of God.

8. Peace. In Ephesians 2:14 Paul says that Jesus *"is our peace."* Without Him, there is no true peace. With Him, we can truly have "peace, perfect peace."

9. Example. As a result of His human experience, Jesus is definitely qualified to be our example — He has shown us how to live victoriously (1 Peter 2:21).

10. Shepherd. As Christians we are the sheep of a shepherd who was willing to give His all for His flock (John 10:11-16). Let us rejoice in knowing that *"the Lord is my shepherd."*

11. High Priest. Jesus is our High Priest, offering our sacrifices to God for us. The Father will give careful attention to what our High Priest says and does, because Jesus understands our weaknesses, having been tempted just like we are (Hebrews 4:14-15).

12. Advocate, Intercessor, Mediator. Even though we are Christians, we still continue to sin at times. Jesus pleads our case before God, asking the Father to be merciful and to forgive our sins when we are willing to repent (1 John 2:1; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Timsothy 2:5).

13. Judge. Jesus is going to be the judge on that last great day (2 Corinthians 5:10), and He will exercise judgment that is totally fair, remembering His own human experience. His judgment will be without prejudice and will reflect His perfect wisdom and holiness.

14. Hope. To be without hope is surely one of the greatest miseries that mankind can ever encounter. Paul characterized Jesus as "our hope" (1 Timothy 1:1). Those who die without having ever become His faithful and obedient followers die without hope. But those of us who wear His name and who obey His will and proclaim His message have hope. Jesus is our hope.

The Scriptures include several more identifications of Jesus that are not included in this list, but hopefully these will suffice in renewing our appreciation for Him. There could hardly be a more appropriate way to close these thoughts about Jesus than to repeat those immortal words of Paul in 2 Corinthians 9:15, ***"Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift!"*** ✝

Table of Contents

God

The Ultimate Motivation: Love! 9
The Love and the Wrath of God...11
The Nature of Jesus 13
Our Forward Observer 15

The Word of God

Why I Believe the Bible 19
The Lost Bible 20
By What Do You Measure. . .? 21

Salvation

Saved By Jesus' Life.....24
Are We Saved By Works . . . ? 26

The Church

Why Not Consider . . . ?.....29
The Church . . . Denominations ..30

Church Growth

The Cycle of Growth 32
Practical Suggestions for 37

Church History

Historical Traces of the Kingdom....39

Proverbs 17:22

Humor 41

Christianity in Action

A Possible Impossible Mission.....43
Devising a Strategy 45
How Long Is Eternity?.....47
Will Foreign Mission . . .?.....48
The Gospel Meeting.....53
The Vocational Missionary.....55
100% Involvement in Missions.....57

Daily Christian Living

Looking Toward the Future.....59
The Heart of a Servant.....61

Poems and Writings

He Gave His Precious Blood 12
This Life I Owe 17
The Wonder of Conversion 44
Dear Lord 60
Solitude 63

Features

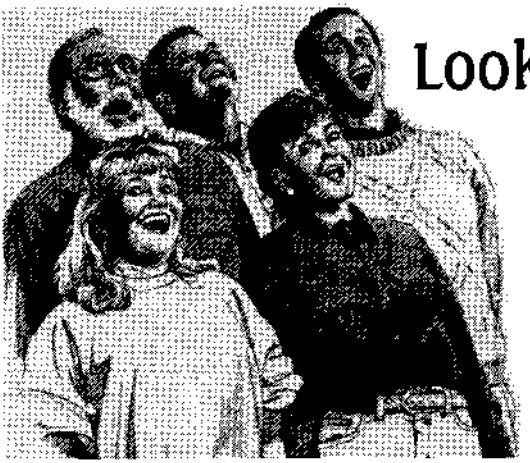
Who Am I? 18
How Do You Measure Up? 23
Verse Search 28
Puzzle Page.....58
Puzzle Answers .....Back Page

From the Heart of . . .

Churches of Christ:
Outreach Around the World 65
Operation 2000 66
One Nation Under God 67
Campaign groups
Full-time Mission Efforts.....68
Benevolence and
Disaster Relief Programs 79
Jail Ministries 86
Educational Tools for Christians ..87
The Printed Page 98
Radio.....105
Television.....109

The Voice of Truth International

Please note that Volume 26 of **The Voice of Truth International** will be especially prepared for use in disaster situations, both at home and abroad. We would encourage individuals and churches who are helping the victims to order enough copies to include one in each aid packet. People need to find God in such hurting times. **JCC**



Looking Up!

Surprise? Joy? Excitement?

We think you'll be as excited as we are when you've read **"From the Heart of . . ."** in this issue of ***The Voice of Truth International!***

Have you ever felt guilty about all the work the church is NOT doing?

Have you despaired that Christians would ever turn things around and be more concerned about our Lord's Great Commission?

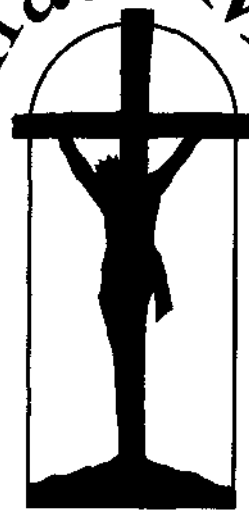
Have you looked at the problems and indifference in the church and wondered if God still calls us His own, or if He has spewed all of us out because of lukewarmness?

When you read the New Testament, you surely recognize that the congregations described there were made up of humans who had a lot of growing to do, yet they were still called 'the church of God at...'. Granted, the church today is not the ideal we must be reaching for, but neither are we as a brotherhood just sitting on our hands and doing nothing. Through the wonderful tools of mass media which God has surely providentially supplied for our use in evangelizing the world, it is a fact that huge numbers of people are having the opportunity to learn the truth.

As individual Christians, let's take heart, be encouraged, and be His 'follow-up' hands and feet to reap the harvest that is already being so widely planted and cultivated.

May God bless us all with freedom and health to work for Him.

The Ultimate Motivation: Love!



Peter Mostert

*God loves so much that **He gave!***

The Bible speaks of "fear leading to understanding." Fear is a good motivator. It causes a person to move from a place of discomfort to a place of safety. A person who is constantly in fear, however, shows that he or she has not found a place of peace. Ideally, a person who "runs" to Christ out of a fear (of going to hell) will replace this with love as he is drawn toward heaven by Christ's love.

One of the most popular verses in the Bible is John 3:16. Here John says that God loves the world so much that He gave His son — that those who believe on Him will not die but have life. When the Bible says that God *"so loved the world"* it means that He loves all people, even those who are hostile to Him, and sent the best of heaven to die

for their sin so that they might become His children.

God's motivation to save the world is love. Not vengeance, not pride, not arrogance, not one-upmanship over the devil. Nothing but love. John also says that God's love is demonstrated by giving His very best. Not an angel, not an animal, not a man — He gave His only Son whom He named Jesus.

The cost of sending Jesus may be downplayed by some who believe that He had the power to shut out the pain of His suffering and death. But Luke, a physician, says that Jesus was so distraught over His mission that while at the Mount of Olives His sweat became like drops of blood. His prayer was —*"Father, if you are willing don't let me go through this...."* Then, according to Matthew, while hanging on the cross, He cried out in deep anguish, *"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"*

Jesus bore the sins of the world — in pain and alone! While people may respond to God out of fear, the gift of salvation was given out of love. When people realize that He is not "out to get them" and send them to hell but, rather, that His goal is to gain them and take them to heaven, their fear turns to appreciation and thankfulness, and their dominant attitude turns to love.

For this reason Jesus said, *"A new commandment I give you is that you love one another,"* and, *"people will know you are Christians by your love."*

If fear is your motivation to follow Jesus, John says that *"love perfected gives confidence,"* that *"there is no fear in love because love casts out all fear,"* that *"one who fears is not perfected in love."*

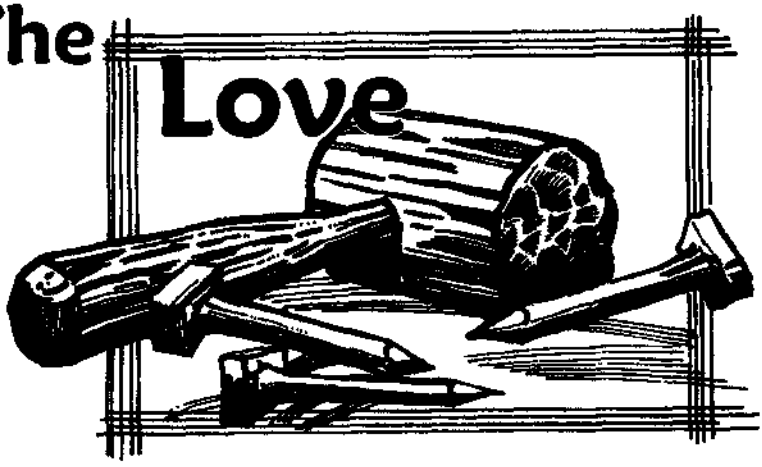
The greatest thing for a Christian is to become like Jesus. John said: *"We know love by this: ...we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren"* (1 John 3:16). I cannot help but believe that Jesus, through giving His love, came out a winner. Those who love as He does are winners too! ✝

Peter Mostert preaches for the church in Yucaipa, California, USA.

We produce joy in the heart of Jesus by remaining absolutely confident in Him, no matter what lies ahead.

— Unknown

The Love and the Wrath of God



Cecil May, Jr.

"Behold, the goodness and severity of God: toward those who have fallen, severity; but toward you, God's goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise, you too will be cut off" (Romans 11:22).

Paul here uses God's rejection of the unbelievers in Israel and His acceptance of Gentiles on the basis of their faith in Christ to illustrate both His goodness and His severity.

The supreme demonstration of the goodness and severity of God, however, is the cross.

No earthly analogy is adequate to illustrate God's love as shown in the sacrifice of His Son on the cross for us. Even mother-love, the supreme example of self-sacrificing human love, falls short. *"Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, but I will not forget you...says the Lord"* (Isaiah 49:15,18).

"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10,19). *"God demonstrated His own love toward us in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8).

How may we perceive "the

width and length and depth and height of the love of Christ which passes knowledge"? How much do God and His Son love the world? How much do They love me? "This much," Christ said, and He stretched out His arms and died.

God, the all-powerful Father, loved His Son with infinite love (John 17:23,26). He saw the mob cry out for His Son's crucifixion. He saw the soldiers prepare the cross, and drive spikes into His hands and fect. "He could have called ten thousand angels to destroy the world and set Him free." He could have stopped the process in a moment with a bolt of lightening or an earthquake. He could have simply not sent His Son to *"taste of death for all men."* Why did a loving Father, who had such power, allow His Son to die such an excruciating death?

We find a partial answer in the Father's love for sinful man, but part of the answer must also be found in the Father's righteous wrath against sin. If sin did not exact such a terrible price, love would not need the Son's sacrifice.

Of two things, there is no doubt. **God loves man, and God hates sin.**

Unforgiven sin will receive **harsh punishment,** but God will gladly and fully *forgive* those who **come to Him through Christ.**

If you doubt either of these facts, *look at the cross!* ✝

Cecil May, Jr. is Dean of the Bible Dept. at Faulkner University in Montgomery, Alabama, USA.

He Gave His Precious Blood for You

The precious blood that Jesus shed
Upon the cross of Calvary's hill
With thorns adorned His sacred head
Still waits for whosoever will.

Though many years have come and gone
His invitation still remains,
And still the vilest sinner known
May wash away his guilty stains.

His word extends to all His blood
Inviting still each precious soul
To plunge into that crimson flood
And let Him cleanse and make it whole.

He gave His precious blood for you;
Oh, would you come to Him today
While sweet forgiveness is in view
And let Him wash your sins away!

– Harry Presley

THE NATURE OF JESUS, THE NATURE OF OUR LORD

Pedro Gelabert

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:5-11).

In my home I've created an environment for some fish that I have continuously to maintain. The fish are not aware of my direct and necessary involvement in their daily living. Without my attention to their needs, they would perish and would never know what happened.

Yet, any time I approach their world to feed them, to care for them, to make adjustments in their environment, any move I make is interpreted by them as hostile and they run for cover. At feeding time, when I approach the tank, they run for cover, coming out only when they see or smell the food. When I approach the tank to adjust the salt level, water level, or pH, they run for cover.

The only emotion they can show me is fear. They **fear** me! They fear me because **they cannot understand me.** They cannot imagine or grasp what it is that I do or the ways I am involved in their lives.

It seems that the only way I could communicate to those fish that I really love them would be to become like them and relate to them in *their* environment. Perhaps they would realize more of what *I* am if I could momentarily *be a fish,* and share with them, and look with them to the world outside their tank. And maybe I could describe the world *outside* of the tank in terms *they* could understand *inside* the tank. Perhaps then they would understand.

When Jesus became man, He was motivated by the love He has for us — a deep love that draws us to seek His face and His ways because of love, *not fear.* Jesus made us understand that God is love and that God loves us, cares for us, and does everything for the good of those who love Him. God is biased toward His children! He has done **everything** to make a straight path for those who wish to listen to Him! He showed it by emptying Himself of His glory and becoming like us in every way. What a God we have! What a friend we have! What a marvelous Being who created us, cares for us, and wishes every good thing for us!

No wonder He is saddened when we turn away from Him. If the fish in my tank fail to observe the rule I set for them, which is to stay away from the mouth of the filter, they perish! When we fail to trust and obey the Lord, we are deceived and mocked by Satan, who is out to destroy us. Don't be fooled by his lies, his deceit, and the accusations he hurls your way. If you have obeyed the Gospel of the living God, you have been rescued from Satan's clutches. You are alive and new in Christ! Amen! ✞

Pedro Gelabert is the Associate Evangelist for the Long Island Church of Christ in Bay Shore, NY, USA.

Our Forward Observer

Jeril (Polly) Cline

While in the army, my husband was trained in what was called a critical MOS (military occupational specialty). Plotting the course of our firepower, correcting each round so as to hit the "target" enemy, adding more to the charge or adjusting the angle of the projectile, all required great training. But the one who often flew above ground and between our armies and the foe, was the Forward Observer. His job was to radio back the enemy's position in relation to our troops, making sure we were not killing our own with "friendly fire." More often than not the Forward Observer took his life in his hands every time he went out.

You can easily see that our Lord, before the foundation of the world, before Satan tempted mankind, before sin entered our hearts, became our Forward Observer.

He knew where the enemy would attack. He made plans for such an assault. He knew what it would cost to redeem us and was willing to stand between us and the foe. He raised our vision and gave us a perspective we would never have been able to achieve on our own. Because of Him we are not

caught unaware and sleeping. We have inside information from on high and can confidently say, *"The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid"* (Hebrews 13:6).

> *"For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you"* (1 Peter 1:20).

> *"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise Him on the heel"* (Genesis 3:15).

> *"And all that dwell upon earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"* (Revelation 13:8).

He is not only our Forward Observer, but also our Forward Absorber. It is He who has taken it upon Himself to assimilate all our sins and their deadly consequence.

> *"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him"* (2 Corinthians 5:21).

> *"But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering ... As a result of the anguish of His soul, He* (God) *will see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities....the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him"* (Isaiah 53:10,11,6b).

The Great Absorber freed us from the curse of death. He overcame the one who held its power...

> *"Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives"* (Hebrews 2:14,15).

Our Lord and Savior has also become our Forward Absolver. Having set us free from sin and death, we are now able to become holy, pure, sanctified.

> *"But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, that, just as it is written, 'Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord'"* (1 Corinthians 1:30).

What can we say? How do we thank Him? Surely the apostle Paul, who considered himself the greatest of all sinners, put it best:

> *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him"* (Ephesians 1:3,4).

> *"Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel ..."* (Philippians 1:27).

May we strive to walk worthy of so great a calling. ✝

Jerii (Polly) Cline is a writer and preacher's wife living in Blue Ridge, Georgia, USA.

This Life I Owe

Charles R. Brewer

This life I owe, it is His own;
And every morning at its dawn
I want to pledge myself anew
To love and serve Him and be true:
To pay Him for the gift He gave
My life to lift, my soul to save;
And at His feet my all to lay —
All I can be or do or say,
The powers of hand and mind and soul
Wholly to yield to His control,
And with my every act to show
I give Him back this life I owe.

Who Am I?

Can you identify me? Read each clue and think carefully. If you guess my name after the first clue, give yourself a score of 100 points. If you know who I am only after the fifth clue, your score is 60, etc.

When you are sure of my identity, look up the passages of scripture following each clue to verify the facts from God's word.

1. **100** I am called by the Greek form of *Yeshua*, which is a common Hebrew name (1:21).
2. **90** An Israelite, I was born of the tribe of Judah, a descendant of David (1:2,6).
3. **80** Part of my childhood was spent in Egypt (2:13).
4. **70** I had four brothers and some sisters, and my family was well known in our community (13:55).

5. **60** I had a sense of humor, illustrating a point with a plank in the eye, and calling a sly ruler a fox (7:3,4; L.13:32).
6. **50** I was a man of paradoxes. Some people thought I was a great king; others thought I was a fraud (L 19:38; 22:66-71).
7. **40** I worked very hard. Sometimes I went away into the mountains just to be alone and to pray (14:23).
8. **30** I had very emotional responses to people and situations (J 11:35; L 19:41; J 2:13-16; M 3:5; M 10:21).
9. **20** At a most unlikely time in my life, a most unlikely person expressed great understanding of my work (L 23:39-43).
10. **10** To meet my friends, I walked on water (14:25).

My Score _____

See answer on inside back cover.

Why I Believe The Bible

Hollis Miller

Some people do not believe the Bible. Perhaps they have adopted a philosophy which is contrary to biblical teaching. Others may not believe it because they either are not acquainted with it or have been grossly misinformed about it.

Composed of sixty-six separate books, the Bible is a unique volume. It begins with the story of God's creation and ends with an account of what is to happen when the curtain is drawn on human history.

Among the reasons why I believe the Bible are the following. **(1)** The Bible exists. True, other ancient writings also exist, but none of them compares favorably with the Bible. **(2)** The Bible tells the story of events, people, and things which we know to be real. It is not a book of fanciful, imaginary reports. **(3)** The Bible is remarkably consistent. It agrees with itself, even though it was written by many different authors over a period of approximately 1500 years. **(4)** The Bible foretells events which no human could have known except through the supervision of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah portrays in vivid language the suffering of the Messiah, and records the reason for it (Isaiah 53). Daniel knew that *"in the days of those kings"* the God of heaven would set up a kingdom which would never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44). **(5)** Those who knew Jesus best believed Him to be the Savior of mankind, and they wrote the New Testament through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They believed Jesus came forth from the tomb in which He had been buried, and they willingly surrendered their lives to Him and His cause. They were intelligent men who knew the difference between a lie and the truth. **(6)** The Bible reveals a level of moral and spiritual guidance that is unparalleled in all literature. **(7)** I cannot think of any reason why I should not believe the Bible.

Because the Bible was not written to satisfy every whim of human inquisitiveness, it does not address every possible question that men might ask. Its purpose is to reveal how God relates to men, and how men are to relate to God. *"Thy word,"* wrote the Psalmist, *"is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."* May it ever be so. ✝

Hollis Miller is a gospel preacher living in Cadiz, Kentucky, USA.

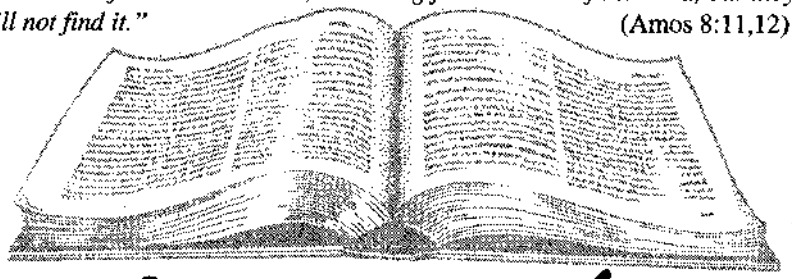
ONE DAY the world awoke to find that the Book of books had disappeared. All traces of its influence had vanished.

Much of the music of the world was silenced. The mighty oratories were no longer to be heard. The hymns expressing the hopes and fears, the longings of human hearts, had died away. Many of the masterpieces were no more; others had great parts of the music missing. Libraries looked as if millions of devouring moths had descended upon the printed pages. Books of Shakespeare, Milton, Bunyan, Tennyson, Longfellow, Tolstoy, Dostoevski, and hundreds of others were well-nigh unintelligibile, due to many omissions. Law books no longer made sense, for fundamental principles had been eliminated.

The Magna Charta of Britain, the Constitution of the United States, the American Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, and all the great statements of liberty and human rights everywhere in the world were wiped blank except for a few commonplace words now utterly lacking in significance.

But the loss of the Book cut even deeper. Values became blurred: human life grew cheap. Men became tools to be used. Life grew drab and meaningless, and man had only himself to worship. Restraints fell off the human conscience, and all the brutal instincts of the animal in man were unleashed. With the Bible lost, a veritable Hades had broken loose upon the earth!

"The days are coming," says the Sovereign Lord, *"when I will send a famine through the land; not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the Lord. Men will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the word of the Lord, but they will not find it."* (Amos 8:11,12)



The Lost Bible

BY WHAT DO YOU MEASURE TRUTH?

Michael L. King

Second hand information can be very harmful in that it is often a misrepresentation of truth by the time it has passed through multiple sources. It is not always reliable due to contamination by personal bias and prejudicial thinking. It is colored by life experiences and dangerously and blindly assumes another person to be correct.

The telephone operator in a small town received a call every day and was asked the time of day. Finally the operator asked her mysterious caller who he was and why he called every day to learn what time it was. "Oh," said the caller, "I'm the fellow who blows the noon whistle at the Town Hall, and I just want to be sure that I'm right on the second!" "Here at the telephone exchange," said the operator in a hearty laugh, "we set our watches and clocks by the noon whistle!"

It is not uncommon for sincere people to measure and declare as truth by "I feel...," "I do not think...," "It is my judgment...," etc. Too, a common failure of man is that conclusions are drawn, as illustrated above, by personal opinions and insights. If "right" is decided by personal opinion, it would be difficult to have any form of athletic competition. Each player would have as much right for being heard and observed as the next, which would result in chaos. Instead, it makes absolutely good sense to look to an unbiased source before making a declaration of *right.*

Paul warned the Corinthians against this very tendency. *"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise"* (2 Corinthians 10:12). He did provide them a means for determining their rightness or personal worth. He admonished mankind to discern *"according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us...For not he that commendeth*

himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth" (verses 13,18).

We can learn and benefit greatly from the minds, experiences, and insights of others, but the ultimate source of truth must be the teachings and example of Christ. The Hebrews writer encouraged Christians, experiencing Neronian persecution as speculated by some, to be *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher (perfecter) of our faith"* (Hebrews 12:2). Jesus declared Himself to be "truth," without which no man could approach the Father (John 14:6).

Inspired Jeremiah proclaimed the fallacy of placing trust in the reasoning of man alone. He prayed, *"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"* (Jeremiah 10:23). Why would Jeremiah reason this way? We can appeal to the inspired wisdom of Solomon to provide the answer: *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"* (Proverbs 14:12).

Sin (transgression) is "missing the mark." Who decides the mark? The Romans were reminded, *"...that the judgment of God is according to truth"* and that His judgment is righteous which no man can escape (Romans 2:2,3,5).

An archer once enjoyed the reputation throughout the community where he lived as the best! He would arrogantly declare that he could hit the "bull's eye" more often than any of his opponents. To his disappointment, his secret was discovered. He would shoot an arrow into the side of a building, then draw the bull's eye around his arrow and claim a perfect hit. His target was adjustable and determined by himself, never failing a shot! One can readily see the folly and sarcasm of his behavior.

We are just as foolish when declaring our position to be right in **disregard** to the Bible! To make others embrace our self-declared standard of right is presumptuous and causes our efforts to be in vain. Jesus taught the scribes and Pharisees that their own self-made "religion" was not adequate. *"But in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"* (Matthew 15:9). A merchant would be unethical in placing his finger upon the scales or lacing the grain with grains of sand to favor himself in the transaction. To accept, believe, and propagate information that is not a measurement of truth condemns one's own soul and does eternal harm to those who might observe and follow such instruction. ✝

Michael L. King preaches for the Grant Street Church of Christ in Decatur, Alabama, USA.

How do you measure up?

Now then,
we are ambassadors for Christ,
as though God were pleading
through us;
we implore you on Christ's behalf,
be reconciled to God.

For He made Him who knew no sin
to be sin for us,
that we might become
the righteousness of God
in Him.

2 Corinthians 5:20,21

Saved By Jesus' Life

Owen D. Olbricht

We usually think of Jesus' death, and correctly so, as the source of our salvation; however, His having returned to life through His resurrection also is essential for our salvation. Paul explained, *"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life"* (Romans 5:9).

If Jesus had not been raised, we would not have a Savior, but having been raised, He is able to save us. *"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them"* (Hebrews 7:25).

Through Jesus' resurrection we have the hope of eternal life in heaven. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you"* (1 Peter 1:3,4).

We must share in His resurrection in order to be saved. Because we share in His burial and resurrection when we are baptized, we share the benefits of His resurrection. *"Buried with Him in baptism,*

wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who has raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, has he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Colossians 2:1,2, 13).

Peter makes the same connection. He wrote that as Noah and his family were saved through water, we are saved through baptism through the resurrection of Jesus (1 Peter 3:20, 21). The statement *"like figure"* (KJV) or *"antitype"* (NKJV) shows the comparison between the water that saved Noah and our own salvation.

Robert G. Bratcher wrote, "An 'antitype' is a thing or event which is considered to be referred to by a previous thing or event, which is known as a 'type.' The water of the Flood was a 'type' of baptism."

Concerning the fact that Noah and his family were saved "by" or "through" water, Daniel C. Arichea and Eugene A. Nida wrote, "If 'through' is taken in an instrumental sense, then the meaning is that Noah and his family were saved by means of the water, since it was the water of the flood which carried the ark to safety. The reference to baptism in verse 21 seems to favor this interpretation."

Salvation is through Jesus' resurrection. This salvation comes to us when we experience with Jesus His resurrection, just as Peter wrote, *"The like figure whereunto even baptism does also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"* (1 Peter 3:21).

The resurrection of Jesus saves us. This salvation comes to us when we are baptized. This does not mean that baptism alone saves. The Bible teaches that one must believe (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12; 18:8) and repent (Acts 2:38) in order to make baptism valid. Believing and repenting without baptism do not save, for baptism is also required before we can be saved through the resurrection of Jesus.

The conclusion of the matter is that we are saved through the life of Jesus, because through His life He can provide salvation for those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). If He was not raised, we have no Savior and we are still in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:17).

Thanks be to God and to Jesus, our living Savior, we can be saved from our sins when our faith causes us to leave a past sinful life, to be resurrected to a new life in baptism (Romans 6:4). Through sharing His burial and resurrection in baptism, we share the benefits of His burial and resurrection and come to our salvation. ✞

Owen D. Olbricht is a writer living in Sherwood, Arkansas, USA.

Are We Saved By Works Of Righteousness?

Max Patterson

In Titus 3 Paul says God saved us *"not by works of righteousness which we have done."* How does one reconcile that kind of statement with Acts 10:34, 35 which says, *"of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him"*?

The truth is that there are different kinds of works, and as is described in this verse, there are works of righteousness *"which we have done."* These works are right, good, and ought to be done! But they are works that do not put one in contact with the blood of Christ.

An illustration might help. Suppose my neighbors are sick. They need the lawn mowed, the house cleaned up, and some food cooked. I do all this. It is the type of act that makes me a good neighbor and sup-

ports good moral and ethical behavior. But I could do this for two lifetimes and never come into a covenant relationship with Christ.

As the context of Titus 3 shows, I must put off the old man and put on the new. There has to be a renewal. The Holy Spirit helps me through the Word of God to start this process and helps me to continue to be renewed.

Notice also that although Titus 3:5 states that we are not saved by righteousness which we have done, it does state how we are saved. *"He saved us by the washing of regeneration"* (or baptism). This washing or baptism obviously is not included in the works of righteousness which we have done, but rather is in contrast with it.

Baptism, like the other covenant commands upon which our salvation is based, *is a part of the righteousness which* ***does*** *save.* It is an action of faith. Our obedient faith prompts God to change His mind, or acts to forgive our sins. Forgiveness takes place in God's mind, not man's. But God's mind in forgiving is activated only in obedient faith. *"Christ loved the church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify, and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word"* (Ephesians 5:25,26).

The result? Notice the Corinthians, *"And such were some of you; but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Corinthians 6:11).

Before we tell people there is nothing they can do to be saved, we need to differentiate between works — between those that simply make us good people, and those that enable us to contact the blood of Christ, and that make us Christians. The former ought to be done, but the later must be done to have forgiveness of our sins. Without the forgiveness of sins one cannot go to heaven, no matter how good otherwise he might be.

It is interesting that Paul says in Titus 3:8, *"that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works."* Indeed, not only should we be good people, but we must work the righteousness of God on earth. ✝

I must put off the old man and put on the new. There has to be a renewal. The Holy Spirit helps me through the Word of God to start this process and helps me to continue to be renewed.

Max Patterson is a gospel preacher living in Neosho, Missouri, USA.

Verse Search

Supply the missing information from the book of Acts, chapter four, NKJV.

1. Who came upon Peter and John? (V. 1)
2. What disturbed these religious leaders? (V. 2)
3. *"...many of those who _____ ___ _____ _____; and the number of the men came to be about _____ _____.* (V. 4)
4. After their arrest, what question was asked of the apostles? (V. 7)
5. In answer, Peter boldly said of Christ, *"Nor is there _____ in any other, for there is ___ _____ _____ under heaven given among men by which we must be _____.* (V. 12)
6. What caused the leaders to marvel? (V. 13)
7. Even though the leaders admitted that the healing of the lame man was a miracle, were they at all convinced about Christ? (V. 16,17)
8. What did they command the apostles to do? (V. 18)
9. What did the apostles answer? (V. 19,20)
10. Why did they not punish the apostles? (V. 21)
11. How did the church praise God? (V. 24,29,30)
12. What happened after they prayed? (V. 31)
13. Was there unity among the Christians? (V. 32)
14. *"With great power ___ _____* gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. (V. 33)
15. What did the Christians do to help each other? (V. 34)
16. Who was responsible for distributing the money according to the needs of the Christians? (V. 35)
17. Who was Barnabas? (V. 36)
18. What did Barnabas do? (V. 37)

[See inside of back cover for answers.]

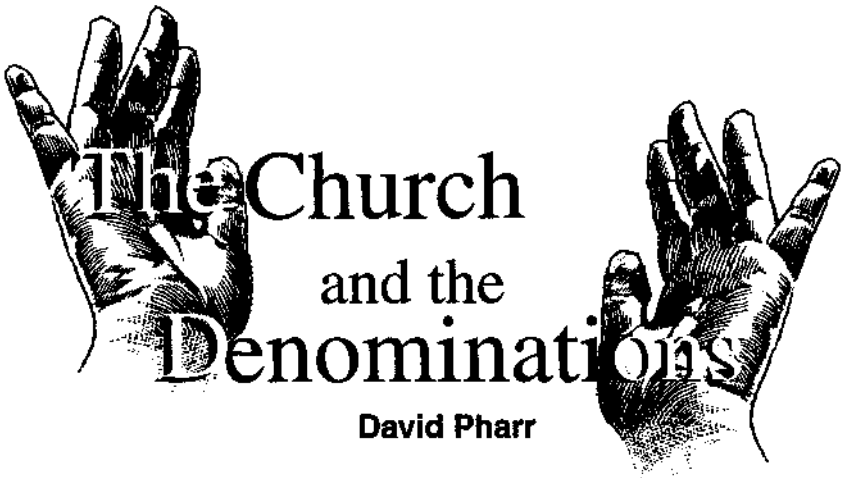
Why Not Consider Christ's Church?

W. Douglass Harris

So many churches are bidding for the attention of the public. Why not consider Christ's church that is revealed in the New Testament? We hope the following references will be helpful.

1. It *is* Christ's church — He purchased it (Matthew 16:18, Acts 20:28, Hebrews 12:22-24).
2. It was built by Christ, through His apostles (Matthew 16:18,19; Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:8; Acts chapter 2; Ephesians 2:19,20).
3. Its God-given rule of faith and practice is the Bible — (2 Timothy 3:16,17; Matthew 15:9; Acts 20:32; Romans 1:16).
4. It worships as did the Jerusalem church (Acts 2:42; John 4:24).
5. It has no instrumental music in its worship (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 16,17).
6. Its officers are elders (bishops, shepherds), and deacons (Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; Philippians 1:1).
7. Its mission is to preach the Gospel (Mark 16:15; 1 Corinthians 1:21), thus saving the lost; strengthening the saved (Ephesians 4:12-16; Acts 18:23); and helping the needy (James 1:27; Galatians 6:10).
8. It finances its work by giving on the Lord's Day through free-will offerings, according as God has prospered each member (1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).
9. Its designations? (Acts 4:10-12; 1 Corinthians 1:10-15; Romans 16:16; 1 Peter 4:16).
10. In the light of 1 Peter 4:11, the church's appeal is *"to speak where the Scriptures speak and be silent where the Scriptures are silent."* ✝

W. Douglass Harris is the editor of the *Caribbean Messenger* and lives in Decatur, Alabama, USA.



The Church and the Denominations

David Pharr

What is the difference between the church of Christ and the various denominations? This lesson will briefly review the development of the modern religious situation.

✦ In keeping with His promise, Jesus built (established) His church on the day of Pentecost following His death and resurrection (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2).

✦ In New Testament times there was only one church, and every Christian was a member of it.

✦ The only guide for the faith and practice of those early Christians was God's Word (2 John 9; 1 Peter 4:11; 2 Timothy 3:16,17).

✦ Observe: Jesus' church was not a denomination.✦

✦ The Lord foretold that there would be departures from the original plan (1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 4:3,4; Acts 20:29,30; 2 Thessalonians 2:3; etc.).

○ The religious system known as the Roman Catholic Church grew out of apostasies (departures from the truth) which began to develop a few years after the church was established.

○ The first protestant denominations began in an effort to reform the Catholic Church.

○ While improvements were made over the Catholic system, Protestantism created other errors and is characterized by:

- ✔ hundreds of divisions,
- ✔ various unscriptural names,
- ✔ doctrines,
- ✔ organizations,
- ✔ forms of worship, etc.
- ✔ Most significant is the fact that denominations rarely, if ever, teach the true plan of salvation.

Churches of Christ exist today where people have separated themselves from the various denominations to follow simply the New Testament pattern of faith and practice in religion. We are opposed to all departures from the Bible plan. The true church is not a denomination (even though many uninformed people might think it is). There must be a continuing effort to persuade people to leave their unscriptural and man-made religions and come to the Bible way.

It is not our place to judge the *hearts* or *motives* of other people, but we can know what **doctrines** and **practices** are unscriptural as we compare them with what is written in God's word, and we must oppose them because contradictions to His word stand in opposition to God Himself! See Galatians 1:6-9.

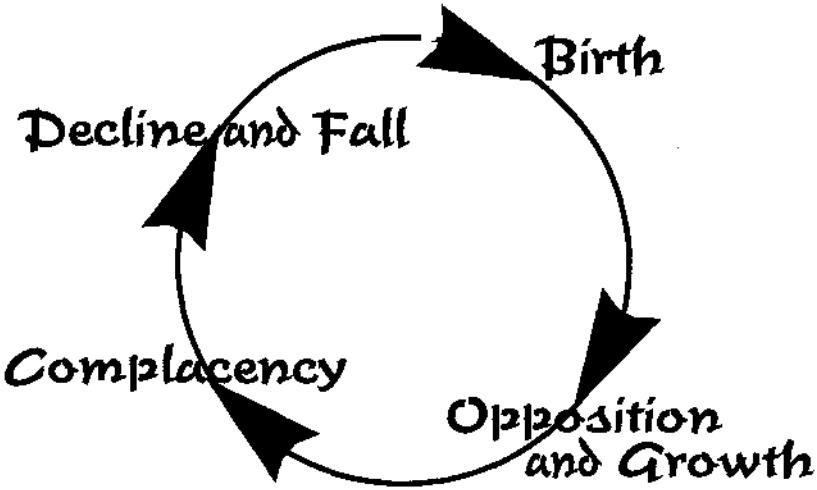
Because people are so accustomed to denominationalism, it is often hard for them to see how undenominational Christianity is different. They will want to classify the church of Christ as just another denomination. But:

- The church of Christ was started by Jesus Himself (Matthew 16:18).
- It is not a denomination.
- It is neither Protestant, Catholic, nor Jewish.
- The only creed book is the Bible.
- Every tenet of faith and practice is by the authority of Scripture.
- Wherever people lay aside human traditions and follow the Bible only, a true church of Christ exists. ✝

David Pharr is the preacher for church of Christ in Rock Hill, South Carolina, USA

Believers in Christ acknowledge their utter dependence on Him by calling Him 'Lord'. If it is a truth that no human has the power to save himself, it is also a truth that we cannot create our own churches, divisions and doctrines — in competition with God's way of salvation — and hope to be accepted by Him.

The Cycle of Growth and Decline



Clayton Pepper

THE EVANGELISTIC THRUST OF THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

Before ascending to heaven Jesus said to His apostles, *"Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"* (Acts 1:8b). There was no alternative, no debate about who was to do the job. Jesus simply said, ***"Ye shall."***

When the gospel was preached the first time, there were about 3,000 converts. *"Then they that gladly received his word was baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls"* (Acts

2:41). Because of their **zealous proclamation of salvation through Christ,** there were additions daily. *"... and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved"* (Acts 2:47b).

Soon, *"the number of the men was about 5,000"* (Acts 4:4). Counting the women and young people, the church probably had 15,000 to 20,000 members. It is at this point that Luke ceases to cite numbers and simply says, *"Multitudes of both men and women were added"* (Acts 6:1). Before the Jewish council, the apostles were told, *"Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine..."* (Acts 5:28).

THE EARLY CHURCH GREW BECAUSE:

1. They multiplied intent — their charge from Jesus was to take the gospel to *every creature.* There was no limitation set on the number of people they planned to reach with the Gospel. Suppose they had limited their efforts of teaching only to those who would come to the place where the apostles were speaking. Their intent would not have been to reach every creature! (cf Mark 16:15)

2. They multiplied opportunity — they went to *every house! "And daily in the temple, and from house to house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ"* (Acts 5:42). How many days each week could you go to your church building and find a lost person to teach? Most of the days in a week you would find none. However, most people are in their homes at night and many are there during the day. If we would win more, we too must multiply opportunity.

3. They multiplied the time devoted to teaching the lost — Acts 5:42 states that they *taught daily.* How much time is used today in reaching the lost? For most congregations, four hours in seven days, four hours of 168 hours a week, with a few other seasonal efforts. It is reported that Christianity is becoming more of a minority religion in the world every day. We must restore a *daily* effort to reach the lost.

4. They multiplied the number of people working to reach the lost — (Acts 8:4). The Great Commission has within it the great plan of passing on to all believers all things that the Lord commanded. This included the command to grow (2 Peter 2:2; Hebrews 5:12), and to go with the Gospel (Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Timothy 2:2). When persecution came upon the early

church, "... *they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word"* (Acts 8:4). Taking the gospel to the lost is an "every member" job, not just a select few (cf Matthew 25: 14-30).

The early church had **more** Christians teaching **more** sinners **more** often, and this resulted in **more** converts. When any church today has only a **few** members teaching only a **few** sinners on a **few** occasions, the result is **few** converts.

5. They used all means. Paul's evangelistic zeal is unsurpassed by his fellow workers (cf Acts 21:13; Romans 9:1-3, 10:1; 2 Corinthians 11:24-28). Paul expressed his concern for the lost when he said, *"I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some"* (1 Corinthians 9:22b). If Paul were living today, I do not believe he would look at any method of evangelism with a negative eye. I believe he would strive to use it to God's glory and the salvation of souls in the way that would please God. Paul's commitment and compulsion to reaching the lost made him look like one who was *beside himself* (Acts 26:24; 1 Corinthians 9: 16). His commitment would be criticized today by many church leaders as being *overzealous.*

Paul said of his work, *"Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 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 watching often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches"* (2 Corinthians 11:24-28).

How much commitment do we need today? Jesus said, *"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with* ***all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength:*** *this is the first commandment"* (Mark 12:30).

THE CYCLE AMONG HUMAN MOVEMENTS:

Findley B. Edge in his book, **A Quest for Vitality in Religion** has this to say about human movements: "Generally a movement is born in a time of great stress as a violent reaction against errors, abuse, and the injustices in

the status quo. Its followers see it as making a positive offer to the people of a better way. It is met with open hostility, however, and often intense persecution by those who champion the status quo, usually the majority. With almost holy zeal those in authority seek to stamp out the movement because it is a threat to those values and to that way of life to which society has become accustomed. However, the newfound ideals, beliefs, and values are held so dear by the followers of the movement that they willingly suffer persecution rather than give them up."

Further, Edge writes: "As the movement grows, it then becomes a hated sect, looked down upon by the society of which it is a part. This stage is characterized by zealous activity on the part of the followers of the movement, both to consolidate their present gains and to win new adherents to their point of view. The movement begins to grow rather rapidly, particularly among the down-trodden and underprivileged."

THE CYCLE IN THE FIRST CENTURY:

The church of the first century experienced this part of the cycle — great dedication, zeal even in the face of persecution, and phenomenal growth — the first two stages of the cycle.

But even in the first century we see examples of further stages. The letter to the **Hebrews shows us a group of Christians who had ceased to grow spiritually because they did not study God's word, and many were weak among them because of failure to worship regularly** (Hebrews 6:1-3; 10:25,26). This is the third phase of the cycle: *People grow comfortable in their achievements and cease to press forward with vigor and zeal.*

The third stage of the Growth and Decline Cycle is further exemplified by the church at **Ephesus** ((Revelation 2:2-5). **Leisure and luxury follow a condition of comfort.** Leisure, when properly used, is a blessing. But when leisure becomes a luxury it is a poisonous virus which kills its host. It undermines the vigor, the vitality, the manhood, the womanhood, the courage. Victims become *"at ease in Zion"* and they sleep on while Satan marshals his forces and moves in for the kill.

The church at Sardis (Revelation 3:1) **was dead.** This church is the last in the cycle of deterioration, when destruction is complete. No congregation of the Lord's church, no great nation, and no individual has ever fall-

en from outside. It has always been the faults, failures, the corruptions, and the rottenness on the inside that finally brings death.

THE CYCLE OF RELIGIOUS VITALITY:

We have seen this cycle repeated again in the history of the church in the US as well as in other nations:

A restoration movement began in Europe and America in the late eighteenth century, early nineteenth century, in which people made a call to return to the Bible and to follow it alone. During this time there was an aggressive proclamation of the Gospel. There was also phenomenal growth, and some persecution — stages one and two of the cycle.

Preoccupation with self is the third stage, holding what has been attained if it can be done with *a minimum of effort*. This stage, being *"at ease in Zion"*, is the comfortable lull in work, zeal, and outreach, born of spiritual laziness and ending in tragedy for individuals and congregations. "Institutionalism" results, as the means becomes the end, with emphasis on preaching and teaching within the body but with little or no focus on evangelism. When Christians lose sight of studying and growing spiritually in order to be effective in evangelism, they have turned away from their real reason for being in this world.

Deterioration and death is the final stage. Congregations go out of existence for lack of commitment and outreach. They may also lose sight of the distinctness of the church and may align with denominationalism, for comfort's sake, or they may die for lack of teaching and converting souls. Their future is bleak unless they repent and do again their first works (Revelation 2:2-5).

All individuals and congregations will experience periods of greater growth at times, and less at others, depending on zeal and the surrounding spiritual climate. **But it is vital that we keep a check on ourselves, recognizing characteristics of these four stages of growth and decline, and guarding against falling into the last three.** With God's help, we can remain strong in zeal, commitment, and knowledge, coupled with the burning fervor of our "first love". ✝

Clayton Pepper, long-time promoter of church growth, works with Restoration Network International in Nashville, TN, USA.

TRAINING TO TEACH

Jane McWhorter

Practical Suggestions for Bible Study

One of the most important aspects of a Christian woman's life is Bible study. Young Timothy was given the admonition, *"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"* (2 Timothy 2:15). The people of Berea were more noble than those in Thessalonica because *"they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so"* (Acts 17:11).

While most Christians are **aware** of the importance of Bible study, few of us devote as much time to it as we should. We mean well, but two culprits normally take precedence over our good intentions. First, we are all **too busy**. Searching God's Word is one of the most important things we can do, but it is not normally the most urgent, so frequently our study is delayed. Second, few people have a **real plan**. Without direction, study is often neglected. Perhaps the following practical suggestions will help.

1. Select a comfortable place for study and keep your material within easy reach.

2. Make realistic time allotments. A time-frame of fifteen minutes a day, kept faithfully, can produce dramatic results.
3. Begin your study time with a prayer for an open mind to God's words.
4. Reading a chapter a day is a beginning. Some try to read the Bible through in a year.
5. Rewrite each verse of one of the Gospel accounts in your own words.
6. Learn all you can about a selected Bible character.
7. Write one or two verses from an epistle on a blank page in a note book. Do some study and research; then write your findings beneath those verses. In effect, you have written your own commentary. These notebooks will become some of your most prized possessions.
8. Study by subjects (worship, baptism, church organization, etc.) and write the Bible verses in a notebook to use in personal work.
9. Study a Bible-related subject, such as evolution.
10. Study Bible geography to deepen your understanding of cities and places in the Scriptures.
11. Read surveys of the books of the Bible to get an overall grasp of the contents.
12. Use Scripture tapes while you go about routine tasks.
13. Tape verses of Scripture over your kitchen sink, on the bathroom mirror, or in some other prominent place. Reading these verses throughout the day makes memorization easier.
14. Study with a friend to share insights. It is wonderful when husband and wife can study together.
15. Use spare minutes wisely. Take your study materials with you if you think you might have a few minutes to wait at a doctor's office or other appointments.

It is the wise Christian who, first of all, takes advantage of her busy schedule by finding treasured moments of time to devote to Bible study. Second, she prayerfully sets projects and goals regardomg the material she wants to cover, in order to prevent aimless wandering as a student of God's Word. Great are the blessings! ✝

Jane McWhorter is a writer and the wife of a gospel preacher, and they live in Fayette, Alabama, USA.

The 'churches of Christ' in Britain

Keith Sisman

Because of severe persecution of 'heretics' (those who disagreed with Catholic doctrine) by the Catholic church, open assemblies of the Lord's church were dangerous and brought persecution to the members.

Historical Traces of the Kingdom that Would Never Be Destroyed

A congregation or 'church of Christ' in Britain has been dated to be meeting in 1390 in Hill Cliff, Wales, another in 1417. Gray, Bishop of Ely complained in 1457 of the existence in Chesterton, Cambridge of a similar congregation which privately assembled, but according to the records, this congregation of believers was persecuted out of existence.

With the spread of the gospel such churches existed in number by the 1550's and in the year 1549 Bishop Burnet said, "There are many Anabaptists in several parts of England who say that 'infant baptism is no baptism". Dr. Some said in 1587 that several Anabaptist congregations were in London and other places. In the book, **Believers' Baptism from Heaven and of Divine Institution**, published in 1691 by Hercules Collins, minister of a church of Christ in Wapping, it is denied that England received baptism from Smith. The book states, rather, that believers' baptism was being practised in England prior to the Baptist preacher Smith.

In October 1538 there was a commission sent to Cranmer, Stokesly and Sampson to inquire after Anabaptists, to proceed against them. At this time and much later, English Christians meeting together as 'churches of Christ' were known by those outside the church as "Anabaptists", a name given to those who had the practice of baptizing as believing adults any who had been sprinkled as babies or children.

William Tyndale,
England's most famous Christian.

The teaching of William Tyndale (died, 1536) on Baptism was that "the washinge preacheth unto us that we ar clensed wyth Christe's bloud shedynge which was an offering and a satisfaction for the synne of al that repent and beleve consentynge and submyttyne themselves unto the wyl of God. The plungynge into the water sygnyfyeth that we die and are buried with Chryst as coserning ye old life of synne which is Ada. And the pulling out again sygnyfyeth that we ryse again with Christe in a new lyfe ful of the holye gooste which shal teach us, and gyde us, and work the wyll of God in us; as thou seest in Romans 6". Quoted from; '**The obedience of all degrees proved by God's worde**, imprinted by Wyllyam Copland, London, 1561'.

Though Tynedale was a Christian and from a Christian family, he was licensed as a priest in the Catholic church (the only way at that time a man could legally preach the Gospel in England). He taught that only those who believe may be baptised into Christ for the remission of sins and thereupon they could partake of the Lord's supper. It seems that Tynedale's religious background was influenced in part from the small groups of Christians who were still surviving in the west of England. In later years Tynedale's brother and family were members of the church of Christ.

> "...the washinge preacheth unto us that we ar clensed wyth Christe's bloud, shedynge which was an offering and a satisfaction for the synne of al that repent and believe...

Tyndale's New Testament which first appeared during 1526 was made directly from the Greek third edition of Erasmus, and was far superior to Wycliffes old Vulgate orientated Bible, which was now out of date and difficult to find. Tyndale's New Testament was mass printed and many of the Catholic doctrines could be seen to be totally without any Bible authority.

Now the English church of Christ had a modern Bible in the vernacular of the day. Churches of Christ were being established throughout Britain, preaching the pure Gospel despite horrendous persecution from the Anglican church. ✞

Keith Sisman is a Christian living in Huntingdon, Cambs, England

Bert got tired of people accusing him of exaggerating when it came to telling his fishing stories, so he bought a special set of scales to weigh his fish. One day the small town hospital broke its scales and asked to borrow Bert's to weigh a newborn baby. The baby weighed in at 32 lbs.

"Dad, can you guess what I'm gonna be when I graduate?"

Dad: "An old man."

Years ago a preacher went for a trial sermon in hopes of being employed as the preacher for the congregation. Following the sermon the men met with him to question his abilities. Wanting to be sure they got an educated man, they and a local school teacher had worked up a few special questions to test him.

With an air of scholarship, the lead man began, "Preacher, would you say a hen sits or sets?" The young sage from the hills answered, "I don't care whether she sits or sets. What I'm interested in is: When she cackles, is she laying or lying?"

There were no more questions. He got the job!

Maybe you've heard of the new branch of psychiatry that is called "Psyco-Ceramics." It's the study of crackpots.

First member: "That sermon was just divine. It reminded me of the peace of God — it passed all understanding."

Second member: "It reminded me more of the mercy of God — I thought that it would endure forever."

You might not want to call him stupid, but he did take an IQ test, and the results were negative.

An Air Force major was promoted to colonel and received a brand new office. His first morning behind his desk, an airman knocked on the door and asked to speak to him. The colonel, feeling the urge to impress the young man, picked up his phone and said, "Yes, General, thank you, sir. Yes, I will pass that along to the President this afternoon. Goodbye, sir."

Then he turned to the airman and barked, "And what do you want?"

"Nothing, sir. I just came to hook up your phone."

A businessman ordered flowers to be sent to the opening of his friend's new branch office. When the businessman got there, he was shocked to see the flowers with the inscription, "Rest in Peace."

He was so outraged that he stopped at the florist to complain. After apologizing, the florist said, "Don't get so upset. Someone today in this city was buried beneath a floral arrangement with the inscription, 'Good Luck in Your New Location.'"

A fellow wanting a date with this beautiful girl found out that she especially liked Indian-Jewish-Southern rednecks.

He finally worked up the nerve to ask her for a date. She asked him what his name was. He replied, "My name is Tonto Abraham Goldstein, but my friends down South call me Bubba."

A lot of stuff that is promoted as "food for thought" these days is nothing but baloney.

Winter ranks as one of my favorite times of the year. Yeah, it ranks right below April 15.

"Dad, what is the millennium?"

The parent responded, "Don't you know what a millennium is, child? It's just about like a centennial, only it's got more legs."

Freddie: "Do you think anyone can really predict the future with cards?"

Teddie: "My mom can. She takes one look at my report card and then tells me exactly what will happen when Dad gets home."

A Possible Impossible Mission

Jerry C. Dyer

Many events make the Great Commission seem impossible. One of those occurred on October 12, 1999. The media reported that world population reached six billion souls. Actually the more accurate records of the World Population Clock and the U. S. Census Bureau indicate world population already exceeds six billion

In thinking about this, one may say, "I have to pass these by and treat them as indifferently as parts of moving machinery going down an assembly line...I cannot possibly relate to all of them, so I will relate to none of them."

The population densities of many metropolitan areas reinforce alienation and indifference An attitude of isolation becomes a way of life. Unable to relate to the hordes, some people conclude there are no people. Some need this response to maintain a psychological equilibrium, but that mindset will destroy outreach to the lost.

In a time when relationships are critical to the gospel's impact, we have discovered that many Christians have neither significant redemptive contacts with non-Christians nor the ability to relate in a redemptive manner. Some have concluded there are too many to reach all of them, so we do not teach any of them, in order to avoid practicing selective evangelism.

We must return to the Bible. Consider the impressive numbers

which resulted from an infant church that believed every member was responsible for reaching out with the gospel: Acts 2:41 (3000); Acts 4:4 (5000 men); Acts 6:1,7; 9:31 (multiplication); Colossians 1:23 (gospel preached in all the world).

The early disciples adopted Jesus' priorities and devoted themselves to reaching their world with the gospel. When we restore their belief in the message and messenger, restore their zeal and love for the lost, and restore their commitment to the Great Commission, we can with God's help reach out redemptively to all the lost.

The titles of two songs summarize the challenge, "Lead Me to Some Soul Today", and "I Know the Lord Will Find a Way for Me." ✝

Jerry C. Dyer is Director of Clayton Pepper Center for Church Growth.

The Wonder of Conversion

A.R. Holton

Man is the only being of God's creation that has remorse for sin. He is the only being of God's creation that is aware of the mystery and wonder of His own spirit. He is the one being to which the Holy Spirit can bear witness.

To be converted, then, is one of the great mysteries of human existence, and at the same time it is the deepest reality that man knows.

To turn from doubt to faith is to be converted. To be converted is to have an on-going, very personal relationship with God as our Father.

Yes, as Christians we stand amazed at the possibilities of an hour of worship. We stand amazed at the human spirit in making decisions for God and for things high and noble. May we never lose the sense of wonder and of the mystery of human life on this earth. May we grow in an increasing awareness that this is God's world and that we belong to God and that we shall go at last to the presence of God.

Devising a Strategy to Build Churches That Last

Gordon Hogan

"By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

"If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames." 1 Corinthians 3:10-15

If the church is to last it is absolutely essential and fundamental that the foundation be Christ and truth.

Right Attitude Vital

Churches that last are made up of members who have the attitude of Christ. *"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness"* (Ephesians 4:22,23).

In everything we do, a right attitude, dictated by a clear, submissive understanding of the will of God is absolutely essential. This will result in a complete, uncompromising trust in God. We will not trust in our own understanding. There will be no place for intellec-

tual pride, selfishness and egoism. Jesus and His way will be kept at the center. A further result will be the avoidance of insisting that our human opinions must be elevated to the status of divine decree. This will free the church from hurtful human issues that Satan so often uses to create division. *"Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things"* (Colossians 3:2) is instruction from God through the Apostle Paul that, when given heed to, will result in the right attitude.

Expectation

Expectation is a relative of desire. The church that lasts will be the one that expects and desires to last. We must really want to! Paul said, *"my heart's desire...is that Israel might be saved"* (Romans 10:1). We must expect to win souls to Christ. We must expect to grow in number. We must expect to mature in faith.

Expectation and desire then give birth to reality when followed by planning, training and determination. It has been rightly said, we finally get about what we really want.

An Example of Strategy

Luke writes of Paul's visit to Thessalonica as follows: *"As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. 'This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ,' he said. Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women."* (Acts 17:2-4) This was the beginning of a church that achieved true greatness.

One year later Paul writes a description of the church at Thessalonica. *"Paul, Silas and Timothy. To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:*

"Grace and peace to you. We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

"For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia — your faith in God has become known

everywhere. Therefore, we do not need to say anything about it. . ." (I Thessalonians 1:1-8).

What worked for this great first century church will work in any century and for us here and now. Take note, they had "work" produced by faith, "labor" prompted by love and "endurance" inspired by hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, they became "imitators of Paul and of the Lord, "welcomed" the message with the "joy" given by the Holy Spirit and became a "model" to all believers then and now. The Lord's message "rang out" from them.

Leadership

The church must have capable, Godly leaders. These leaders will recognize that it is essential to nurture, feed, shepherd and make it possible that every member understands that he or she is a vital part of the one body (I Corinthians 12:27), and that each has a gift or gifts that must be used to the edification of the Church and to the glory of God.

Picture this:

A congregation where every member matters, where each can make a difference to society and the world as an active participant.

A congregation where every member has opportunities to succeed in ministry, with success defined by God.

This congregation will be a spiritual home for its people, not a hotel. Strong families will serve as anchors; evangelism and concern for the lost of the world will be its heartbeat. This is a church that will last! ✝

Gordon Hogan is Missionary-in-Residence at Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas, USA.

HOW LONG IS ETERNITY?

Because Jesus was resurrected, all people are assured that their spirit will one day return to their body, bringing about the **resurrection of the body,** to stand before God in judgment. The righteous are promised eternal life in God's presence, where God will "*...dwell with them ... and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, and there shall be no more pain...*" (Revelation 21:4).

"*But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone...*" (Revelation 21:8).

This place of fire is called 'hell' and is described as *everlasting* (Matthew 25:46). Thus, according to the Holy Bible, *the soul never ceases to exist; it will never die.*

NEXT: **HOW CAN I KNOW WHAT GOD WANTS?**

Will Foreign Mission Methods Work At Home?

Betty B. Choate

According to a recent article, 80% of all churches number 100 or less in attendance. Certainly this would be true of the Lord's church, if the figures in **Where the Saints Meet** are reliable.

This means that many Christians have a home situation where the church is small and often inadequate to meet the local spiritual needs. The leadership may not be dynamic. The preacher may be young and inexperienced, and perhaps less effective in his work than those employed by the larger congregations. The program of activities may include little more than the basic worship services. A wide range of ages may be lumped together in classes, for lack of teachers. Because of spiritual inactivity, there may be bickering, luke-

warmness, and worldliness, making the congregation a poor example of Christianity in the community.

In short, the local situation may leave many Christians totally discouraged about the future of their home congregation.

Must such a negative picture continue? Must the church remain small? Is it possible to overcome the inadequacies and to grow?

Look at a foreign setting for a minute. A family goes into a pagan country where the church doesn't exist. There is no large body of believers to attract newcomers. There are no exciting activities to offer. There is no range of well-organized and well-attended classes to draw others. The group may even meet in the missionary's home, or in some temporary rental place.

Nothing about the situation seems designed for the actual building of a nucleus of believers, yet it happens. Why is the missionary able to do what seems so difficult for already established congregations here at home?

I suggest that at least part of the answer lies in basic and often subtle differences in outlook. It doesn't take much — a little here and a little there — to add up to a completely different total.

Why can people be converted in mission areas?

✔ Because the missionary has staked his life's work on the belief that the truth he is offering is needed and wanted. He goes out, asking God's help in locating those who are looking for Him, and he *expects* to make converts.

✔ Because he focuses the attention of his students (as well as his own) on God and the truth they must have rather than the fellowship they may lack as they become new Christians.

✔ Because the missionary knows that diligent and persistent outreach are necessary to contact the unreached souls who will be responsive.

How do these attitudes differ from the typical outlook of American Christians in a discouraging local setting?

✘ We are convinced that religious pleas are not wanted these days. We don't expect positive response to our spiritual overtures.

✘ We compare ourselves, congregationally, with local denominations and feel that we have too little to offer.

✘ We, ourselves, listen to our negative reasoning and so we don't go out diligently and persistently, *prayerfully,* looking for those who want to learn.

Must such a negative picture continue? No. The picture will change when our own attitudes change. Part of the problem that prevents us from teaching and winning the lost is *our mind-set,* not their refusal to hear.

Recent surveys confirm that more than half of the American people don't regularly participate in any church. A Gallup Poll study says that 54% of the "unchurched" would be willing to be members of a church. What they lack is the teaching, the encouragement, offered by someone who already has spiritual commitment.

Putting these figures together, do we realize what they are saying?

◆ The "churched" may be satisfied, even polarized where they are.

◆ American society has grown steadily away from spiritual anchors since the 60's. A whole generation has grown up without those strengths or those biases for or against truth. That generation's children have grown up with the pendulum ready to begin swinging back, and many of them are open to teaching. This doesn't mean that *masses* can be quickly and easily converted, but it does mean that, one by one, conversions can be made.

◆ If one-half of the population is "unchurched", and if one-half of that number is willing to be "churched", then, potentially, one out of every four people might be won to Christ.

◆ As I have conversed with various ones during the past week, three different parents have told me of their teenagers initiating a return to religion for the whole family. One lady said, "My daughter is really searching. She told me the other day, 'Mother, it doesn't matter to me where we go, but I want us to start going to worship somewhere together.'" Yesterday a man said, "I was brought up going to church but the teachers in my high school years talked more about sports than the Bible so I dropped out. My son is a teenager now, and last year he started going to Bible School and joined the church. He kept after me and so I went back a few weeks ago." Another lady said, "Our boys just insisted that they wanted to be in classes somewhere. We are going with them some now."

◆ The times are changing always, and we need to keep ourselves aware of those changes. The negative response to truth that seemed widely character-

istic during the 60's and 70's is not necessarily what we will see today. Of course, our Lord's statement that the way is narrow and that there will be few to find it will always be true. But another of His observations is true also: *the field are white unto harvest.* In its own way, the era of a-spirituality has served to create in some hearts a new realization of need for God, largely free of pre-established biases. We must open our eyes to these facts and seize the opportunities that are before us now.

◆ There are cycles in human behavior. Because of the divisions among believers in Christ, because of indifference on the part of too many Christians, because of humanistic and atheistic teachings from every direction, because of affluence and materialism, much of the developed world is not greatly concerned about religion. Yet, in spite of these factors, religious groups that are out *actively teaching* are growing. Even Middle Eastern and Eastern mystical religions are mushrooming in growth among Americans. The spiritual vacuum is being felt in lives — the problem is that it is being filled with garbage instead of the righteousness of God.

How can we go about reversing the negative trends in the church?

● *Pray. Work.* **Pray. Work.** *Pray. Work.* **Pray. Work.** There is no substitute for these two essentials for success.

● Take inventory of the activities of the congregation. Listen to the announcements. Do they concern — bottom line — "play" activities for the youth and teens, and "busy work" involvement for adults? "Playing" will not assure spiritual maturing and faithfulness, but **bearing fruit** through teaching and converting others, and through nourishing weak or new Christians will invariably strengthen the workers as well.

● Encourage individual fellowship with Christians in their home and yours, **praying and planning together. Let your conversation be about spiritual things, rather than sports, work, or school.** Suggest ideas and work that can be done; talk them up and set about getting others involved. Develop training sessions for those who lack confidence in their ability to teach. Remember, if you are working and you get one other person started working, you have doubled the work force! Develop a close spiritual relationship in the church in these ways and watch for the good changes to come.

- Realize that we don't have to be the largest group to have something to offer. If community people can see a caring quality about Christianity, a Christ-like love and oneness, if they can be taught to recognize truth, then *negative* factors will not be the *deciding* factors.
- Use all scriptural methods in your hands to improve the local congregation. Keep your eye on *God and on the goal;* **persevere,** and be always prayerful about God's work through you, and about any changes in methods that need to be made.
- Ask God to help you find those who are looking for the truth, and then make the formal commitment to keep yourself regularly involved in a study with some non-Christian.
- In conversations, look for spiritual openings and then follow through on them.
- When the setting seems right, just take the plunge and ask the person for a regular weekly study time, so that the two of you can learn together.
- Be concerned with the personal and emotional needs around you. Too often we want to work with those whose only needed change in life is baptism and, presto, we have "instant Christians"! If we are looking only for that type of person to teach, we won't find many opportunities. Jesus said He came to call sinners to repentance, and He was accused of associating with people who would contaminate Him. He didn't have a lot of time for the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the "most righteous" people in the religious world, because most of them didn't have time for Him.

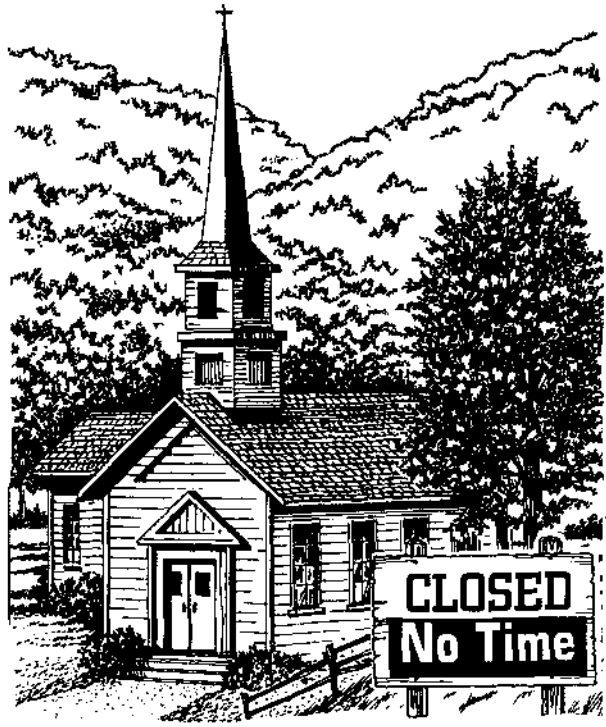
Today, the world is full of problems, and people really need the solutions given in God's Word. We, standing in Christ's stead, must involve ourselves with those who need us. We must be willing to use our homes, our food, our cars, our money, our abilities, our families, our time, our everything in God's service. With this attitude we will have continual opportunities to teach. Our problem will be lack of time and strength, not lack of students.

Do we really want to reverse the negative trends in the church? Do we really want individual Christians and the church to grow? It can happen. The trend can be turned around. *Working* with God, we can do it. The choice is ours. And the resulting unspeakable happiness will also be ours when we get up and get involved. ✝

Betty Burton Choate is the wife of J.C. Choate, missionaries to India for many years.

The Gospel Meeting

Demar Elam



The three latest gospel meetings I have conducted produced the following results: 57 restored; 15 baptized.

More and more we're hearing people say, "The day of the gospel meeting is dying," or "The day of the gospel meeting is finished." If there is any validity to such statements, then it reflects on our spiritually. I've seen in my lifetime the gospel meeting reduced from two weeks, to one week, to four days, to three days, and I recently heard that a gospel meeting effort would be conducted over four Sundays (just regular Lord's Day worship periods).

I've been privileged over thirty-four years of preaching Christ to travel into thirty-five countries of the world sharing the good news of salvation with others. I've witnessed a variety of interests in the gospel message, from apathy to an extreme hungering and thirsting. Christ said in His memorable Sermon on the Mount, *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled"* (Matthew 5:6). Paul instructed Timothy, *"till I come, give*

attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (1 Timothy 4:13). We are told to *"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"* (2 Timothy 2:15).

Perhaps it is time that we re-evaluate our actions. Why have we reduced the length of our gospel meetings?

- Is it because we feel that by doing so we can improve our spirituality?
- Have we decided that we can better edify the church in three days of preaching than in seven or fourteen?
- Has the reducing of the days of a gospel meeting resulted in a greater numerical or spiritual growth?
- Have we increased or decreased the Bible knowledge of the average member of the church by providing fewer learning sessions?

Brethren, I suggest that we're no longer as hungry as we once were! The American way of life is so filled with fun and frills that our taste buds have little or no craving for the Water and Bread of life (John 6:35,48). The Bread that provides eternal life (John 6:58) is the very bread that we no longer desire for two weeks, or even one.

I suggest that if we allow the gospel meeting to die it's because **we're dying spiritually, individually, and in many cases, as a group.** Those who are hungering after righteousness exercise their senses, *"For every one who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil"* (Hebrews 5:13,14).

Gospel meetings afford us the opportunity to exercise our senses. Perhaps we're already reaping what we've sown, as Bible knowledge appears to be sorely lacking with many church members today. Where Bible knowledge is lacking, spirituality is lacking, and when spirituality is lacking, the door is open to all types of doctrinal errors and divisions.

We must remember that, always, we are only a generation away from apostasy. The only thing shielding us from that disaster is a firm knowledge of God's word.

Where are the spiritually mature leaders in our brotherhood who will boldly lead us and reverse the present trend of the disappearing Gospel Meeting? ⇧

Demar Elam is Director of Mission Studies at Southern Christian University in Montgomery, Alabama, USA.

The Vocational Missionary

Charles Salmon

The greatest of all vocational missionaries in the body of Christ had this to say, *"Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended: but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things in Himself" (Philippians 3:13,14,20,21).

Though he could have had fame, fortune, and security in the world by virtue of birth, training and position, he willingly put these things aside and counted them but rubbish, and forgot them. He did not look back, but set his goal in heaven through Christ, and gave us an example to follow (Philippians 3:3-17).

This attitude of heart and concern for the lost caused him to write the brethren of Corinth in this manner, *"Just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. ... Be ye followers of me just as I also am of Christ"* (1 Corinthians 10:33; 11:1).

Brethren, let us not categorize and fail to understand fully these and a multitude of other passages which tell us that **we are *all* vocational missionaries.**

Let us be like Paul and quit seeking for security in paid up mortgages, businesses, insurance policies, and positions of earthly responsibility.

How can we believe in the greater promises of forgiveness of sins, heaven, and eternal life if we do not believe that the Lord has the inclination, the desire, and the capability to bless and care for those that will "deny self", and do His will (Luke 9:23-26; Matthew 6:33; Psalms 1,2,3,37).

Now, in understanding what and who a vocational missionary is, we can look at the opportunities afforded us, as opposed to preachers and missionaries who are supported by congregations and individuals.

First, we are *a multitude*, greatly outnumbering our supported brethren.

Second, we are *everywhere*, and there are few areas in the world where some of our vocations are not needed. Doors open for us that are closed for documented missionaries.

Third, we are not a *financial burden* upon anyone, and do not need to waste valuable time in raising working funds, travel funds and support. (You can easily see how this would free funds for larger and more comfortable buildings, cushioned pews, defunct A/C replacements, better carpets and a multitude of other such vital needs at home!)

Fourth, and this is most important, **we teach by our example that Christ is first in our lives,** and we, like Paul, are bound by this great commission to go into all the world and preach the Good News.

When those we teach see us demote the values of the world and promote the values of Christ in our lives, we become powerful instruments in the hands of our Lord. Willing instruments, conformed and fitted to the Master's use in accomplishing that for which so great a price was paid — *the saving of lost souls.*

Much could be said about choosing a field, training to go, preparations of various kinds, but these are details that will fall neatly into place once we are personally committed and have set our *"goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"*.

There is no need for a complex, complicated, intricate plan at the beginning, but merely a plain and simple statement to our God, earnestly and sincerely made. **"Here am I Lord, send me."** That is all God has ever needed, for He owns the world and all therein and is able to alter any and all things for the accomplishing of His will (Psalm 50; Isaiah 55:8-11).

It is evident that Satan has sneakingly whispered in too many ears, "He didn't mean *you,* you will not surely die." Subtly, he has offered — and we have bought — the lie that we have not the talent to teach others; yet, we use daily the God-given breath, life, wit and time to do a host of trivial things and convey to others the knowledge of the same. What more talent could we want?

Is it talent we lack? or is it commitment? ✞

Charles Salmon is a former vocational missionary to Tasmania,who lives in Naples, Florida, USA and makes campaign trips to Ghana.

100% Involvement in Missions

Doyle Kee

We sometimes feel detached from the church's mission outreach. A check is sent, a report is put in the bulletin, and every two or three years the missionary shows up for a weekend to give a report. Is that it? Is that our limited involvement in carrying out the great mission of the Lord's church?

Paul, the "missionary" of the early church, had something else to add. Though some are able to go on foreign campaigns or make contributions individually to special projects (may God bless you all!), *everyone* can respond to the mission call of the apostle Paul. We hear this call in statements like these:

"Brothers, pray for us" because there is no way we can be "Christ" to the world by ourselves. Being ambassadors in foreign territory is a struggle. ***"I urge you, brothers...to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me"*** (Romans 15:30).

Specifically, for what are we to pray? ***"Pray for us that God may open a door for our message...that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should"*** (Colossians 4:3,4). Then he asks, ***"Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message may spread rapidly and be honored. Pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men"*** (2 Thessalonians 3:1,2).

Paul indicates that we have a **direct** involvement in mission work when we pray for missionaries. You can continue, or you can begin, to work directly with missionaries whom you know. Your prayers have an immediate and personal influence on the direction of mission work. Missionaries let God direct their work as **you** have requested.

"Brothers, pray for us" is not just a cliche at the end of missionaries' letters/reports. It is a plea that you enter personally and directly into their mission. This ***"partnership in the gospel"*** which Paul calls it (Philippians 1:5) is a wish and a plea for all of us. This makes us ***"God's fellow workers"*** (2 Corinthians 6:1). ✞

Doyle Kee is a missionary to the French speaking world, living in Geneva, Switzerland.

The Book of 3 John for adults

Fill in the verse below by using the graph.

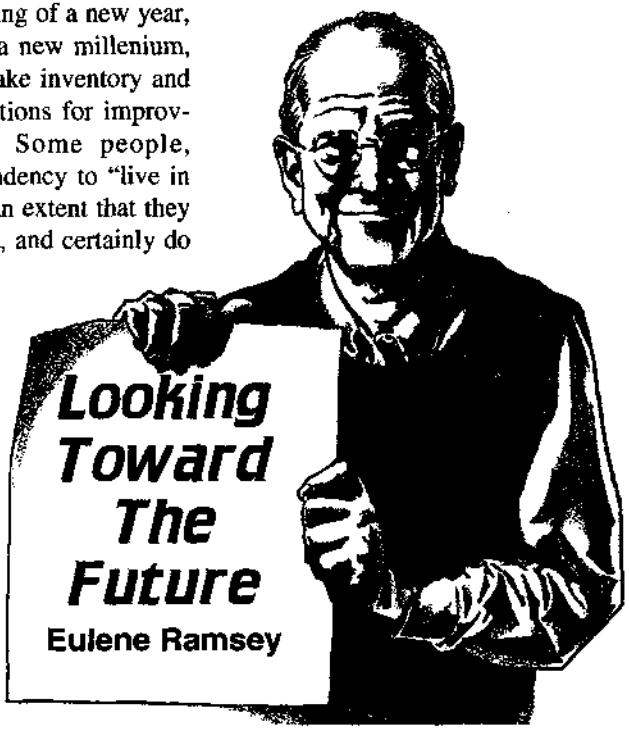
	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	IMITATE	NOT	EVIL	IS	DOES	NOT
2	HAS	BELOVED	GOOD	HE	BUT	DOES
3	WHO	EVIL	3 JOHN 11	DO	GOOD	SEEN
4	IMITATE	GOOD	HE	WHO	OF	GOOD

_____, _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
B2 D3 F1 A4 B3 E2

_____ _____. _____ _____ _____ _____
A1 C2 C4 A3 F2 F4

_____ _____ _____; _____ _____ _____ _____
D1 E4 B4 D2 D4 E1 C1

_____ _____ _____ _____. "_____
A2 B1 F3 E3 C3



At the beginning of a new year, and especially of a new millenium, it is a custom to take inventory and make some resolutions for improving ourselves. Some people, though, have a tendency to "live in the past" to such an extent that they misuse the present, and certainly do not look ahead to the future.

As Christians we should look to the future with great expectations.

Think of the future as a huge page, potentially filled with opportunities! But unless we take advantage of them, they might as well not be there. It is vital that Christians train themselves to look for opportunities, and once they are found, to act on them.

Have you ever experienced the feeling of loss when you realize that you have let an important opportunity slip by unnoticed? We need help with this, so it should be a part of our daily prayers.

Galatians 6:10 tells us that *"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."* There are opportunities to visit the sick, the lonely, those who are struggling with problems. The love in our hearts should make us want to do whatever we can to help another along the way. For instance, nursing homes are always looking for volunteers to visit, write letters for those who can no long write, read to them, sometimes to just sit and listen.

Since every Christian's goal is to win others to Christ, we should look for opportunities to teach our

neighbors and friends. Do we invite them to go to worship with us? Our lives should be such that they respect us enough to be willing to listen when we suggest a home Bible study. If we carefully watch for opportunities to teach, we will find them.

There are many opportunities to help in mission work. If we are unable to go, then help those who can. There are many millions in this world who have never held a Bible in their hands! Bibles are inexpensive and can be sent all over the world. Why not take the opportunity to work with World Bible School, a method that has taught the gospel to thousands and thousands of people who might never have heard it except through this medium.

It is vital that we know what the gospel is before trying to teach others. That means Christians should spend much time in study. There are now numerous books written by some of the most able men and women in the brotherhood. These are inexpensive and can be used by an entire family.

But there is nothing that can take the place of simple Bible study. In this hectic world it is not always easy to find time to study, but if our priorities are in proper order, there will be opportunities if we but search. Perhaps it may mean missing some favorite TV programs, or even missing the daily newspaper, but ask yourself which is more important.

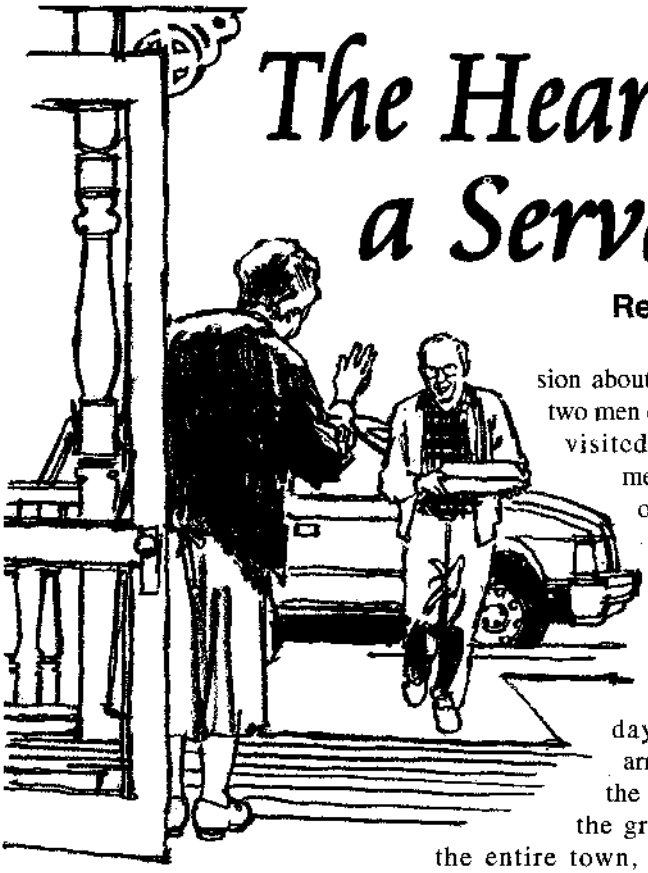
So let us look at each new day as a day the Lord has given us, and determine to see any opportunity for doing the Lord's will. There is a great big future out there, and we should thank the Lord for giving us another day in which to work!

Eulene Ramsey is a member of the World Evangelism Team. She lives with her husband, Darrell, in Winona, MS, USA.

Dear Lord,
So far today I've done alright.
I haven't lost my temper,
haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty,
selfish, or over-indulgent.
I'm really glad about that,
but in a few minutes, God,
I'm going to get out of bed.
From then on,
I'm probably going to need
a lot more help.
Thank you,
Amen
— Anonymous

The Heart Of a Servant

Rex Banks



Rabbinical tradition contains the story about a little village whose inhabitants were thrown into a state of great excitement by a divine announcement to the effect that an angel would visit a particular resident of the town, a godly soul, whom the Lord God held in high esteem. Two famous rabbis lived in the village, and there was much speculation and discussion about which of these two men of God would be visited by the Lord's messenger. Which of these erudite students of the Word had obtained the special favour of Jehosvah?

Well, the day of visitation arrived and so did the angel — but to the great surprise of the entire town, neither of the learned teachers was visited by God's messenger. Instead, the heavenly visitor entered the humble dwelling of an old woman who had devoted her life to washing the feet of strangers, visiting orphans and tending to the needy.

Now, much that was taught by the rabbis was fanciful nonsense, but the moral of this story reflects a great Biblical truth, namely that

God honours those who choose a life of service to others. From Jesus' own life we learn that greatness is measured, not by places of honour (Matthew 23:6), respectful greetings (v. 7) or titles of rank (v. 8), but rather by *service to others* (v. 11).

Service to others also features prominently in Ephesians, chapter 4, where Paul explains just why Christ *"gave gifts to men"* (Ephesians 4:8) to equip them to **minister** [serve] as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (v. 11) within the body of Christ. Look closely at Ephesians 4:12 and note carefully that the *immediate* purpose of the gifts was *"...the equipping of the saints **for the work of service"*** (N.A.S.V.). The N.E.B. has *"...to equip God's people for work in his service."* Yes, God intended for the church to be the place in which *EVERY* person learns to use his talents and abilities in servanthood!

We have *all* been called to offer our talents and abilities, to *"wash feet"* and to seek the good of brethren above our own. Often in the world men fight to gain a mean advantage — in the body we are to glory in the role of *servant.* Often in the world a petty, competitive spirit sours human relationships — in Christ we learn to work for the salvation of others. When God became Man, He came to earth as "One who serves" (Luke 22:27) — discipleship, therefore, involves possessing a servant's heart.

Now, if the ***immediate*** purpose of the gifts was *"the equipping of the saints for the work of service,"* the ***ultimate*** purpose was *"...the building up of the body of Christ"* (Ephesians 4:12). You see the gifts were designed *"...for the common good"* (1 Corinthians 12:7), and when employed in a selfless, humble manner the entire church was edified. Quite simply, when we learn to *"be subject to one another"* (Ephesians 5:21) in joyful, generous service, the entire body is edified, encouraged and built up.

Why is the Philippian letter an epistle of optimism, joy and thanksgiving? Quite simply because Paul was delighted by the self-sacrificing, serving spirit of the brethren at Phillipi, and knowledge of their concern for him ***built him up!***

Brethren, if we *really, really* love that body for which Christ gave His life, then we will consciously put on *"a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience"* (Col. 3:12) and build up the brethren by becoming a servant to those for whom Christ died. In fact, the call to discipleship demands it. ✝

Rex Banks is a preacher of the Gospel in Gisborne, New Zealand.

SOLITUDE

I climbed up to the mountain peak seeking
Quiet solitude, far from the haunts of men.
Up there the sky was clear, the air was clean.
Below me sprawled the city on the plain.
The smoke of commerce lay like a dank fog
On streets teeming with men of every stripe,
Each in his own pursuits devoted to
The triune god of Profit, Pride and Wealth.

I sat till eve and watched the sinking sun
For one brief hour set the western sky
Ablaze with flames of gold and purple hue,
Then vanish in the crimson afterglow.

Then God began to light His evening lamps;
The twinkling stars gave prelude to full night,
And in the streets below a neon glare
Blazed forth from palaces of sin and vice.
The sounds of revelry came to my ears,
The raucous shouts of drunken men at play,
The shrill laughter of women of the streets;
The drinkers and carousers held the night
While flashing lights beckoned, beckoned, beckoned.

I knelt beside a sturdy oak and prayed,
"O. Lord! Let me abide here In this place,
Where all is calm and peace, in solitude.
Let me eschew the earth and its pleasures,
Away from blood-soaked fields of war and strife;
The wine vendor who reaps the toiler's wage,
Leaving his own to plead for charity;
The envious eyes of men of lesser worth,
The arrogance of men in high places;
From those who barter vice as merchandise."

"O, Lord! Let me abide here close to Thee
That I might not be soiled by unclean men."

As I thus prayed a strong wind came and shook
The rugged tree that I had knelt beneath,
And from the trembling leaves I seemed to hear
A voice that cried to me, "O, wretched man!
I sent my own beloved into the earth,
From the celestial glory where He dwelt,
And from a woman made Him into man —
A Son of Man, of common, human flesh.
He walked among the derelicts of mankind;
He touched and healed the loathsome and unclean;
He saved a scarlet woman with these words;
"Let him that has no sin cast the first stone."

"He with sharp words rebuked the hypocrites
Who held the seat of Moses in the land.
He dined with sinners and with publicans,
And taught to them the spirit of the law.
For this He died upon the cross, O man!
Among culprits, He died to bear your sins."

"Go down, therefore, back to the streets of men,
And learn to love the ones you once despised.
Go down and learn to love the unlovely,
Help ease the harsh afflictions of the poor
And show Christ's mercy to some sin-sick soul."

Humbled and chastened I began my slow
Descent from that quiet mountain-top retreat,
Back to the habitat of humankind,
To share with them whatever weal or woe.
This I had learned, that would I hold my head
Erect, then I must plant my feet upon
The solid ground, and tread the selfsame dust
That all of Adam's progeny have trod.

— John H. Erwin

FROM THE HEART OF . . .

CHURCHES OF CHRIST:

AROUND THE WORLD

We look at the number of "missionary" families of the Lord's church actually living "full time" in foreign fields, and we realize that the number is down, compared to twenty or thirty years ago. But times and effective methods change. **Actually, Christians are surely teaching more people today than at any time in our history, considering the tremendous size of the world population!**

You ask, "How have things changed, and how is so much teaching being done?" Thirty years ago there were major portions of the world where little or no work had been done — in Central and South America, in Asia and the Indian Sub-continent, in most island nations. Today, the church exists in all of the major countries of the world, and most of the minor ones. There is a nucleus of local Christians, many who are twenty or thirty years old in the faith, and congregations with the third generation of Christians growing to maturity.

These sincere and dedicated brothers and sisters form an even more effective work force than foreign missionaries!

Having grown past the initial planting stage in most countries, the great need of these times is for mass media tools and help in methods beyond the financial capability of the local churches. In these areas, more is being done today than has ever been done in the history of the church. Without doubt, there are more New Testament Christians living in the world today than at any other time, and more people are having the opportunity to hear and obey the gospel than ever before! These are wonderful and exciting facts! Let us share some of the thrilling stories of this work.

OPERATION 2000

Foy Smith

● **Everyone is deserving.** The group of soldiers of the cross that attended the first meeting of Operation 2000 in September of 1992 was convinced of the truths of the Bible and believed that every person on earth deserves to hear the Gospel. Operation 2000 is no formal organization; it is a grassroots campaign to be carried out by congregations and individuals that will be responsible for a nation until every nation on earth has a Church of Christ meeting in it, reaching for the goal of 2000 A.D.

● **Information.** Our first job was to gather all the contacts we possibly could in nations that did not have a New Testament Church. This information is made available, free of charge, to any congregation of the church that is interested in evangelizing a country. Those involved in Operation 2000 have a lot of mission experience and are traveling constantly to all parts of the world to preach and teach the Gospel. They are also willing to visit any new work to help out in getting the church established.

● **Support Resources.** **International Bible College** has agreed to help this effort by making use of its resources for mission information and publicity. **Basil Overton,** Editor of ***The World Evangelist,*** has agreed to print regular updates to keep the brethren informed of progress and opportunity. Other brotherhood papers will be offered the opportunity to help with advertising.

● **List of Nations.** A list of the nations in which there is no congrega-

tion is maintained and updated quarterly. You may obtain a copy of the list by writing to **Operation 2000, P.O. Box I.B.C., Florence, Alabama, 35630;** or if you want further information, you may call **615-355-0907.** We will keep a file on each country without a church and try to have specific facts that may be helpful to getting a church started in that nation.

These are some of the countries yet to be reached: Afghanistan, Algeria, Brunei, Cape Verde, The Comoros, Djibouti, Iraq, Luxembourg, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Nauru, Niger, Oman, Qatar, San Marino, Sao Tome/Principe, Somalia, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen.

VISION 20/20

Roger Mills

Vision 20/20 is a program for working with elders, preachers, and existing congregations to promote the establishment and maintenance of a church in every county of every state in the United States by the year 2020 A.D. Perry Taylor of Florence, AL is responsible for coordinating work with brethren in the western United States, and Roger Mills is contacting brethren in the eastern states. Contact **Vision 20/20, 3908 Avalon St, Florence, AL 35633; e-mail: rpmwe@aol.com; phone: 256-766-7015.**

ONE NATION UNDER GOD

PO Box 3273 • Cookeville, Tennessee • 38502

The **One Nation Under God** program, under the oversight of the **Sycamore Church of Christ,** in Cookeville, TN has recently announced plans for a program that has created more excitement than any phase of our work since the first effort to get the gospel message to every home in the **USA** about 10 years ago.

Since that time we have sent the gospel into **Canada,** the **Caribbean,** parts of **South America,** parts of **Eastern Europe, Cape Town** and other places. While we are waiting to get men in place who can produce and distribute the proper literature to every home in **South Africa,** we decided to target every **college** and **university student in the USA** who has a mailbox.

We do not yet know how many of the 15,000,000 students who attend the colleges have mail boxes on campus, but we have little doubt that many of the approximately 1,000,000 foreign students do. If we can reach any significant number of them with the gospel, we will be touching the "cream of the crop" of foreign nations, who will be going back home to direct the affairs of their governments. That will do more to change the history of the world than any effort of which we know in recent times.

We are now preparing the brochure that is to be mailed to the students. We are trying to get the names of every college and university that has boxes on campus for any of their students. It is our hope that we can find enough sound and enthusiastic congregations and individual Christians to provide the money necessary to print and mail the brochure to the college near them. We anticipate that the cost will be only about 20 cents per student. In Cookeville, for example, we have 5000 boxes at TTU. Any one of the four or five main congregations in Cookeville could easily provide the $1000 necessary to print and mail the brochure.

We would assume that those who thus participate would be willing to follow up on all who respond in their area. We are not interested in anyone participating who thinks that most any denomination is as good as the Lord's church, but we want those who are evangelistic with the pure gospel. If you are willing to assist in providing funds and/or following up, feel free to contact us. Our address is **ONE NATION UNDER GOD, Box 3273, Cookeville, TN 38501, phone 1-800-251-6871, Ext. 150**. Our e-mail address is **onug@multipro.com.**

We have discovered that *if you are willing to do what you can, where you are, with what you have for the glory of God, He will enable you to do what you can not, where you are not, with what you did not have.* The Macedonians gave beyond their power, and a little boy who came to hear Jesus fed five thousand with a few loaves and fish. **Tpiercebrown@multipro.com.**

CAMPAIGN GROUPS AND FULL-TIME MISSION EFFORTS

Many individual congregations annually send campaign groups to mission fields, both local and foreign. Groups of young people are organized to help with clean-ups after disasters. Others conduct VBS programs on

American Indian reservations and in cities where the church is small and in need of teachers. Campaigners of all ages have gone in massive waves to Eastern European countries since the fall of the Iron Curtain. Others travel to Central and South America, and to the islands of the Caribbean.

One such group is sponsored and trained by the **Parkway Church of Christ in Naples, Florida.** For the past three years men, women, and young people from that congregation have spent three-and-a-half weeks working in Ghana, Africa. Preparation for the campaign begins six months before the trip. In January, the campaigners begin meeting weekly to prepare themselves for the work ahead. They go over goals and strategy. They plan lessons and help each other develop those lessons into meaningful and mature tools. With the guidance of experienced preachers and Bible teachers, campaigners are trained in effective presentations of their lessons. They go into the field prepared to teach publicly and one on one.

One great advantage gained from the Ghanaian work is that American Christians are exposed to an environment where Christians are serious and not entrapped in the many petty pursuits with which American Christianity is often burdened. A strong cadre of capable and zealous gospel teachers (aged 12 to 66) has been developed in Parkway because of the campaign work.

The work has also been extremely fruitful in Ghana, with many being converted, many Bibles and other literature shared, and with the support of local workers to do full-time evangelistic and follow-up work. There is a tremendous brotherhood of Ghanaian Christians. They are known worldwide for their dedicated and zealous evangelism but they need tools and our encouragement.

GHANA GRAM

Dan McVey

We are in the process of moving from the Accra area where we have worked for over 16 years to the North of Ghana. This move will, of course, reduce my involvement in the National Bible Institute that we have worked so hard with all these years. It is a good time to leave NBI, though, for with my leaving come the **opportunities for our other directors to develop and take over the leadership in a more complete manner.** The school contin-

ues to expand and improve remarkably, and I will be focusing on NBI's extension training in the North and our training courses for evangelists up there. I will also continue to help with materials, periodic teaching and being a consultant for the school.

Our work in other parts of Ghana will also be curtailed some due to the vast distances but I will still be involved with some projects like *seminars, lectureships, etc.* However, most of our focus will be on the northern portions of the country, the less developed and more challenging areas.

We will continue to work with our literature projects and periodic visits to French speaking countries — **Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso** and **Togo** — as well as encourage the work in **The Gambia** and **Senegal.** I will also put more direct involvement into certain aspects of the *water well project* once we are settled in the North.

Opportunities abound in the North. Our 16+ years in Accra have seen much growth and development in terms of congregations, membership, leadership, projects, buildings and general maturity of the church. Not that we are responsible, but we have been participants in the growth.

In Accra, we have gone from **8** to **62 congregations, 600** to **16,000 members, one locally supported preacher** to **34, one church building** to more than **40 building projects.** At NBI, we have gone from **2 teachers** with **5 students** in **one** training course to **25 teachers** in **10 training courses** with **75** students at present, and **200 have passed through our courses.** These figures are only for the *city of Accra, not the whole country.* The country of Ghana as a whole has **850+** congregations, **4 Bible colleges** with a total of **150 students, clinics, schools** and many other good projects.

This success in Accra is a challenge for us to build upon while we focus on the North. We started the work in the North with **3 churches,** and we now have almost **200.** However, the needs are great and the opportunities limitless up there. We must work to train more evangelists, make their work more efficient and lasting, develop leadership in the churches and reach new areas. We especially must target the Islamic tribes so that they can also come to know Christ.

We also believe the move to Yendi will be good for our family. The more rural setting, exposing our children to more direct contact with many great Ghanaian evangelists and their families on a daily basis (they will be our neighbors) and the opportunities to serve among the most impoverished people of this country will all be good learning and character shaping experiences for our children, and for Brenda and myself.

OPEN DOOR NEWSLETTER

Demar Elam, Director of Mission Studies at **Southern Christian University** in Montgomery, AL **(P.O. Box 240240, Montgomery, AL 36124-0240; Tel. 334-277-2277; e-mail: demarelam @aol.com),** divides his time between teaching mission classes at the university, preaching in campaigns and gospel meetings in the US and abroad, and co-ordinating campaigns to Russia, New Zealand, Guyana, Easter Islands, and numerous other places.

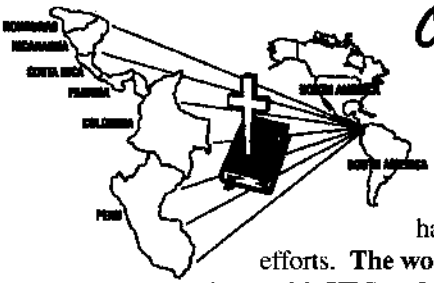
Demar says, "In 1991 God opened a wonderful opportunity in the former Soviet Union. By faith, churches of Christ in the US rushed through that door, with many campaign groups and some full-time missionaries turning their full attention to those opportunities. Here at the beginning of the new millennium we praise God for more than **5,000 Russians and Ukrainians who have been converted to Christ,** for the **48 congregations,** for **two preacher training schools,** and for more than **2,800 American campaign workers** trained to preach and teach Christ in foreign lands.

"Our work is patterned after the methods of the apostle Paul, who systematically traveled to new areas, establishing new congregations, and then returning periodically to further feed and nurture the developing Christians. This method produces exciting results. We focus on establishing new congregations around the world where Christ's church does not exist. Once established, these congregations need to be strengthened and edified through ongoing campaigns.

"Our efforts in reaching the lost have extended wherever God has opened doors: to **Guyana, Chile, Easter Island, Cook Island, Fiji, Kiribati, Tasmania, American and Western Samoa, Majuro, Tarawa, Tonga, the Micronesian Islands, Saipan, New Zealand, Scotland, England, Jamaica, Cuba, and China.** Recently God opened a great door in **Brooklyn, New York** in Brighton Beach which has a Russian community of 400,000. We established a congregation of the Lord's people there in a spring campaign in which nine souls were baptized into Christ. The five-week campaign involved 50 workers from around the United States. More than 20 people now attend this newly established congregation.

"For the Lord's church, the cry of the new millennium must be **'New congregations! New congregations! New congregations!'** God needs foot soldiers to go into all the world with His gospel in 2000!"

Latin American Missions



Campaigns in Managua

Roger Leonard

The East Ridge Church of Christ in Chattanooga, TN, was responsible for these teams, and I had the joy of leading the evangelistic efforts. **The work plan was the same in both locations, with VBS and door knocking during the day and preaching every night.** June 26-28, we were in the Georgino Andrade neighborhood, Managua. We knocked doors and set up Bible studies, reaching new people interested in the gospel. An all-out effort was made to restore unfaithful members as well. With the daytime activities and nightly preaching, four souls were restored to the Lord and four more added to the body of Christ.

June 29-July 1, we worked in the Tierra Prometida neighborhood. The campaigners were beginning to wear down, yet enthusiasm was high and brethren continued working diligently and faithfully. Seven souls obeyed the Gospel in Tierra Prometida.

The week ended with an overflowing church building. The children were separated to classrooms and extra benches were brought into the auditorium. Many Christians stood either inside or outside the building to make room for visitors. It was truly joyful to see all the new Christians in the crowd and new disciples put Christ on in baptism.

THE GOSPEL STILL WORKS! — But there are still millions who need to hear the saving message of Christ.

Las Flores, Nicaragua Campaign

Larry Calendine

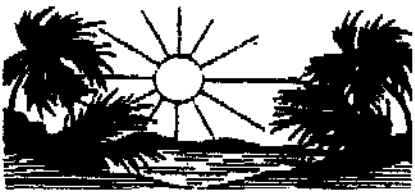
Fifty-six (56) North American missionaries entered the village of Las Flores, Nicaragua, with the intention of spreading the Gospel of Christ. There was a variety of tools used for this purpose. We had **a medical team, building team, benevolence team and of course an evangelism team.** Many national translators and preachers were used. The success of this campaign was great.

The Las Flores congregation was established last year and is supported by the Hartsville Pike congregation in Gallatin, TN. **A building team from Sparta, MO, undertook the task of constructing a church building** and did a fantastic job. The team had the following results:

Patients	2301
Prescriptions	7039
Dental Patients	174
Extractions	219
Heads Scrubbed	267
Children's Classes	156 avg.
Adult Classes	157 avg.
Baptisms	18
Restorations	1
Church buildings built	1

Over 3,000 lbs. of food distributed.

This team was sponsored by the **Hartsville Pike** congregation. They have been good friends to Latin America for many years.



The Pacific Islands

Robert Martin

In August 1973 my family and I made a voyage to the Pacific Islands to work for the Lord, and that voyage has continued for 26 years. We quickly saw the challenge before us in the Pacific region: **22 countries, 30,000 islands,** and approximately **6 million people.** We now have *a mission team* for the Pacific Islands overseen by the **Forest Park** congregation in Atlanta, GA.

For years we taught, edified and trained Pacific Islanders in Friday night Bible Training Schools in one country at a time. Then in 1996 we started the **Pacific Islands Bible College.** The courses and instructors are carried to each island country where the Lord's church has been established. Brethren are able to take courses in the classroom and by video. There are 12 classroom instructional courses and 12 video courses.

Pacific Islands Bible College has grown from 0 to **502 students** in three and half years, and is still growing. We have 22 instructors that we use from the States who give two to three weeks of their time to teach in the college.

What are the results of Pacific Islands Bible College? Putting the word of the Lord in people's minds and hearts (Hebrews 8:10), strengthening the souls of the disciples (Acts 14:21,22), and equipping Christians as elders, deacons, preachers, teachers, and soul-winners (2 Timothy 2:2).

Our first work was in the Fiji Islands, and from there we have helped to establish the Lord's church in **15 countries/territories** throughout the South, Central, and North Pacific Islands. We conduct campaigns and workshops with groups coming out to the Pacific to be short term co-workers with us in the work of the Lord in different countries/territories. Precious souls are continually being baptized as a result of our efforts together with the native brethren in the Pacific Islands.

A new Handbook for French World Missions is being published. The handbook is simply meant to provide useful, up-to-date information about the Lord's **work in French-speaking areas around the globe,** and to help churches and individuals see how they can be a part of this excellent work! The new publication should be available in early August. If you or your church would like a copy or copies, please contact **Bren White at OPERATION FRENCH WORLD, 10698 Oak Ridge Ct., New Market, MD 21774 USA;** e-mail: **BrenWhite1@Compuserve.com.**

*** Senegal ***

The following is a letter to **Evangeline Kougioumoutzakis** of Ste-Foy, Quebec, who works with **thousands of Bible correspondence course students.** It is from a man in Senegal, West Africa.

"Dear Sister, It is with joy that I announce to you a very good news which concerns me. I was baptized the 31st of January, 1999, at 3:30 PM in the Rio Cacheu River **in Guinea-Bissau** by Albinou, a man in his sixties. He lost an eye when he was young.

"Here is how this man approached me. The first day, Sunday the 17th of

January, I was sitting beside a small tree about 50 meters from my house. This small tree was my place of worship. I had with me some **brochures,** the guide of **how to organize an assembly of Christians** in my own home, and the book **Church of Christ** by Ed Wharton. The aged Albinou had a field alongside my place of worship. This day he approached me to ask if he could join me in my Sunday prayers. I accepted his request by the love of God. After the prayers, I gave him a little money to help him out. The second Sunday, the 24th of January, I found him already at the worship place with a basket full of fruit which had been harvested in his field. We again prayed together. He asked me to pray for him and for his scattered family. After the worship time, he asked me to take the basket of fruit to my friends.

The 31st of January I asked my friend, Albinou, to baptize me in the waters of the Rio Cacheu. When I spoke to him of Jesus, he prayed each day before going to bed. The 1st of February, early in the morning, he came to find me at my house. Unfortunately, I had left for my work and did not return for four days. Friday, the 5th of February, he came and found me again. He said that when he sleeps, he dreams of baptism. He asked me if he must wait a long time before being baptized. I told him no. He said he wanted to be baptized as I was. I baptized him Sunday the 7th of February. Since this day, he was my collaborator of worship. That small tree became the meeting place of the church of Christ, and Albinou, the new baptized child, is very pious and happy to be a member of the church of Christ

Dear sister Evangeline, Now that I am back in my home in Dakar, I will build a place for the meeting of **the first church of Christ in Oussouye (Senegal)** on my own land." **Lazard Diamacoune, B.P. 24195 Ouakam, Dakar, Senegal.**

*** St. Martin ***

Three years ago, **Emmanuel Charles** was a "pastor" of the Apostolic Faith Church on French St. Martin. On a trip to Florida in 1996 he was taught the gospel by another converted "pastor" of the same denomination. Though there was much anguish, when faced with Truth he knew he must obey it and did not hesitate. When he returned to St. Martin, he spoke first to his wife, then to the key leaders of the AF church. **Claytus Wilson** of the Whitlock church of Christ and **Joseph Sejour** of the Haitian church in Orlanda, Florida, flew down to St. Martin for 13 days of preaching to the congregation of the AF church. Nearly half of the members converted from their pentecostalism and formed the new French St. Martin church. Today,

nearly three quarters of those old members are your brethren in Christ and worship in a tent right next to a half-completed building.

Emmanuel Charles, his wife, Desgrace, and their five children spent the last two years at the **Florida School of Preaching** in Lakeland, Florida where on the 9th of May 1999 he graduated with honors.

Emmanuel has committed himself to the work of the Lord and His church. *He has no home as yet and is living with his brother under desperate conditions.* He could have stayed in the States and lived well, but that would have violated his conscience, his passion to serve the Lord, and the French St. Martin people. If anyone can help the Charles family, contact the **Eastwood Church of Christ, 800 Eastwood St., Paris, TN 38242 (Tel. 901-642-2861).**

*** Mission to Lubumbashi, DRC (Zaire) ***

For several years, there has been a struggling group of Christians in the Katanga region of what was known as Zaire. With the change of government (and name) tight restrictions were placed on religious groups.

About the time that this was happening, a brother from **Mutare, Zimbabwe,** was trying to get to Bangui, Central African Republic, to work in a campaign and to be part of a team which was to move there. Because of the disruptions by the civil war, he was blocked in Lubumbashi. After seeing that being part of the Bangui team was impractical, and having learned of the need for a trained teacher in Lubumbashi, **Godfrey Mafumhe** and his family made the commitment to move there. *In spite of the risks and the difficult life in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, they moved from Zimbabwe the 1st part of May 1999.* Mafumhe is now working with the director of **a small Bible school, Kimpende Sikyala,** and a number of religious groups in the Lubumbashi area. Sikyala has been given a small regular amount of financial help by the church in **Montpellier, France.**

Mission Trips of the Wilsons

Many missionaries in the current age and development of the church find that their time and talents are better used by following Paul's pattern of "making rounds" among churches, to win new souls and to strengthen the nucleus already there, rather than to spend all of their time in one place.

The Ken Wilsons participate in the French work in this way. A sample itinerary reads: "**Ken and Ida Wilson** will be involved in a number of

French World missions over the next six months. In August they will be in **Brussels** a few days before flying to **Cotonou, Benin, West Africa** where Ken will teach for two weeks at the Bible school. After a few more days in Brussels, September 24-26 they will be in **Searcy Arkansas,** for the French Reunion and Workshop. In November, they will again be in Brussels before attending the French workers' retreat in **Lyons, France.** Ken will then teach in the Bible training center, *Chre'tiens en Mission,* in **Marseille.** The early part of December will find them in **Morocco** teaching a few known Christians in that country. From the 11th of December until the 31st of March 2000 they will work with the church on the Island of **Mauritius.** After a few days back in Brussels, they will then return to the States (for how long?).

EGYPT for CHRIST

Jim Ogburn, Brooks Ave. Church of Christ, Raleigh, N. Car.

At the end of four years of work in the Muslim country of Egypt, **Habashy** has seen encouraging results. In **1995 three** souls were reached; **nineteen in 1996; forty-four in 1997;** and **thirty-two in 1998,** and the number continues to grow.

So many wonderful things are taking place in Egypt that it is hard to know what to start with! Our brother is so busy and is called to so many places to preach the Bible. Some of the places are far from Cairo, and the drive to and from involves many hours. He usually spends 3-4 hours each visit in the actual studies.

He has been driving to Fayoum to study with a **Coptic family** that was just short of being fanatics. After studying on how to be a Christian according to God's word, the couple insisted on what their church taught, and brother Habashy told and showed them again and again what the Bible says. Then he said, *"You have two options: either accept what God says or what men say."* He was silent for about three minutes, during which he was silently praying for their decision. Suddenly the man said. **"I need to be baptized for the remission of my sins! I am ready to be baptized according to what the Bible says!"**

After long, long months of teaching the family, we now have a brother who is a highly intelligent teacher and lawyer. He has three children and a wife who has, till now, resisted the call of the Gospel. Please pray fervently for him to be faithful and grow, and for the other family members to be brought into the fold.

The Lost Tribes of New Guinea

Bob Thomas and Duane Morgan

The jungles of Waropen Bawah are thought to conceal as many as 20,000 souls and at least a dozen languages that have never been heard by the outside world. These primitive hunter-gatherer tribes do not have a written language, calendar, metal or the wheel. They are stone age in every sense of the word. Cannibalism is a part of these cultures and they tend to be wild fighters that war continually. There are no health facilities, schools, permanent dwellings, roads, bridges or grass airstrips in this untouched area. Their sparse diet consists of reptiles, insects, birds and fish. Infant mortality is high and life expectancy is short. People suffer from leprosy, elephantitis, tropical ulcers, malaria and malnutrition.

These primitive tribes build small sleeping platforms constructed of bamboo poles, thatch and vines. Clothing is unknown. Primitive weapons are bows made of black palm with bamboo bow strings and bamboo arrows. An ax consists of a stone head tied with vine to a wooden handle.

Duane Morgan, Bob Thomas, and David Buskirk have made several penetrations into this uncharted region using inflatable boats and helicopters. This pioneering work is sponsored by the **Meadow View Church of Christ** and supporters in more than forty states, Canada, and Australia.

The team shares with Indonesia their estimates of the population, health and location of these elusive, nomadic hunter-gatherer tribes. This is the government of the largest Islamic nation in the world and it has allowed the **churches of Christ** to establish a coastal **Bible school.** To date eleven classes have been graduated and **fifteen churches** established. Each congregation has an evangelist trained in the school and all but one is self-supporting. Churches have been established where transmigration centers are planned. These centers will become the future home of thousands of migrants to be transported from the overcrowded Indonesian island of Java.

Any congregation that desires a narrated slide presentation of this unique outreach may call **972-761-0003** to schedule, or write to **Bob Thomas, 1221 Abrams Rd., Suite 221, Richardson, TX 75081.**

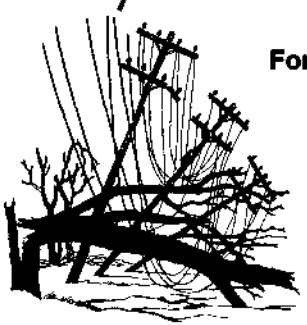
BENEVOLENCE AND DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAMS

We have **Agape** programs in many states for the placement of babies for adoption and homes to aid unwed mothers. There are numerous children's homes, such as **Sunnybrook Children's Home** in Jackson, MS, **Medina Children's Home** in Medina, TX, **Tennessee Children's Home** in Springfield, TN, and **Boles Home for Children** in Quinlan, TX. These homes require dedication, hard work, and sacrifice on the part of many people to supply food, clothing, shelter, love, and spiritual guidance to children who would otherwise be alone in the world.

Helping Hands, a group of Christians in Nashville, TN saw the need to work together to supply food, clothing, medicines, help with construction and repair of homes, and financial aid to victims of disasters — floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, etc. Other brethren in individual congregations also assume responsibility and rally to the aid of those who are suffering, whether in their own area or in some other part of the world. Often they spearhead programs to involve churches nation-wide in their benevolent efforts.

Sojourners is a senior citizens group organized to take advantage of the freedom of many retired Christians. Using their own motor homes and RV's, they travel in small groups to assist in manual labor, construction, teaching, and in other ways according to the need. This work is under the oversight of the **Wilshire Blvd. Church of Christ, 820 SW Wilshire Blvd., Burleson, TX 76028-5797; e-mail: bcoc@flash.net.**

Get a Container Scheduled!



Glenn Jacobs, for the elders
Forest Park Church of Christ, 5238 Phillips Drive, Forest Park, GA 30298

"Get a container scheduled! Food and clothing for a Honduran and Nicaraguan disaster relief effort is on its way!"

That was all the warning our elders gave me. I do not believe they anticipated the response we received from both our brethren

and those in our community. Seven large containers arrived at our warehouse empty and left full. This was largely due to the overwhelming response, from many of you, to the need of our brothers and sisters in Honduras and Nicaragua.

Starting in November of 1998, we began to ship food and clothing to brethren in the storm-damaged regions of these two countries, with tremendous success. Six of the containers were 45 feet, while the seventh was 20 feet. In total, nearly 80 tons of food and clothing were sent to the areas in which the storm caused severe damage.

While this effort was underway, another type of relief was taking place. **Four Medical campaigns** were added to the relief effort. Two teams were sent to Honduras, and two to Nicaragua. These campaigns were in addition to the pre-scheduled campaigns that took place during the summer. Coupled with the food and clothing, these medical campaigns did much to help ease the burden that was inflicted upon our brothers in these countries as a result of hurricane "Mitch".

This outreach was not accomplished by *individuals*, but by a strong *team* comprised of brothers and sisters in Christ. Many of you brought tons of items to your congregation, packed them, loaded the massive amounts of food and clothing for shipment, assisted monetarily, or even drove personally to Valdosta to deliver the items that had been collected by the many congregations who sent aid. Thank you, from our hearts. This outreach shows us the power of God through His church when we stand united in purpose. This was truly a team effort, **God's team.**

"If God be for us, who can be against us?"

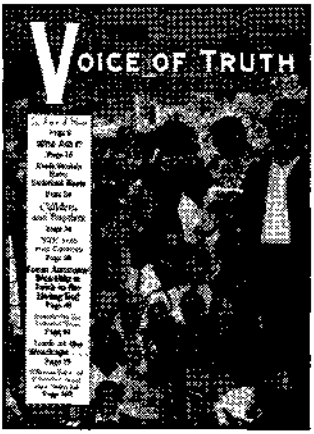
One Little Book

During the rescue and clean-up operation following the terrible storms, a lady doctor from Texas heard of a pilot who was taking a plane load of things to Honduras. Being licensed to fly, herself, she arranged to accompany him as co-pilot, and to help in whatever ways she could when she reached Honduras.

For several years brother **Richard Machen,** originally of Slidell, LA has been involved with teaching programs in Honduras, using many of our **World Literature Publications** as some of his teaching and follow-up tools. At the time of the emergency he also became deeply involved in helping the victims with the physical needs that were so pressing.

Brother Machen had taught and converted enough people through the years that he eventually built a factory there in order to provide jobs for new converts. The factory was wonderfully spared during the tragedy, and was used as a base of operations for some of the relief work.

It happened that brother Machen came in contact with the visiting doctor. At the time he had only one copy of **Bible Keys** left, so he gave it to her. Upon beginning to read it, she was ecstatic, exclaiming that this book was answering so many of her questions, and that she was thrilled that it was *a study of the Scriptures,* in plain and simple language that no one could misunderstand!



THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

Seeing the wonderful way American Christians have responded to disaster situations, both in the States and abroad, it has been decided that Volume 26 of **The Voice of Truth International** will feature appropriate articles so that it can be used as a spiritual addition to parcels for physical relief. We would like to see that every person who is hurting and helped physically is *also being offered emotional and spiritual help.*

To that end, articles in Volume 26 will cover such topics as "God's Providential Care", "Does God Directly Bring Disasters on People?", "Are Disasters Providential Punishment for Evil?", "Benefits to Be Gained from Hardship", "Being Faithful to God Through Adversity", "Seeing God's Love in the Midst of Problems" and "Why me?"

We will also include well-developed articles dealing with the gospel and the fellowship Christians have in times of trouble, through God's family, the church. These will be ideal for inclusion with local or foreign benevolence.

For enquiries concerning this project and how you can incorporate **The Voice of Truth International** into your local and foreign efforts of benevolence, please write to **J.C. Choate, P.O. Box 72, Winona, MS 38967,** call **662-283-1192** or e-mail: **choate@worldevangelism.org;** or contact the managing editor, **Byron Nichols, 2148 N. National, Springfield, MO 65803;** telephone: **417-833-5595.**

Lima, Peru Medical Campaign

Jack Farber

The area of Peru where **Lima** lies is an extremely dry desert strip on the Pacific coast, watered only by rivers that come down from snow-capped Andes mountains. June is a cool month, with temperatures barely reaching the upper 60's or lower 70's. They say it never rains in Lima because the rainfall is no more than 1 or 2 inches a year.

This past June fifty-seven campaigners from the States and one couple from Panama **(Big Sarge and Margarita Grenald),** came to work in the Lima suburb of **Montecarlo.** This team was assisted by nine local preachers and seven translators, all from Lima.

Juan Garcia is the preacher at Montecarlo. He graduated from the **School of the Americas** in **Panama City** this past December. He, his wife and two teen kids live in a house without a roof (not unusual in Lima since it never rains).

The Montecarlo district is extremely poor, with dirty streets and partially completed buildings everywhere. We were able to use a community center of the Coviti district which borders Montecarlo. The high walls and limited access points made it possible to do our work and develop a good flow of patients into the compound.

We worked in conjunction with the Lima Norte health department. They provided us with tents and some medical personnel. On the last day of the campaign we were running low on medication, so the director of the region, Dr. Luis Pro Delgado, provided us with enough supplies to finish. The team saw a total of **2924 patients.**

Our number one goal is always to reach the lost. We were effective in that mission, baptizing thirty-one (31) precious souls. During the day, **we had two gringos teaching Bible studies along with seven native preachers.** We also had a first on this team: *A group of teens went out each day to specifically target the teenage group.* Each evening we not only had preaching and children's classes, but we also had a teen class that effectively taught the growing crowd of teens each night. And as a direct result, a number of teens were baptized on this campaign. The daily children's classes went well also. *The teachers were given the opportunity to visit one of the local schools where they presented Bible lessons to each class in the school.*

Partners in Progress

Partners in Progress is a program of many facets, developed under the leadership of **Bill McDonough** and the **Sixth and Izzard Church of Christ** in Little Rock, AR. The goal is to go into nations where the church is weak or does not yet exist and develop programs of work, particularly in the field of medicine, that will be of benefit to the nation while providing opportunity to share the gospel with those who are interested in learning.

Concerning work being done in the current emergency in Kosovo, brother McDonough says, **"Doug Smith** is continuing to work with hospitals in Prizren and Gjkova. We have provided four state-of-the-art computers for the pharmacies which allows them to cross-reference drugs they are receiving from around the world, and to keep up with their records. These tools aid the doctors in Kosovo where some of the hospitals now have as high as a 40% mortality rate among children.

"Assistance is also being given to numerous families who lost their homes. They are rebuilding at least one room now, to get them through the winter. Doug is studying the Bible with all of those he can, and is looking forward to the coming of **Trent Campbell,** missionary to Germany for 30 years, for additional help. Others who can spend at least one month are desperately needed."

Good News Medical Clinic

Bob Marshall

One important outreach of churches of Christ in the Philippines is the **Good News Medical Clinic** in Cebu City, with which I work as director and fund-raiser. Sponsored by the **Northside Church of Christ** in Spokane, WA, and supported by Christians throughout the US, the clinic is affecting many lives, both physically and spiritually.

There are two full-time doctors, three nurses, and three Philippine evangelists on the staff (17 staff members, altogether), with a multi-faceted program of work: the treatment of patients and offering of Bible study/literature on site, mobile efforts in which the staff goes to impoverished areas of the city for day-long clinics; and weekend excursions in cooperation with volunteer Christian doctors, nurses, and evangelists (both local and foreign),

going into selected areas where the church does not exist, and offering on-site combined medical and evangelistic services.

In a typical day, **Doctors Orly Ursal and Eugene Vano** and their staff will see 100 patients or more, the record being 202! The day may begin by 4:00 a.m., with a mother arriving for the delivery of her baby. A large percentage of the patients are expectant mothers, babies, and small children.

The church also meets for worship at the clinic site. Under the evangelistic leadership of her preacher, **Jun Arcilla,** the Mandaue church has grown to be the largest in the area, with about 140 in attendance. Jun, along with two other preachers, canvasses selected communities, holding gospel meetings and informing people about the services of the Good News Clinic.

As a result of their efforts, each month sees several baptisms, and the children's classes in the **Mandau** have increased to such an extent that every available space has been taken for classrooms. All of these increases, both for the clinic and the congregation, are requiring plans for another doctor and enlarging the space for examination rooms, congregational meeting, and classrooms.

African Christian Hospitals

"Each day the gospel is preached, and each day lives are saved."

H. Glenn Boyd has been president of the **International Health Care Foundation** for many years. This foundation is responsible for the development of four hospitals operated by churches of Christ in **Nigeria** and **Ghana.** Brother Boyd shares the following information about the work being done by these hospitals:

"Over the past thirty-five years approximately one million people have been treated at the Nigerian Christian Hospital in the name of Christ! The hospital was established in 1965 in a rural setting on land donated by three Nigerian villages near the **Nigerian Christian Bible College.** Missionaries were trying to treat very sick people who came to their doors daily, but felt that they were doing an inadequate job.

"When they asked themselves the question, *"What would Jesus do?"* the answer was obvious. They began to search for a Christian medical doctor and found **Dr. Henry Farrar,** who, with his wife, Grace, and five chil-

dren, and two nurses, **Nancy Petty** and **Iris Hayes,** moved to Nigeria in 1964. The hospital was opened in 1965 and has been growing and serving for the past 35 years. It is known in the entire state for its compassion and excellent service. They know that it is a work of churches of Christ, and the churches claim it as their hospital. Truly it is a light in the midst of darkness.

"In addition to the Nigerian Christian Hospital (NCH) we have the **Palmer Memorial Hospital,** located about 40 miles east of NCH in the small village of Ikot Usen, where the modern day restoration movement was begun by **C.E.O. Essien** in the late 1940s. This hospital was named for **Lucien Palmer,** who was an early missionary among them, and who raised most of the money for the facility.

"In the West African country of **Ghana,** we have two clinics. One is in **Kumasi,** the second largest city of Ghana, and the other is in **Yendi,** a city in the remote north of Ghana. Two missionary women, a nurse and a nutritionist, are serving in Kumasi at the clinic.

"Three missionary families are serving in Yendi and are very much involved in mobile clinics and evangelism. For each of our works we employ a full-time local evangelist, who works among the patients each day. We have a slogan: *"Each day the gospel is preached, and each day lives are saved."* The medical work is good in and of itself, but what a great opportunity we have to present the gospel! We do not have a record of all who have come to Christ through these efforts, but we know that many are touched for eternity by the Christian compassion and concern shown them."

Medical Mission Campaigns

Medical campaigns are organized each year by American churches, sending doctors, nurses, dentists, medical supplies, evangelists, and personal workers to temporarily enlarge the staff and outreach of clinics and hospitals in Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, and other Central and South American countries.

These campaigns, treating both physical and spiritual sicknesses, directly involve American Christians in the poverty and hurting needs of fellow humans. Helping to supply those needs proves to be a spiritually maturing experience for those who go. If all of us could live a few days in the bodies and homes of others, how differently we would think and live!

JAIL MINISTRIES

Many churches have developed extensive teaching programs in jails and prisons, and there are wonderful success stories of lives turned completely around through these efforts. To sit and talk with workers in prison ministries, such as **Paul and Gaynelle Mayberry** of the **Blackwater Macedonia Church of Christ** in Nauvoo, Al, is an inspiration. Why? Because there is no "small talk"; their concern and excitement are with the studies they are having, the lives they are seeing changed through the power of the gospel, and the materials they are using to teach. Many copies of **The Church of the Bible, The Gospel of Christ,** and ***The Voice of Truth International*** have been used by them and by numerous other brethren for free distribution among interested inmates.

Received in response to a book mailed to one young man, this enthusiastic letter shows the impact of literature inside a prison:

"Dear Tommie, Bless your heart, I'm very thankful for you. I got my study yesterday from J.C. Choate in Winona and I've really been enjoying doing it. It has blessed my day yesterday and today, so I took time out to stop and say thank you for getting it for me. The Lord said, 'Seek and you will find,' and you did. This is very encouraging to me, and I want to thank you for all your prayers for me. Oh, yes, he sent me four study books and one book, ***The Voice of Truth International.*** *So I started on the* ***Beginner's Bible Correspondence Course*** *and it's a comfort to me, as it encourages. God bless you my friend."*

There is organized outreach by churches of Christ to prisoners in forty-six states, with more than 1000 workers involved in the teaching programs. Each year approximately 5,000 men and women are baptized into Christ. Many of these are taught initially through literature and correspondence courses. Current statistics show that the recidivism rate for offenders is approximately 70 percent nationwide, but these rates drop as much as 25% among those who are baptized or restored during their incarceration, if they remain active until parole or release.

Frequently a prisoner makes the statement that jail is the best thing to happen to him, because it was the means of turning his life around — and because it was in prison that the gospel reached his soul!

Educational Tools for Christians

Among Churches of Christ in the US are numerous colleges, dedicated to providing opportunities for Christian education to the youth of the Lord's church, equipped also to train preachers and Bible teachers. These include such well-known names as **Freed Hardeman University** in Henderson, TN, **York College** in York, Nebraska, **Harding University** in Searcy, AR, and **Oklahoma Christian University** in Oklahoma City, OK.

Some of these colleges, such as **International Bible College,** of Florence, Al and **Southern Christian University** in Montgomery, AL, especially emphasize the foreign mission aspect of education; others, such as **Magnolia Bible College** in Kosciusko, MS, and **East Tennessee School of Preaching** in Knoxville, TN, look toward the training of preachers and building up the church in surrounding cities and states. **Churches of Christ in the United States,** by Mac Lynn, lists 23 colleges and universities, with about 60 preacher training schools.

The church also operates "campus ministries" and "Bible chairs" on numerous state college campuses. These serve to keep contact with Christian young people who are attending the colleges, and are often very evangelistic in their outreach to the student body in general. **Christian Student Center** at MS Delta Community College in Morehead, MS, operated by **Gene and Madolyn Gibson,** is one such facility. Particularly, in areas where the church is weak, as in the Mississippi Delta, is this missionary-type outreach sorely needed.

There are many, many day-care, pre-school, elementary, and secondary schools operated by Christians. **Mars Hill Bible School** in Florence, AL is well-known and respected throughout the area. **Georgia Christian School** in Dasher, Georgia is more than 100 years old, formerly operated as a boarding school, but now taking only day students. There are more than 100 secondary educational institutions, day care and nursery facilities among churches of Christ in the United States.

Bible encampments such as the **Blue Ridge Encampment** in North Carolina, **Red River Family Encampment** in New Mexico are inspirational outings for families. There are also many youth encampments. **Conferences, lectures, and workshops,** usually conducted annually, number 200 or more.

Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes

Jack Zorn

Another educational program for youth is **Lads to Leaders/ Leaderettes**, conceived by **Jack Zorn,** to give every Christian young person the opportunity to develop leadership skills. Beginning with only eight young men, it is expected to have more than 20,000 participants by the year 2000. Bible reading, Bible memorization, public speaking, song leading and general Bible knowledge are emphasized throughout the year, with nationwide forums and competitions held annually in central locations.

A congregation with an active Lads to Leaders program, or the similar **Timothy program,** instills spiritual growth and Bible knowledge in its children and young people far beyond the average. It is an exciting thing to see young men going to small neighboring churches to provide the leadership for entire services of worship. This training, continued throughout childhood, ensures faithfulness to God and involvement in leadership in the church for a lifetime. What greater gift could we give our children? Certainly, it is worth the commitment of time and effort on the part of parents and other leaders in the congregation.

African
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS
2932 Foster Creighton • P.O. Box 41120 • Nashville, TN 37204 • (615) 244-8181
2932 Foster Creighton, P.O. Box 41120, Nashville, TN 37204

In foreign fields, also, the church provides for secondary and college-level education in numerous places. Besides the tremendous benefit of biblically-based education, students in these colleges are trained in evangelism. A report by African Christian Schools Bulletin says, *"The evangelistic activity of students at **Nigerian Christian Bible College** in the past quarter is remarkable considering students went out only two weekends each month. **They baptized forty, restored twenty-nine, and enrolled sixty-six in World Bible School correspondence courses.** On a typical weekend, forty students will serve 20-25 congregations in the neighboring area."*

This same combination of education and evangelism is followed by **School of Biblical Studies** in Jos, Nigeria, the **French Bible Training Center** in Cotonou, **Mutare Bible School** in Mutare, Zimbabwe, **Kakinada School of Preaching** in Kakinada, India, **Pacific Islands Bible College** and many others.

One difference between these colleges and Christian colleges in the US is that there is a much greater emphasis on evangelism and on organized programs of evangelism in the foreign mission fields than is characteristic here in the States. We could learn from our converts!

Extremely effective *youth forums* are also conducted by some foreign churches. In Nigeria the **Obeng Christian High School** hosts a three-day annual forum which is attended by thousands of youths from all over the country. Throughout the year there are local youth forums to prepare the young Christians for presentations and competitions at the nationwide forum in Obong Ntak.

"Our youths are very happy to take up the responsibility of sharing the gospel of Christ with others without being shy or ashamed of it. During the annual forum three sessions are held each day, with approximately 2500 youths attending each session. We ran out of chairs, and many classes were held under the trees. The theme this year was 'Youth ministry, Home and Church Growth.' More than 120 churches of Christ from across the nation were represented. The harvest was abundant, as fifty-four souls were added to the Lord in baptism during the three-day forum."

Activities such as these are building strong young Christians.

French Bible Schools

An encouraging aspect of French missions has been the development of several Bible schools over the last three to five years. There are now seven known special Bible training centers. There are three in Haiti — two in **Port-au-Prince** and another in **Cap Haitien.** Both the ones in **Cotonou, Benin,** and in **Bouake, Ivory Coast,** are in their second class of students. The one in **Lubumbashi, D.R. Congo,** has just graduated six in the first class. The **Chretiens en Mission (CEM) in Marseille, France,** has finished its first year with nine students and four professors. It is hoped that all of these special training schools will grow and increase the number of better qualified workers in the French world.

WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL

CHARLIE DIPALMA

Another type of "school" — method of sharing the Gospel — that has been developed by Christians is called **World Video Bible School.** Through its services, individual American Christians, congregations, and foreign Christians and churches can avail themselves of in-depth studies of the Scriptures that would likely not be possible for them, otherwise. Christians who do not have the time or money to attend classes at a Bible college can "attend" via video. Small congregations that cannot afford a full-time preacher, or that may not have capable teachers for Bible classes, can have the best of lessons by simply studying these professionally prepared videos.

World Video Bible School (WVBS) is a non-profit corporation that was begun in 1986 by three Christians who are members of the **church of Christ at Buda, Kyle, TX.** The goal was to produce Scripturally accurate, high quality, inexpensively priced Bible educational material on videotape and to distribute it throughout the world.

Through the years, courses have been filmed on *each of the books of the Bible* and many Bible-related subjects. This includes all the courses needed for **a preacher-training curriculum** comparable to those found in two-year schools of preaching.

Through what appears to be God's gracious providence, the material has gone to **all 50 states in the US** and **77 other countries.** It has been sent to **82 preacher-training/Bible schools,** *19 in the US and 63 in 28 other countries.*

Material has been produced in **ASL (for the deaf), German, Hindi, Italian, Ki-Swahili, Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Tamil, and Telugu.**

VIDEO BIBLE INSTITUTE

A second exciting facet of WVBS is the **Video Bible Institute** (VBI). VBI is a completely self-paced *video correspondence school* designed for the person who wants an intensive study of the Bible. Assignments include memorizing verses, writing term papers, and taking tests that are mailed to VBI for grading. Upon completion of all requirements for a course, the student receives a VBI certificate of completion.

Churches of Christ in this country have used WVBS material to start night or weekend schools to encourage more in-depth study of God's word in the local church and area churches of Christ, to develop and strengthen leaders, to encourage those from the community to study the Bible, and to train men who cannot attend a full-time school of preaching.

The Lord willing, future projects include making material available through the Internet, placing the notes from courses (over 8,000 pages) on one CD-ROM, and placing the video studies on Digital Video Disks (DVD).

Material is made available for *less than it costs to produce it* and almost all of the material sent overseas is donated *free of charge.* This has been made possible through the contributions of individual Christians and churches of Christ. **worldvbs@corridor.net**

The "Jule Miller" Filmstrips and Videos

For more than forty years people all over the world have been using a series of lessons commonly known as the **"'Jule Miller' Filmstrips"** to convert thousands to Christ. Most observers conclude that these lessons have been a major component in the growth of the churches of Christ in the last half century.

Entitled "The Visualized Bible Study Series", these lessons existed first in the mind of Jule L. Miller who in 1955 was a Personal Evangelist with the Central Church of Christ in Houston. While at Harding College, Jule had been impressed with the importance of visual learning. He felt a great need for a visual presentation of the gospel to teach people thoroughly about Jesus and His way and so they would *want* to be baptized into Christ. He began working to find art to visualize 5 basic lessons surveying the entire Bible with a focus on **God's grace, Christ's church** and **the plan of salvation.**

Word soon came to be circulated about this project among evangelists in the Houston area and elsewhere and numerous copies of the filmstrips were spoken for before they were ever produced. More than **100,000** sets of the filmstrips have been used in the intervening years. The series is accompanied by full color booklets with the full text of the lessons and tests over

the material. Even a novice can easily conduct a home Bible study with this combination of tools. Many, many thousands have obeyed the gospel, the world over, after seeing the filmstrips.

In 1992 the 5-lesson "Jule Miller" series was released on **videos** with 5 separate cassettes per set. Over **15,000** sets of the videos have been distributed.

The home of the "Jule Miller" filmstrips and videos is **Gospel Services, Inc.** located in a suburb of Houston, TX. The 9 employees of Gospel Services are busy every day, shipping VBSS filmstrips and videos to churches, individuals and bookstores all over the USA and the world.

Bible-Share, Inc., is a non-profit corporation, (**Jule Miller** or **Texas Stevens, P.O. Box 944, Pasadena, Tx, 77502; Fax: 713-472-8775; e-mail: gsplsrv@juno.com)** established to provide filmstrip kits to small churches and foreign mission fields. More than 100 projector/Spanish filmstrip kits have been donated to preachers in Mexico and other Spanish speaking countries. Over 150 complete kits, in which black models are used in the live scenes of the filmstrips, have been sent into Africa. In excess of 200 kits have gone to preachers in India.

Missionaries report that nationals will walk for miles and stand for hours just to see these fullcolor Bible presentations. Some hear and see Jesus Christ presented for the first time!

Literally hundreds of lost souls are being brought to Christ. Dozens of new congregations are springing up. Preacher training schools are being established. On a few occasions entire denominational churches have been converted to New Testament Christianity.

As native preachers use the filmstrips, they themselves are being strengthened in the faith.

◆◆◆◆◆◆

"Recently, a woman just 'showed up' at a worship service one Sunday, responded to the invitation and requested to be baptized. The preacher was naturally concerned about her understanding. He asked her about the purpose of baptism and how she learned the gospel."

Her answer was surprising. *"She had gone to a garage sale and while browsing through the various 'treasures', she discovered a box of religious films and tapes. The owner was asking only $3 for them. She bought them, took them home, and watched all five. Which tapes did she buy? The 'Jule Miller' Filmstrips!*

"Realizing that she was well taught, the preacher gladly took her confession of faith and baptized her into Christ." (Submitted by Les McGalliard)

International School of Biblical Studies

Roger Dickson

Roger E. Dickson in Cape Town, South Africa (rdickson@ mweb.co.za), has developed the **International School of Biblical Studies.** Knowing that many Christians throughout the world have the desire and capability of higher biblical education, yet they lack the means and opportunity, Roger has worked out a solution to the problem. In explaining the purpose and operational procedure of the school, he says: " The International School of Biblical Studies offers serious Bible students an opportunity to increase their knowledge through advanced guided studies. It is our goal to equip preachers and church leaders to be more effective in their work by making university-level courses available to them in their own homes, wherever they are in the world.

"The International School of Biblical Studies is a **non-resident** school of extension courses, taken to the students by mail. Through the use of textbooks, study manuals, and systematic testing, the School incorporates proven standards of study that have long been effectively used by distance schools. A very beneficial side result is that since the courses are the 'teachers', upon graduation the student has accumulated several thousand pages of materials as a reference library for his future teaching of God's word!

"Students must complete, with an 80% average on final tests, eighty credit hours of undergraduate studies in order to receive the *Certificate in Biblical Studies.* Successful completion of this level of work allows the student to continue with higher studies.

"Because of the challenging content of courses, three personal spiritual qualities must be characteristic of each student: they must be **mature, disciplined,** and **sacrifically committed** to the study and teaching of the Bible.

"Courses for South Africa are economically priced. **Because of shipping costs, scholarships are often provided for students in other countries, and there is a need for brethren and churches to help us with these funds.**

"At this time the average age of our students is 36. The men now enrolled are preaching for an average of two-and-one-half churches, which means that our students are serving well over **2,000 congregations!** What a power for good, as we help in the development of strong, sound, capable future leadership in the church in many nations of the world where such schooling would not otherwise be available!"

WORLD ENGLISH INSTITUTE

DICK ADY

World English Institute is both a correspondence school and a one-on-one outreach, using the desire of individuals to learn English as part of their appeal to students. The studies are biblical, using the Bible as a textbook. There is also much personal involvement in mission fields throughout the world. Particularly in **Albania** and **Kosovo,** missionary families and campaign groups are working to plant and develop churches of Christ, using World English Institute materials as evangelistic tools.

Doug Smith is working Kosovo, in the city of Prizren. He is planning a summer follow-up campaign for the work and says, *"We're looking for a dozen good teachers who would like to* ***make history*** *by helping establish the church of our Lord in this predominantly* ***Muslim country.***"

The work in Prizren is an outgrowth of the Kosovo relief work done in Tirana. Thousands of refugees who received aid through the church in Tirana have returned to their homes, many of them in the Prizren area. Some of them have studied the WEI Bible course in Albanian, and some have worshipped with the church in Tirana.

In Tirana, a building project is planned between the Albanian congregation, WEI, and the American missionaries. The building will be used for worship services, Bible classes, and fellowship activities by the church; missionaries and Albanians will use it for teaching WEI students five days a week; and it will be used for summer campaigns.

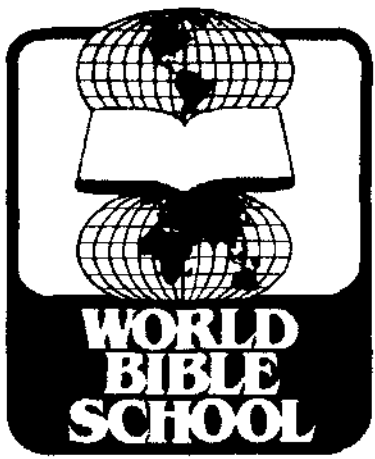
Though most of the refugees have returned home from Tirana, the warehouse continues to serve about 300 families. **Randy Richards** said, "One day at the distribution center, Tom was helping a woman who didn't speak Albanian. He asked her if she was a Serb. She started crying. It turns out that she is Bosnian, and after the conflict in Bosnia she moved to Kosovo. Between the two conflicts, she has lost her entire family and had her home burned in both Bosnia and Kosovo. She has nothing to return to. Please pray for her and our efforts to comfort her."

A living testimony to the effectiveness of WEI is **Ariola Delli,** a law student at the University of Tirana. She comes from a Muslim family and has experienced a terrible inner struggle while coming to faith in Jesus Christ. She has also faced resistance from her family. Until recently, her father

refused his blessing and she couldn't bring herself to go against his will. Just recently she came to me with a smile and said that she was ready. Now, as a Christian she plans to take WEI courses, to grow in her Bible knowledge.

Albania's first nationwide Christian youth camp is being planned by **Virgil and Jackie Jackson** who have secured 50 tents left behind by refugee relief agencies. For the youth meetings the tents will be set up outside of Vlore. Following the youth camp, Virgil plans to conduct a WEI follow-up campaign in Vlore, for which he is seeking teachers.

Those interested in being WEI teachers or taking part in a campaign should write to **Doug Ady, 1525 NW Division, Gresham, OR 97030; Tel. 503-661-0348; e-mail: weiady@aol.com.**



R.H. "TEX" WILLIAMS

For more than thirty years a unique method of evangelism has been used by American Christians to reach to all parts of the world. First conceived by **Jimmy Lovell,** the idea of offering correspondence Bible courses to foreign students with American teachers promised many complications. Brother Lovell's response to those cautions was, "There will be problems, but getting more American Christians involved in mission work, and offering the gospel to more people of the world will more than off-set the cost, the discouragement caused by the insincere respondents, and gaps in follow-up workers." He was right. **World Bible School** is a tremendous tool for good.

Tex Williams is now the director of this program. He explains: **"World Bible School** is a method of mass evangelism. With the development of mailing systems that reach all nations of the world, teaching the gospel through the postal systems has become quite effective."

World Bible School regularly inserts in newspapers and magazines **in most of the nations of the world that will accept them,** advertisements offering free Bible correspondence courses. The prospective student writes to World Bible School in Austin, Texas USA, asking for the course. That

person's name and address are then passed on to an **American Christian** who takes the responsibility of sending the lessons. Teachers are also encouraged to write personal letters so that they can become friends as well as teacher and student.

World Bible School is not only a method of preaching the gospel to the lost, but it can be of assistance to missionaries, churches, and national evangelists in countries where it is being used, and even to American churches as it helps individual Christians in developing skills in the use of God's word. World Bible School can provide churches in many nations of the world with the names and addresses of students who want to know more about New Testament Christianity or be baptized. In this way churches have grown through World Bible School contacts, and new churches have been established where students have learned the truth, obeyed the gospel, and have gone on to teach others so that a congregation was established.

The first material sent out by World Bible School teachers is an Introductory Lesson which simply says the Bible is God's guide to life. Many people wonder why they are here and where they will go after they die. The second lesson booklet is called *God Has Spoken* and tells who God is and what His connection is with the people of the world. The third lesson booklet is *Knowing Jesus.* Other study booklets follow as the students finish each lesson.

There are World Bible School students in **172 of the nations of the world** and the materials have been translated into about **30 different languages.** For more information our addess is **World Bible School, P.O. Box 9346, Austin, Texas 78766, U.SA; e-mail: wbschool@realtime.net.**

* * * * *

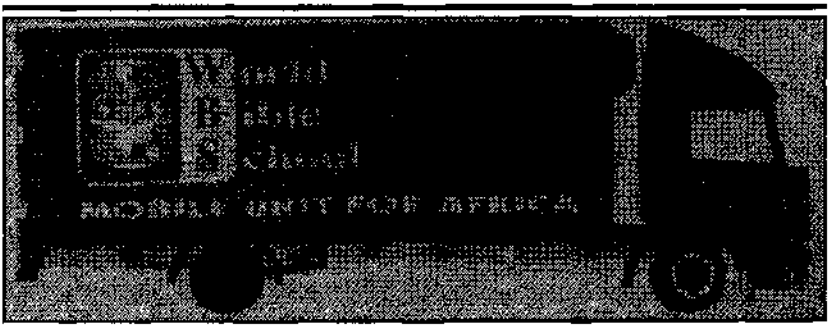
"In the West African country of Nigeria, a student in a Catholic high school began taking a World Bible School Correspondence Course. Other students asked for the course until a large number of students were involved.

"What the students were learning began to be discussed in their Bible classes. Some of the teaching nuns asked for the WBS course and passed on copies to the local parish priest who also became a student. He wrote WBS and asked for enough copies of the lessons to use in their high school Bible teaching program.

"A local Nigerian evangelist visited the school. After a lot of teaching, he baptized the priest, the nuns, and most of the high school students. A New Testament church was begun. Fifteen months later they wrote that they had baptized over 500 new converts and started five new congregations!"

A Gospel Chariot

George Funk



George Funk (e-mail: george.funk@pixie.co.za), a South African Christian in Johannesburg, has been deeply involved in **World Bible School** follow-up work for almost ten years. With a vision to see and the ability to involve others, he has built a team of workers to implement short-term and long-term goals for evangelizing the northern part of South Africa. Realizing the African hunger for study materials, George is expanding his very successful evangelistic methods so that there will be an outreach to nine African nations through the "rolling bookstore" he is currently buying and equipping.

George explains: "It will be **a mobile** World Bible School Seminar traveling into 9 countries, having seminars, recruiting new students and baptizing those coming to Jesus, also linking converts to churches of Christ.

"It will stay for longer periods in areas where many souls have come to Jesus, to mature them.

"It will also assist with providing maturing literature, looking beyond World Bible School and linking zealous students to **International School of Biblical Studies,** operated by Roger Dickson in Cape Town.

"It will carry literature from **Truth for Today** (Eddie Cloer in Searcy, AR), **World Literature Publications** (J.C. Choate, Winona, MS), and other suppliers. In cities where we set up **World Bible School study rooms** (in made-over shipping crates) or WBS kiosks, we will off-load supplies of the books and study materials so that local Christians can use them in spreading the gospel.

"The whole dream can be summed up in one word — EVANGELISM — and in one scripture: Luke 19:10."

The Printed Page

Never before in the history of the Lord's church has so much been done through the print medium. How God has blessed His people with the development of computers, improved printers, and the ease and economy of making the gospel available to multitudes through books, papers, and magazines published by members of His church.

Some might challenge, "Why print materials written by men? Wouldn't it be better to provide only the Bible?" Certainly, the Bible is God's word. It is the source of all truth, and people must have access to it for their studies and salvation. But Peter explained in 2 Peter 3:16, *"...some things* [are] *hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures."* And the man from Ethiopia asked in Acts 8:31, as many do today when they are searching the Scriptures, *"How can I* [understand], *unless someone guides me?"*

Certainly it is possible for people to learn the truth from a study of God's word alone, but too often Satan is there with a host of false teachers, adding their doctrines, churches, TV and radio programs, and an endless array of printed materials. It is the plethora of error that demands that we provide some spoken and written guidance to point up truth and expose error.

In the US, we are so blessed with individual church bulletins, gospel papers, Bible class materials, song books — an abundance of knowledge at our fingertips, to aid us in spiritual growth. Few American Christians realize that the rest of the world does not have this wealth.

For almost 150 years the **Gospel Advocate** has been a strong advocate for truth. At one time a weekly magazine, it is now a monthly. The Advocate was begun early in the history of the Restoration Movement of the Lord's church in America, so it has played a great role in the religious education of Christians and in the stabilization of congregations through these years. **Neil Anderson** is the present

Publisher and Editor. Usually most of an issue is devoted to a timely theme, with all aspects of the subject considered from the Scriptures.

The Christian Woman is a companion publication, designed especially for women. The publishers also produce a line of Bible class materials for all ages, and there is a **Gospel Advocate Bookstore**, offering a full range of reference and brotherhood books, as well as selected materials written by other authors. **Gospel Advocate Co., P.O. Box 150, Nashville, TN 37202-9875; e-mail: gamag@gospeladvocate.com.**

Basil Overton edits **The World Evangelist,** a monthly newspaper which carries a mix of news and study articles. This paper is provided in bundles for area distribution in the US. **The Magnolia Messenger,** edited by **Al Franks,** is also a monthly newspaper carrying news pertaining primarily to Mississippi, and articles in defense of truth.

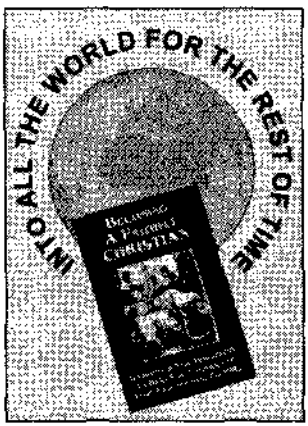
Apologetics Press, Inc, with **Wayne Jackson** and **Bert Thompson** as co-editors, publishes and sells books written by brethren, dealing with evidences concerning creation, earth sciences, the existence of God, and other faith-building materialism contrast to the widely held atheistic and evolutionary beliefs. ***Discovery*** is a monthly magazine of Scripture and Science for youth, which is also published by **Apologetics Press, Inc., 230 Landmark Dr., Montgomery, AL 36117, tel. 334-272-8558; Web site: www.ApologeticsPress.org.**

International Gospel Teacher is a four-page magazine of fundamental Bible teaching, published every two months by **Central Church of Christ in Lufkin Texas,** USA. It is written in simple English and can be easily understood by most people for whom English is a second language. The basic ideas for the formation of this work were gleaned from three other evangelistic works: *The Bible Teacher, World Bible School,* and *Gospel Minutes.*

Begun in 1980 through the labors of **Royce and Susie Frederick** and **Ronnie Lowe,** foreign circulation for the first issue was **900 copies to nine nations.** Through the grace of God and help of many Christians, *IGT* is now in its twentieth year, with a circulation of over **42,000 copies to 104 nations.**

FROM THE HEART OF . . .

IGT is used by many congregations in evangelistic outreach, Bible classes, prison ministries, and as follow-up teaching for graduates of Bible correspondence courses. Readers are encouraged to reprint *IGT* articles in full, *without special permission from IGT.* Single copies or bundles of *IGT* are sent free to readers in any country where mail delivery is available. You may request free copies or bundles by writing to: **IGT, 711 N. Second St., Lufkin, TX 75901 USA.** Current issues and many back issues are available online at **http://www.sat.net/~coccntrl/igt** where you may also sign up for e-mail copies of each issue.



Founder and director of **Truth for Today World Mission School, Eddie Cloer,** a Harding University Bible professor, usually summarizes the work this way: "Truth for Today World Mission School is reaching out to the whole world with two arms: one arm provides a biblical education for the gospel preacher in his own country, and the other arm reaches out directly to those who are lost, who have never heard the gospel." This broad description, broken down into its two parts, involves the **Printed Preacher School** and the mass mailing of a book entitled **Becoming a Faithful Christian.**

The monthly periodical, *Truth for Today,* is sent free of charge to national men in the Printed Preacher School. Filled with expository Bible studies, each issue is 52 pages and is equivalent to a 150-page book. The school was begun in 1990 in cooperation with **World Bible School.** Men who had become Christians through WBS correspondence courses and wanted to preach or teach needed more in-depth studies to equip them for preaching to others in their homelands. *Truth for Today* was designed to provide these biblical studies, along with preaching and teaching helps.

For ten years, these materials have been mailed to English-speakers all over the world who could then teach others in their native languages. Currently, about 6,000 books per month in English are mailed into over 100 countries.

The first translation center was established in 1995, to provide gospel literature for the Russian-speaking world. The distribution of Scriptural

materials in Russian made it possible to provide follow-up training for those who became Christians during short-term evangelistic campaigns in Russia and Ukraine. Since then, other translation centers have been set up. Materials are now being mailed regularly in Russian, French, Spanish, and Arabic.

A total of 16,300 per month are being mailed to 147 countries (75% of the world's populated land area). In addition to the material sent to national Christians, 800 denominational preachers in 21 countries receive the literature. Several have already become Christians.

The second "arm" of TFTWMS involves the distribution of a book entitled **Becoming a Faithful Christian.** The book introduces first-time Bible readers to Jesus Christ in an easy-to-read form, opening with lessons like "Who Is God, the Father?" and "Is the Bible God's Word?" Later studies guide the reader to consider "Which Is the New Testament Church?" and "What Will You Do With Jesus?"

An introductory letter encourages the reader to compare the teachings in the first part of the book with the New Testament. By special permission, the New American Standard New Testament was included in the book. The original edition of the book was produced in English, especially for distribution in Africa.

In 1999 TFTWMS sent **150,000 copies** of **Becoming a Faithful Christian** to three major English-speaking regions of the African continent. Immediately, the book became an effective campaign tool, both in evangelistic outreach and in training new converts for faithful Christian living.

Groups within the US have begun using a US edition of the book in prison ministries and inner-city evangelistic efforts. Requests from those trying to reach the lost in French- and Arabic-speaking regions in Africa have prompted TFTWMS to translate the book into those languages. Missionaries in Russia who have seen the English version of the book also have requested it as a tool to evangelize Russian-speaking areas of Eastern Europe. Therefore, TFTWMS has set a goal of sending 300,000 copies of the book to Africa and to Eastern Europe in the year 2000. Africa will receive 150,000 copies in French, Arabic, and English.

A special commitment is made by Truth for Today World Mission School, Inc., to keep these two methods as practical and cost-effective as possible where the missionary dollar will reach the farthest, work the longest, and achieve the most enduring results. **Truth for Today World Mission School, 2209 S. Benton, Searcy, AR 72143; Tel. 501-279-2435; e-mail: mknappier@biblecourses.com.**

FRENCH LITERATURE

Doyle Kee has worked in Geneva, Switzerland for many years, promoting the French work around the world. He has taken the lead in getting a number of commentaries and other books translated and printed in French. He and his wife also go to French-speaking countries where there is a special need for short-term workers and spend weeks or months strengthening the church.

Jerry L. Davidson who works with International Bible College in Florence, AL has also been instrumental in getting more materials into print in French. Jerry directs the **French World Bible School.**

SPANISH LITERATURE

Western Christian Foundation of Wichita Falls, TX, is dedicated to the translation, printing, and distribution of literature in the Spanish language. Many tons have been supplied to churches throughout Central and South America.

House to House
Heart to Heart

An 8-page, 2-color bimonthly publication, ***House to House, Heart to Heart,*** begun by **Allen Webster** of Jacksonville, AL is being printed for mass distribution by churches of Christ in America. The basic paper is the same for all recipients, but a column on page one personalizes each issue for congregations which subscribe to the service. Worship timings, radio and TV programs, day care or mothers'-day-out, counseling services, and other information can be made available to the community. Churches order by thousands and then mail them to all or select addresses in their area.

Tracts

Bobby Dockery, of the **Baldwin Church of Christ in Fayetteville, AR,** did mission work in Ghana for a number of years. He has developed an additional program of work, printing millions of tracts for use in Ghana and other foreign settings, as well as here in the States.

Numerous lines of tracts are available from individual brethren and from book store catalogs. These are useful tools for introducing the truth to people, or for clarifying truth on particular subjects.

In the 60's the Lord's church existed in very few nations in the Eastern hemisphere. There followed two decades of families moving to those countries to begin the work and to live for years at a time. Nations that seemed inaccessible because of visa difficulties became targets of campaign groups. Gradually, through the combination of many efforts the picture changed. **Most of the major nations of the world now have at least a few Christians, and there is a thriving brotherhood in many.**

Though these churches and individual Christians are relatively young in *church development,* and most are either not large enough or financially strong enough to take up the responsibility of completing the evangelization of their own and neighboring countries alone, still *a working nucleus is there.* Many of the preachers are now 25 or 30 years old in the faith. They have had years of experience in preaching the gospel and defending the truth. **And let us never doubt that those truths are just as precious to many of those people as they are to us!** Truly, the gospel belongs to all!

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

World Evangelism

Taking the gospel to the masses through radio and literature

Under the oversight of the **Liberty Church of Christ** in Dennis, MS, **J.C. Choate** and his family have done mission work in the Indian sub-continent for almost 40 years. What had begun as on-site, full-time foreign work has evolved with changing times and needs to an entirely different type of work.

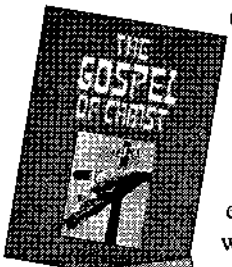
As the church grew, it became apparent to J.C. that he could serve the Lord's cause far better by providing mass media tools for the use of local brethren than by simply continuing to work personally in India. A joint effort in literature and radio was begun and has continued to expand through the past 25 years.

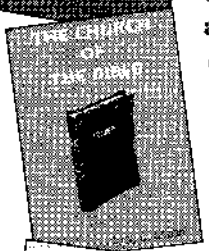
WORLD LITERATURE PUBLICATIONS

Winona/New Delhi/Cape Town/Singapore/Cebu City/Jakarta

What is being done today under the banner of the church of Christ, as **World Literature Publications?**

- 15 monthly magazines in India in 10 local languages.
- 1 monthly magazine in Sri Lanka.
- 1 magazine in the Philippines.
- 1 monthly magazine in the planning stage for Nepal in Nepali.





✔ During these years, far in excess of **500** different books of fundamental studies, **2000 to 5000 copies each, with reprints of numerous titles,** have been printed and distributed free of charge in fifteen of the languages of India. All of the India Radio sermon manuscripts have been printed and made available to listeners, in addition to Bible Correspondence courses. This would account for at least **two million books in India alone!**

✔ Many books have also been printed in English and local languages in **Sri Lanka, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, and South Africa.** Editions have been in, or printed for and shipped to, **Ghana, Nigeria, Malawi, Malaysia, Korea, Mauritius, and Burma.**

✔ Approximately **30 titles** of select books are printed in the US and made available to **World Bible School teachers, prison ministries,** and to churches and individuals for **personal work** at a subsidized cost of **.75 a copy.** Hundreds of thousands of books have been put into the hands of truth-seekers in this way.

✔ In response to requests received every day in our Mississippi office, we personally mail packages of books to all parts of the world. Replies reflect both the gratitude and the great need for printed materials:

"Dear Mr. Choate: We received the wonderful assortment of books you sent to us through Gordon Hogan. Then just a couple of weeks later we received the box you sent by sea mail. We were thrilled to see so many wonderful and evangelistic books. Some of the Christians helped us unpack the box, and they were really happy to get a chance to be able to read these books and ***The Voice of Truth International.*** *They were also amazed that somebody would just* ***send*** *so many books. We've already been able to fill a 'literature gap' we've had in several cases.*

"Tim has been selecting certain books to help certain people with struggles they are having. He gave one college student, Tamas, a copy of **You Can Be Just A Christian.** *As soon as Tim told him he wanted him to read it, Tamas grabbed it and earnestly said, 'I will. I want to learn more.'*

He's the type of person who will accept finding truth, but he wants to think on his own. He doesn't want to get peoples' opinions but prefers to 'dig' for himself. It was wonderful to have the book to give him. Thank you so much. ***Anessa Westbrook; Szolnok, Hungary."***

THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

Another major part of our literature program, world-wide, is the quarterly magazine, ***The Voice of Truth International.*** With **an American edition, and 17 foreign editions** sent free of charge to the respective countries, this magazine is filling a tremendous need for materials that will evangelize the untaught and edify Christians. Currently it is being mailed to more than **90 nations** of the world, and it is our goal to continue adding to the number of editions as the funds are available.

RADIO IN INDIA

A second major part of our work is radio. We have **14 weekly programs** in **six of the major languages of India,** broadcast from the *Giant of Asia* station in **Colombo, Sri Lanka.** We have received letters from as far away as the **Fiji Islands** to the East and **Sweden** to the West. Many listeners in the **Persian Gulf** have taken Bible Courses, and a number of them have obeyed the gospel.

In India, herself, these 25 years of radio preaching have brought a rich harvest of souls. As **Joshua Gootam,** the Telugu speaker, said, *"Twenty-five years ago the Lord's church in Andhra Pradesh state was still in its infancy and relatively few people had heard about it. Now you go to any village or town in this very large state of more than* ***100 million people*** *and you will find that they are aware of the church of Christ. Oh, yes, they hear* ***Satya Vani*** *regularly, and they like it. Now at least they cannot say they had not heard about the Lord and His church on that final day!"*

Joshua wrote us concerning a listener in the neighboring state of **Karnataka,** in a village noted for an ancient Hindu temple to which millions of Hindu pilgrims travel each year. The woman was the wife of one of the priests of the temple. She began to hear the radio programs and to write for the books, tracts, and Bible courses being offered.

In time, the listener wanted to obey the gospel, but there was no preacher or church anywhere near her. Knowing that her husband would not permit her to be baptized, she wrote to Joshua, wanting to leave her husband and children and all of her former life, and to come to Kakinada to be baptized and to stay there, helping out in whatever work she could do.

Joshua replied to her letter, saying that she had responsibilities before God for her family, and that she must find another way to become a Christian besides simply abandoning her family. Time passed. The woman continued to listen and to correspond with Joshua. Her knowledge of the Scriptures surpassed that of many of the Indian preachers because she wrote for every piece of literature offered, even asking for multiple copies so that she could give tracts to people who came to the temple.

Finally, one day she and her husband knocked on the door of the church building in Kakinada. Her husband had brought her to be baptized!

❋❋❋❋❋❋❋

Another woman, in Madhya Pradesh state, India heard **Sunny David's** Hindi radio programs. She, too, wrote for literature, and then asked Sunny to come to her village to baptize her. He sent a nearby preacher, instead, and Sunny was concerned when **Peter Singh** sent a wire saying that he had found the village in an uproar and the woman's husband threatening to divorce her if she left the prominent denomination of which they were important members. What to do?

Sunny wired Peter to return for further study and to baptize her if she still desired that. An answering wire confirmed, "Elinoor *has been baptized.*"

Would you like to hear 'The Rest of the Story...'? Instead of divorcing her, Elinoor's husband began to read the books and was soon baptized himself! Then they traveled to her home village, about 12 hours away by bus, and shared their knowledge and books with Elinoor's family. Her father and several other family members obeyed God, beginning a new congregation. They shared the books with family in a nearby place and another congregation was started. Gospel meetings in these places have won others. Two of these were Lutheran preachers who studied the books, and one of them told Sunny, *"When I read your books, I couldn't wait to get to the water to be baptized!"*

A Christian woman traveling by train began to talk with the man in the next seat. Their discussion turned to religious matters. After some discussion, the stranger declared, "You're teaching Choate's doctrine!" Of course "Choate" has no doctrine, but the incident does show that the message is spreading and that the gospel is being understood.

Philippine Radio

The people of the Philippine Islands have been very receptive to the gospel. Much work has been done by foreign brethren and by local Christians, with a combination of radio/literature/follow-up work proving to be most effective. **Reuben Emperado** coordinates speakers and contracts for a number of those programs, as well as being the editor for the local magazine, ***Voice of Truth Philippines.*** Each year special medical and evangelistic campaigns are conducted, with a combination of American and Filipino workers, in an area where the church has not yet been established or is very weak. This is effectively spreading the borders of the kingdom.

Reuben wrote, "I have a very sad news to tell this time. The doctors discovered that brother **Agapio Catamora,** our radio speaker in **Butuan City,** had cancer of the bile duct, and that it had already reached a very advanced stage. He died within six weeks, a great loss to the ministry. I talked to his family about the future of his radio program, as it was brother Agapio's last wish that it continue. His children are as faithful and dedicated as their father, and two of his sons are now speaking on that program. Brother Catamora has left a great legacy of faith and dedication to his family and to the church."

GERMAN RADIO MINISTRY

Gottfried Reichel, Rasso-Siedlung 450, D-82284 Grafrath, Germany; Tel. 011-49-8144-7911; e-mail: GJReichel@aol.com, has been the radio speaker on this very well known **German Radio** broadcast for **35 years.** It has seen great success, and many people have heard and obeyed the Gospel.

Brother Reichel says, "Earlier this year, **Jens Baumgart,** one of our listeners in Saxony, started writing me. As an atheist he got hold of a Bible and was prompted to attend the Lutheran church. Through our broadcast he understood that baptism according to the Bible is immersion. When he learned that I was to preach in Chemnitz he requested that I should come by to see him. His wife invited us to eat lunch, and while she prepared it we had time to answer Jen's questions. I could tell that Jehovah's Witnesses had worked with him. He appreciated my biblical answers. At the end of our conversation he told us that he would come to hear me preach the next day at Chemnitz (a two-hour drive from his home) and that he would like to obey Christ in baptism. It was a great privilege to me to baptize a former atheist, reared under 25 years of communism.

"In a letter of gratitude, Jens wrote, *'During the last two weeks I prayed to almighty God to lead me in the right path. He led me out of the darkness which surrounded me through your visit on Saturday to the light of our Savior Jesus Christ. The joy of all the brothers and sisters (in Chemnitz) on Sunday was so wonderful that I would like to see them again as soon as possible.'"*

Restoration Radio Network International

Roy Beasley

Roy Beasley, founder of **Restoration Radio Network International,** is the principle radio speaker. The network has programs in the US, Nigeria, Kenya, and Philippines. During the past year alone, 3000 baptisms have been reported, with 50 new congregations begun.

Brother Beasley says, "Over the years tons of cassette tapes, Bibles and other literature have been shipped to our listeners. Thousands have been enrolled in Bible Correspondence Courses. WBS material is used to a great extent. Successful campaigns have been conducted by members of the RRNI team. Dozens of denominational preachers have been converted through our follow up program, **The Apollos Program,** directed by **Clayton Pepper.** They, in turn, have baptized thousands of their followers, turning many of the congregations from denominationalism. Some have merged with existing churches of Christ.

"One of the most exciting events happened in 1998. Brother **Lucas Owino** of Kenya was sent on a mission trip to Nigeria. Prior to his conversion five years ago, brother Owino was a Bishop of his own denomination but was converted, along with his family, through our teaching. He has since become highly effective as an evangelist and a representative of RRNI in our East Africa office in Nakuru, Kenya.

"On this particular mission trip, on his way to Nigeria brother Owino met a Kenya Embassy official who was returning to his post in Lagos City. They became friendly, and the official invited him to the Embassy for a few days. Brother Owino devoted his time to teaching a Bible class twice a day which resulted in the establishment of a congregation of about 30 members! (Paul speaks of saints in Caesar's household. Well, we now have saints in the Kenya Embassy in Nigeria!) Brother Owino also started two other congregations on Lagos Island."

RRNI's home office is located at **417 Welshwood, Ste 301, Nashville, TN 37211. Tel. 615-833-4771; e-mail: rrnii@aol.com.**

IN SEARCH OF THE LORD'S WAY ®

Mack Lyon, speaker of *"In Search of the Lord's Way",* television ministry of the **Edmond Church of Christ, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083-0371; e-mail: searchtv@aol.com.**

IN SEARCH OF THE LORD'S WAY, an international television and radio program, now in its 20th year, has a potential audience of **300 million households every week.** The program is produced under the oversight of the elders of the **Edmond, Oklahoma congregation. Ken Helterbrand** directs the congregational singing of the Edmond church and **Mack Lyon** is the preacher. *It features a gospel message, with no sensationalism, no featured guests from the sports, music or entertainment worlds. No appeals for money are made on the air.* The program is financed through the free-will participation of more than four thousand congregations and individuals.

SEARCH was the first national religious television program to feature closed captioning for the hearing impaired. It has received two Nielson Awards for largest audiences on the ACTS network. It was broadcast (free) for two years by the **American Armed Forces Radio And Television Service** (AFRTS) to 500 ships at sea and to 30 nations where American service men were stationed.

For three years SEARCH was seen throughout the **Ukraine** by way of the Ukrainian National Network. It was translated into the Ukrainian language by **Rick Pinzuck** of Kiev, Ukraine. It is currently broadcast on 80 television stations, more than 150 community cable systems and 22 radio stations in the US. It is also carried several times each week on the ODYSSEY, INSPIRATIONAL and FAMILYNET satellite networks that cover the entire North American Continent, from the northernmost tip of **Alaska** to the **Caribbean.** It is also being broadcast by **radio** to five English-Speaking nations of Africa: **Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi.**

The sermons are printed monthly in an attractive booklet and are sent **free upon request. Audio tapes are mailed free.** Requests for these tapes and books and responses from them have come from about **every nation of the world and literally millions have been sent to places around the world.**

Plans for the year 2000 call for its being made in the Spanish language for Spanish speaking nations of Central and South America, as well as for the millions of those immigrants to the US. The big delay is the necessary funding for productions. The best is yet to be, and the thanks and praise go to our God who is able to do exceedingly more than we can ask or think, through the power that works in His people.

And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (1 Timothy 2:2).

God has committed to this generation also ***"the word of reconcilliation.*** *Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us, we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God"* (1 Corinthians 5:18,19).

What an exciting thing it is to read of these many programs of work in which our Lord's people are involved — and how much more exciting it is to know that these pages tell *only a small part of the story!* **Truly, never before in the history of the church has the gospel been preached to so many, using the wonderful tools of technology available to us in this age.** The development of these programs shows a great vision and perseverance, for many are more than 20 years old!

If all of us could see — as God does, from His vantage point — the many, many other activities of His people, and if we could know the individual souls that are daily being won through those efforts, how our hearts would fill with joy! There is much to be thankful for in this age that is both wonderful with opportunities and technology, and terrible with sin.

So, we must not *"grow weary with well-doing"* but *"press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 3:14). The seed is being sown widely through radio, television, and literature. Much follow-up work is being done by individual Christians, both local and foreign, in campaigns, gospel meetings, and one-on-one studies.

Let us encourage one another in this personal involvement, knowing that our own souls will be enriched as we work with God to save those who have a love for the truth.

May God be with us all. Amen. ⇧

Flash!!! We are preparing an edition of The Voice of Truth International for use in disaster situations as they occur here in the US and throughout the world. Order a good supply for your pantry/clothing room, for local use, so that each person who receives physical help will also have spiritual guidance. Order, also, in bulk for overseas use.

With your response, we plan an initial printing of at least 50,000 copies, but we need advance word from you, today!

Dear Brethren:

☐ **Please send us _____ copies of Volume 26, the special edition of THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL, which is being prepared for use in disaster situations. We understand that if we order 1000 or more before April 1, we can have a page for our own message and address, at $1.50 per copy, plus shipping costs.**

☐ I want to subscribe to the quarterly magazine, THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL. Enclosed is my check for $12.00 for four issues, or $20.00 for eight issues, starting with Volume ____. ***My address is given below.***

☐ The church has agreed to send $25.00 per month (or a multiple), for a box of 35 copies (or multiples) of each issue of the magazine as they are printed. These are to be used in the work of the local church.

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Suggested uses for individuals and churches for
THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL:

- Use them for family devotionals at home.
- If you own a business, dealing with the public, present copies regularly to your best customers whom you would like to convert.
- Give them to patients in hospitals and nursing homes.
- Use them in your personal work and in visiting newcomers; give to workers in banks, post offices, restaurants, and other business offices.
- Give a copy to each member of the congregation.
- Draw from them for bulletin articles.
- Keep them on display in libraries, hospitals, doctors' offices, barber shops, beauty parlors, and other public places where there is a magazine rack.
- Send them to your WBS students.
- Give subscriptions as birthday, anniversary, etc., gifts.
- Encourage the young men in the congregation to draw materials from them for their public devotionals.

(Return this form in an envelope, along with your check, to the following address)

THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL
2148 N. National
Springfield, MO 65803

Att. Byron Nichols

Answers to Puzzles

Verse Search — 25 (from page 28)

1. The priests, the captain of the temple, Sadducees.
2. That they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.
3. Heard the word believed; five thousand.
4. *"By what power or by what name have you done this?"*
5. Salvation; no other name; saved.
6. They perceived that Peter and John were uneducated and untrained men, that they had been with Jesus.
7. No.
8. Not to speak or preach in the name of Jesus.
9. *"Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."*
10. They knew the people all glorified God for what had been done.
11. *"Lord, You are God who made. . . ."*
12. The place was shaken; they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.
13. ***Yes.***
14. *The apostles.*
15. They sold their possessions and gave the money to the church.
16. The apostles.
17. He was a Levite from Cyprus.
18. He sold land and laid the money at the apostles' feet.

Who Am I? (page 18)

Jesus

The Book of 3 John (page 58)

Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. He who does good is of God; He who does evil has not seen God.

(3 John 11)

For further information, please contact: