

Frank W. Dunbar

To
Every Man That
Asketh

To
*Every Man That
Asketh*

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“SHOW YOU” SERMONS FROM
THE “SHOW ME” STATE

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A Collection of Sermons Prepared
By Missouri Preachers

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W. CARL KETCHERSIDE
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*"Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts
and be ready always to give an answer
to every man that asketh, a reason of the
hope that is in you."*—I Peter 3:15.

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W. E. Ballenger

W. E. BALLINGER

William E. Ballenger, a son of Elijah W. and Sarah Ballenger, was born in Lawrence County, Missouri on September 19, 1879. Two years later, in 1881, the family moved to Carroll County, where Brother Ballenger grew up and received his education.

On December 21, 1902 he was united in marriage to Miss Cora M. Griffith, and their four children, all married now, are Roy, Lawrence, Edith and Mabel. Bro. Ballenger obeyed the gospel near Wakenda, Mo., in January, 1899, and was immersed in the Missouri River, by T. L. Gray. He delivered his first major discourse at Elm Grove, near Wakenda, and nearby at Riverside, held his first meeting in September 1911. He improved his education in the Word of God by attendance at four Bible Readings, and has been a power for good in the gospel field. Brother Ballenger's sermons are noteworthy for the amount of scripture he is able to weave in them, and the one we present is characteristic.

Although the family resided in Kansas City for 26 years, the present address is Hale, Missouri, Brother and Sister Ballenger having come back to Carroll County in 1942.

The New Testament—Our Creed

By W. E. BALLENGER, Hale, Mo.

The New Testament is the word of the Lord, for we read, "But the word of the Lord endureth forever, and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:25), i.e., this is the word that is set forth as gospel. But we must know something about the Old Testament before we can understand the New.

The Old Testament makes mention of certain characters who are referred to in the New. For example, Isaiah (7:14) has this prophecy of Christ, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel". No doubt many people were impressed by this prediction and watched for the sign. It was so definite they knew they could not mistake it. By and by that sign appeared in Bethlehem of Judea. Matthew observing it declared, "Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord, by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us".

Immediately after Jesus was born, Satan started to oppose him. He found a faithful ally in Herod the King, for in the second chapter of Matthew we read, "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these

sayings, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah art not the least among the princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod when he had privily called the wise men inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him, bring me word again that I may come and worship him also."

But remember that Herod the king did not wish to worship Christ, but he proposed to put him to death. Herod did not understand the spiritual character of Christ's kingdom. He seemed to think that by and by Christ would rule over the children of Israel as Solomon and David had reigned. So he wanted to get rid of him. But the time had not come for Christ to die, and His Father was able and did keep Herod from his purpose. Christ had a great work to accomplish for it was appointed unto him to die that man might live.

In Matthew, chapter three, a forerunner of Christ appeared on the scene in the person of John the Baptist. He came paving the way for the Messiah as evidenced in Luke 1:3-17: "But the angel said unto him, Fear not Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth, for he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink, and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias to turn the hearts of the fathers to the

children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

John baptized Christ in the Jordan River. Upon his baptism the heavens were opened and the Spirit assuming a visible form descended upon Him. John in referring to this afterward, said, "He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining, the same is He (Messiah)". At the time the Spirit descended upon Christ, the Father uttered an oracle from Heaven, which he chose to reveal personally, rather than through man or angel, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased".

After his baptism, Christ called twelve apostles and sent them forth to preach the gospel saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and as ye go, preach saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils. Freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:5-8). In verses 17 and 18 of this chapter, he warns them against evil men, and in the 19th verse says, "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you".

Thus we see that the apostles were at this time verbally inspired which was enough for them at that juncture of their work. But they would need more power later, for which the Master says (John 14:15-17), "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you forever." In Luke 24:29, the Lord says to them, "And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."

They had to be clothed upon with that supernatural

power before they were qualified to preach the gospel in its fullness. The apostles received the baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4). There were many people present in Jerusalem that day, and the apostles, filled with the Holy Ghost began to teach them. All of the apostles did some teaching but after awhile, Peter became the chief speaker, and he stood before those who had put the Lord to death and frankly accused them of the fact. He spoke as the Spirit gave him utterance, which means that the Spirit, through this apostle, told those Jews that they had killed the Lord of Glory.

Upon hearing this testimony of the Christ, they were pricked (convinced) in their hearts and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The Spirit using Peter as a mouthpiece answered the question, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Thus we have the testimony of the Holy Spirit on freeing from sin. If this teaching is wrong, the Holy Spirit is responsible for the wrong, for this is His testimony. But His testimony is not wrong! It is right!

Not only did the Spirit make known the law of induction into the kingdom, but the apostle John said, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2:11). The Holy Spirit then hath spoken to the churches. But how could the Spirit do this? It was through the agency of the apostles, who spoke as they were given utterance.

The Spirit through Paul said, "If ye therefore be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1,2). Also the Spirit, through the same apostle said, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the

power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6: 10, 11).

The Spirit through the apostle Peter said, "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity" (2 Peter 1:5-7). Now we can see how the Spirit spoke through the instrumentality of the apostles to the churches, and we have His testimony in the twenty-one letters. Surely we must agree that the entire New Testament is the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, we should look to it as our creed.

We have no use for human creeds, for if they contain more than the Bible, they contain too much; if they contain less than the Bible, they do not contain enough. The New Testament is a divine creed and the true church is satisfied with it. David said, "Forever O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psa. 119:89). The Savior said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). The Word of the Lord has stood the test of the ages and will stand the final test, as well.

Then why not accept the New Testament as our only creed? It is perfect! Hear James (1:25), "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this man shall be blest in his deed". It is the converting power, for David said (Psa. 19:7), "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple". Paul affirms, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).

In view of these quotations we do not marvel that Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). The gospel is God's power to save the obedient ones, but will not save those who will not obey, for Christ by his

death upon the cross became "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him". Peter said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls through obeying the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (1 Peter 1:22-23).

The word of the Lord is the sanctifying power. It is that which if obeyed from the heart will lift sinners' feet from the miry clay and place them upon the Rock of Ages. It will turn the sinner from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. Then why not take the New Testament as our creed? We are to be judged by it, and I am sure if we obey it from the heart, we will have no fear of the judgment day. It constitutes our only hope of eternal life. The Master said, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). The Lord will not suspend the rule of Heaven and receive me, if I do not prove faithful.

John wrote, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them" (Rev. 14:13). Thus if we obey the Lord in primary obedience we become his children, and of us it is written, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3:1). It is great to know the Lord is our Father and we are his children. God has always loved his own and has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you. I will be a strong tower unto you. Call upon me and I will hear." These are consolations afforded us as we tread this low ground of sin and sorrow.

Then at the end of our race, at the conclusion of this life, when we shall bid adieu to all that is nearest and dearest to us on earth—father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister, son or daughter—when life is sinking fast,

when the cold hand of death is approaching and the summons comes for us to cross the dark waters, the Lord shall extend His hand to us and say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". Then will we see what the Lord hath done for us. Then beyond the rolling river, when he will send a convoy of his blessed angels to escort us to the home of the soul, so beautifully pictured in the closing scenes of the Bible, we shall rest where "There will be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, for the former things will have passed away".



Robert Brumback

ROBERT BRUMBACK

Robert Harrison Brumback was born in Mystic, Iowa on May 31, 1892, the son of John W. and Emma Goode Brumback. He has lived in succession at Memphis, Browning, Neosho, Nevada and Kansas City, Mo. After finishing his high school career at Browning, he attended the Western Bible and Literary College two years, then took three years of special work in history and literature with Lincoln-Jefferson University at Wilmette, Ill. He obeyed the gospel at Browning on June 1, 1905, being immersed by his father. Four years later in November, 1909, he delivered his first sermon at Neosho, Missouri and the following November began his first series of meetings at McNatt, McDonald County, Mo.

For several years after his marriage to Louise Dunham on June 14, 1923, Brother Brumback labored at secular work in Kansas City, filling Lord's Day appointments as invited. He interested himself in the development of younger brethren and has assisted churches in Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kansas and Connecticut. Recently he gave up his secular employment to devote full time to evangelistic labors at Bridgeport, Conn. Having returned from there, he will labor under elderships at 26th and Spruce Sts., and 59th and Kenwood Sts., in Kansas City, and also Independence, Mo., until June 1944. He hopes in that time to do much in development of local ability to carry on the work more effectively.

Brother and Sister Brumback have one daughter, Mary Louise, who was born Sept. 17, 1925.

What We Believe About Prayer

By ROBERT BRUMBACK, Kansas City, Mo.

The belief of the Churches of Christ upon the subject of prayer is revealed by the teaching of our Lord and the writings of his Apostles. The Churches of Christ, unlike the churches of men, have no liturgy or prayer book to set forth what is believed, but accept without change that which is recorded in the New Testament Scriptures.

Jesus taught the Apostles to pray. That they became men of prayer is revealed by the epistles they addressed to the churches. James says, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:18). The apostle Peter admonishes, "Be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer" (1 Peter 4:7). When Paul wrote to the Church at Thessalonica he exhorted them, "Brethren, pray for us" (1 Thess. 5:25). To these, Jude and John add their testimony, showing the scope of prayer on behalf of those among whom they labored.

The apostles knew how fruitful and beneficial the habit of prayer would be to the Church. When Paul wrote to the Church at Philippi, he said, "Be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6). Thus the New Testament reveals that prayer may be offered unto God at any time, in any place, by the right or proper person. Because the Scriptures so teach, the Churches of Christ believe prayer to be the privilege of God's children. Concerning this, the apostle Paul wrote to the Church of Christ in the city of Rome as follows, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons

of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:14-15). Paul here shows that God is the father of those who have complied with the law of adoption and thus have become members of his family. Therefore they are entitled to address him as "Our Father."

The apostle Peter tells us that it is the prayer of the righteous that is heard by the Lord. "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers, but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Peter 3:12). This Scripture condemns the practice of misguided and uninformed preachers who encourage sinners to pray for salvation. Such teachers tell the seeker that God will hear and answer his prayer and grant unto him the forgiveness of his sins. Not one Scripture gives such a promise to support this practice, but many Scriptures condemn it. It is true that prayer was offered by both Paul and Cornelius prior to their conversion, but neither of them prayed for salvation like the unconverted who beg and beseech God to speak peace to their souls today. Paul prayed for knowledge of his duty, but the prayer did not save, for Ananias told Paul, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). In the case of Cornelius, four days after the prayer was ended he yet had to hear the words whereby he and all his house could be saved (See Acts 11:14). One becomes righteous before God by obeying that form of doctrine that is delivered unto us by the gospel. Then and then only are we able to say, "Abba, Father," to pray for the blessings of life with the assurance that God will hear and answer our prayers. As conclusive evidence that God ignores the prayers of those who refuse to obey his will, John gives us this, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth" (John 9:31). Solomon

also gives us information on this subject saying, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination." Because the Scriptures so teach, the Churches of Christ believe prayer to be the privilege of the children of God, of members of the body of Christ, of Christians.

If we want God to hear our prayers, we must live close to him, seek at all times to do his will, and study, and know his word. The highest type of prayer does not ask for this or that, but that we may use that which is our lot, for our spiritual welfare and good. Prayer breaks down the will of the flesh that prevents the accomplishment of the Divine will in us. The prayers we offer are often filled only with our needs and desires, and thanksgiving for past blessings is forgotten. Some disciples are not praying today. They look upon prayer only as something to resort to in days of great trial or stress. Because we have neglected and forgotten to pray as we ought, the family, the home, and the church, are facing a crisis. Let us get back to God, back to his word, back to prayer.

In private prayer we have a personal interview with God, our Father. In public prayer we join with other members of God's family to offer up our petitions and worship. In both, the warning of the Savior is, "And in praying use not vain repetitions as the Gentiles do, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matt. 6:8). The Churches of Christ have no ready-made, stereotyped, prayers to be repeated over and over, but are taught by the New Testament to pray to God from the heart for those things we need. Some may say, "Well, if God knows what we need, why do we have to ask for it?" God has prepared many blessings, both temporal and spiritual, but they are not ours without effort. God stored the coal in the depths of mother earth, but man can not have it until he desires it enough to put forth the effort to obtain it. God sends the fruitful season, but the crop will not be produced

without labor upon the part of us. So in prayer God compels us to pray for the blessings we need.

But our prayers should not be filled with petitions alone. The attitude of "give me this and give me that" does not contribute to our spiritual welfare. Often the question is asked, "Will the Lord always hear me when I pray?" Only when the prayer is in harmony with his will can we expect God to hear it. "And this is the confidence we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will he heareth us" (1 John 5:14). The Scriptures are the source of information concerning the things for which we should pray, but we must so pray as to be in harmony with the revealed will of God. The example of the Savior here is profitable. He prayed, "Not my will but thine be done". From this, we learn to ask God to grant our requests if they are in harmony with his divine will.

In no other way are we brought so close to God as in prayer, but if we live in neglect and indifference to his will, when the hour of anguish, of need of help comes suddenly upon us, we are in no condition to draw near to God in full assurance of faith. Another thing by which our prayers are hindered is malice, hatred, bitterness in the heart, against our fellow man or brother in the church, for we can't wrestle with God in prayer and at the same time wrangle with our neighbor. If we pray for forgiveness, we must forgive those who have wronged us. Listen to the Savior, "And when ye stand praying, forgive if ye have ought against any that your father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses" (Mark 11:25). If we have wronged others, our prayers will thus go unanswered until we right that wrong.

We have the assurance that God does hear and answer prayer. Because the Scriptures so teach, the Churches of Christ believe that if we listen to God's word and do what he asks, he will listen to our word and do what we ask. A question often asked by those seeking guidance in the

prayer life is, When and Where Are We To Pray To God? The Scriptures reveal that prayer is not governed by time and place but rather by the attitude of the one praying. Paul said, "I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also" (1 Cor. 14:15). The Savior set forth a vital principle of prayer when he said, "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets that they may be seen of men" (Matt. 6:5). This reveals that our prayers are addressed to God and not to those who chance to stand by. When Paul wrote to Timothy he said, "I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting" (1 Tim. 2:8). To the Thessalonians he said, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). God wants us to know that we can pray anywhere, at any time. We can make our place of business, the home, the office and the farmer's field sacred with God's presence. The disciple who gets a little time with God in the morning will go to the work of the day much stronger. To begin the day with prayer will keep us from folly and sin. Too many disciples pray a lazy, selfish prayer to God, dump their petitions before him and say, "Well, I am done, now it is up to God," and then live in such a way that God can't answer their prayer.

Jesus refers us to the story of the unjust judge to teach us to be persistent. God wants us to draw near to him with a determination to obtain what we seek, and not to be afraid to ask again. The Savior used this illustration, "Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, trouble me not, the door is now shut and my children are with me in bed, I can not rise and give thee. I say unto you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity

he will arise and give him as many as he needeth". That word "importunity" sets forth the idea of persistence in the request of the host. So God would have us to come boldly to the throne of grace and pray for what we need, and not for what we want, but for that which we really need. God's storehouse is full. The supply never fails, but he gives only what you are able to receive. Your spiritual capacity determines the amount. To the church at Philippi, Paul said, "In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God". Supplication is the repeated petition. God often compels us to pray repeatedly for the best blessings of life. Many people when their prayers are not immediately answered say, "Well I must be submissive, perhaps it is not God's will to give me this". By the study of God's word we can know if our request is in accord with his will, if it is not revealed, however, we should pray just as earnestly, adding, "Not my will, but thine be done".

Our supplications to God are often hindered by spiritual hazards, by disbelief in the power of prayer and by devoting the time to other activities that should be devoted to God. Giving up praying to God for the same blessing over and over again is not always submission. We do not call it submission when we see some one cease their efforts to obtain temporal things by labor. We say they lack determination. The disciple who never asks the second or the third time for the same blessing forgets the example of the greatest teacher of prayer, for we read of Christ, "He prayed the third time saying the same words" (Matt. 26:44).

The motive that led Christ to the cross was that he might win to himself our lives completely, that he might redeem us from iniquity that he might have fellowship with us. Listen! "Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him" (1 Thess. 5:10). What a wonderful thing, God's infinite heart so yearned

for the love and fellowship of our hearts, that he gave his only begotten son to win that fellowship. "He first loved us". We cannot understand why God wants the constant companionship of our hearts every day, but he does. If that is his desire; shall it not be ours? If he gave so much to bring that about, shall we not be willing to daily devote a little time, a little thought to definitely giving ourselves to him? Because the Scriptures so teach, the Churches of Christ believe that prayer is a vital thing and part of every true Christian life. Many perils lie hidden in the pathway of life. Deep afflictions will come, dark clouds will blot out the sun, then may we avail ourselves of prayer. Our father alone has the only relief for burdened souls. The pathway to that eternal home is through prayer, through cries and tears. Jesus has trod the way before us and he bids us to follow. The home is the school of prayer. The poet expressed it thus:

"Let him hear thee talking to thy God,
He will not forget it when the years are gone,
And as his feet the paths of sin would trod,
He will hear thee talking to thy God."

There is nothing that will keep a young man or a young woman, outside of the Bible, like the memory of home influence. But the homes today where the family prayers are held are few. People are not even living in their homes today, but in the picture shows. The old family fireside prayer has disappeared. Parents seem not to have time to teach their children, to read the Bible, and to pray. The lack of these things is undermining the spiritual foundation of home life. There was a time when most disciples read the Bible in their homes and prayed to God, but they don't do it now.

The family altar has vanished! Few homes hear a word of prayer from parents' lips. The Bible is seldom read. Little wonder there has been a decline in spiritual

life and vigor. How we need today the old time American home with its religious atmosphere, with its love for the Bible, with its obedience to God's command, with its family prayers, led by a spiritually-minded father and mother. David said, "My father, thou art the guide of my youth". To guide youth aright a father must be right himself. He must be a Christian, he must be a man of prayer. The job we are trying to do as parents is too large to carry through alone. There is no way we can face the problems that come to us, the responsibility of parenthood, the care and the training of our children and the trials of life, if we are strangers to prayer. Multitudes of fathers look upon prayer with askance. They say it is childish. It may be a child-like affair but it is not childish. It takes a real man to kneel in prayer. There are a lot of men who are ashamed to kneel in prayer and as a result they have never prayed. Many today have never prayed since they left their mother's knee, never prayed since they said, "Now I lay me down to sleep".

"The fire upon the hearth is low,
And there is stillness everywhere
And like winged spirits here and there,
The firelight shadows come and go,
And as the shadows round me creep
A childish treble breaks the gloom,
And softly from a farther room
Comes, "Now I lay me down to sleep",
And somehow with that little prayer,
And that sweet treble in my ears,
My thoughts go back to distant years
And linger with the dear ones there."

Many of us remember that prayer at mothers knee and the prayer of father too, before the throne of grace, when our names were taken before the Lord and his blessings asked upon us, that we might grow into stalwart Christian

men and women. Where shall we pray to God? Anywhere, in the home, in God's great outdoors, in the office, as well as in the church. Certainly when the whole church is come together we should ask for God's blessing to be upon us, for his word to guide us, and voice unto him our gratitude for past blessings.

These prayers should be concise, with petitions for the church, for the disciples, for rulers, for our nation, for our community, for all gospel efforts being put forth to save the lost, and last but not least, for the preacher too. In them we should also ask God for strength and for the forgiveness of sins, but they should not be long, rambling prayers with requests too numerous to mention. Paul said this to Timothy, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim. 2:1-2). We are not to mumble out a prayer to God that those standing by can not understand or hear. The brother leading the prayer should speak audibly, so that all may say, "Amen". His words express our sentiments and all should be following along and not glancing about, whispering or talking to the one by our side.

Often when a brother is called on to lead in prayer his "Amen" is the only one heard. If you believe his prayer reached heaven, that it is heard, that it is in harmony with the Divine will don't be afraid to say "Amen". Paul said, "Pray for us", but how few brethren slip in a petition for the preacher or the brother bringing the message. Preachers sometimes have brethren say to them, "Now don't call on me for public prayer, I just can't pray in public". They might as well add, "And I never pray in private either". If you want to be able to pray in public, learn to pray to God in private. No certain attitude is enjoined upon us in prayer. It is permissible to either stand or kneel. The position of the body is not the thing that God notices but the condi-

tion of the heart. In either position all should bow the head, and there should be no actions which might be construed as a lack of interest in that which is transpiring.

The communion prayer should express thanksgiving for the loaf and the cup, and for the salvation made possible by the shed blood of Christ. When called upon to have a part in this portion of the worship, we should approach God in humility and sincerity. Our prayer need not be long. It is a prayer of thanksgiving that calls to our remembrance the sacrifice of him who died that we might live. Let it be spoken so that all may hear and give thanks. It should not be a prayer repeated without thought, neither should it be one in which the words fall over each other with such rapidity that one cannot understand it. The dismissal prayer is a prayer of thanksgiving for the spiritual blessings attending the worship, for the preaching of the word, for the edifying of the body of Christ, coupled with certain requests for God's watchful care until we come together again. It should be brief, audible to all assembled, with the "Amen" pronounced clearly, that all may know the prayer is ended.

Because prayer indicates the spiritual temperature, all members of the body of Christ ought to pray. If ever in the history of the church we needed to pray, we need it now. Too many are playing when they ought to be praying. Fifty years ago the prayer meetings of the Churches of Christ were largely attended. They were an index of church strength, but now the elders of many churches say they can't get enough members to pay to light up the meeting house and build a fire. What is the reason? Too many movies, too much coldness, too much carnality influencing the members of the body of Christ.

Why should we pray to God? Because of the Spiritual benefits derived. Prayer develops the spiritual nature, and brings us into communion and fellowship with God. It strengthens us for trials, enables us to overcome tempta-

tion and keeps us from sin. When we go before God in prayer we do not hold malice. If we do, the prayer never rises any higher than the roof. How could we address God with hatred in the heart? Prayer then, helps us to develop a spirit of forgiveness. "When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any, that your father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses", such was the teaching of the Savior!

Why pray to God? Because God answers prayer. He does not always send the thing we want, he does not always say "Yes", sometimes he says "No", sometimes, "Wait", yet each is an answer just as much as "Yes". The Savior pointed out that God does not give that which would harm, but that which would help. A parent does not give a child a serpent that looks like a fish because he begs for it. Neither would he give a stone when the child needed bread. So, often God withholds from us that for which we pray, but gives to us some better thing instead. Moses had to take "No" from God. When he begged to be allowed to enter the promised land, God told him to speak no more about the matter, but granted to him the sight of Canaan from Pisgah's lofty summit. God withheld from Paul the removal of the thorn in the flesh, bitter trial of his life, yet gave to him the grace to bear it.

Why should we pray to God? Because a Christian family needs God's help and presence, just as surely as does the church. Many parents put forth the effort to teach their children, not only to teach them but to lead them, but how many neglect to lead them to the foot of the Cross. If the young are not taught the gospel of Christ until they are grown, the chances are they will never obey it. Parents do you think seriously of this responsibility? Do you find time to impress upon their respective minds the truths of God's word? Do you let them hear you pray and tell them why you pray to God? You will spend plenty of time, labor and money preparing them for business life

or the social life. How much time, labor and money do you spend fitting them for spiritual life? Count it up! Brethren, Sisters, we had better get down on our knees and pray to God to forgive our neglect in the past and petition him for strength and help to train our children right. But don't pray to God to grant that they may be Christians, and then never take them to church. Don't pray to God to guide them always to do right, and then fail to set before them that kind of an example. Such prayers are not recognized by God. "Ye ask and ye receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:3). So don't pray that kind of a prayer and then say, "God did not answer my prayer". If you want God to hear your prayers, back them up with a righteous life. Because the Scriptures so teach, the Churches of Christ believe that the righteous should pray to God at every opportunity. God will never hold you accountable for the dollars or acres that you fail to leave your children on account of taking time to teach them his will, or take them to church, but he will hold you to account for failing or neglecting to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The course of the sun across the sky each day rewarms the earth and causes a growth in the vegetable world. So does our drawing near to God in prayer, daily bring warmth of his love into our hearts and cause us to grow spiritually. The faithful observance of prayer prepares us for spiritual enjoyment as we grow in years. In the quietness of that communion with God we shall find strength. When we speak to him, we have the promise that he hears with sympathy and understanding. The doubter speaks of prayer as being only a psychological effect, but the Christian knows that it is something real, and not just an imagination of the mind. That faith is the key that unlocks the storehouse of God's blessing. "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with

the wind and tossed" (James 1:6). It is not the strong and confident disciple who needs help in prayer, but the babe in Christ. And God provides that help. When your eyes are blinded by tears and you cannot word your prayer, when your heart sinks under its weight of need, and your prayer is only a sob, it is then that the Spirit is near, it is then, that the prayer you cannot speak, that your tongue cannot utter, becomes mighty in the presence of God. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 7:26).

In apostolic times we find much importance attached to prayer. When Peter was in prison, prayer was made without ceasing for him. When the church sent Paul and Barnabas out to preach the gospel, we read that they first engaged in prayer. Thus the prayers and the work of the children of God went hand in hand. When Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica he said, "Pray for us". So it should be in work of the church today. We should spend more time communing with God. Our zeal and our love is shown by our devotion. Paul admonished, "Be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7). This is a promise from God's word designed to inspire us, to fortify us. In everything let your requests be made known unto him, and his guidance, his help, his strength, will keep you and lead you till the day is done. Take God's word for your guide, live for Christ and your last prayer, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit", can be uttered with the assurance that it will be answered in the last day by the Savior saying, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world".



Winford Lee

WINFORD LEE

Montevideo, Minnesota was the place where Herman and Eva Lee were residing, on April 25, 1918, when a son was born unto them. The youngster was named Winford. The family continued to live in that region until December 1928, when they removed to Ethel, Missouri.

On September 3, 1939, Winford obeyed the gospel under the preaching of Brother C. R. Turner and was by him immersed into the Lord. He delivered his first sermon almost exactly five months later, on February 4, 1940 at Chillicothe, Mo. The subject was "Temptation". Later he attended 18 weeks of Bible Reading under the instruction of Brother E. M. Zerr, and 24 months under direction of W. Carl Ketcherside.

He held his first meeting for the congregation at Lammine, Mo., in August 1941, and has since declared the message of truth in seven states.

What We Believe About Communion

By WINFORD LEE, Ethel, Mo.

The Lord's supper understood presents one of the most beautiful and inspirational phases of Christian worship. Then, on the contrary, if it is not understood it only makes for greater confusion and perplexity. Inasmuch as this is a controversial subject in the general religious world, I will first deal with what it is and what it means to the Christian, and then will consider some of the ideas and theories of the skeptics and how to refute them.

In order to get the complete understanding of a subject it is necessary to get the background and setting that prompted it. It is a misconception of the scripture to think that the Lord's supper had its origin on the night the Savior was betrayed. While it is true that is the time Christ made it known, that the people of the Christian era were to observe it, and what they were to use in the commemoration, but the setting of this institution is in the 12th chapter of Exodus. Our passover is the anti-type of the Jewish passover. "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" (I Cor. 5:7). Let us bear in mind that the Jews were in bondage when they were told to prepare for the Lord's passover and the same night the tenth plague was inflicted on the Egyptians and Israel marched out the selfsame night. That was the turning point in the history of the Jewish nation! From a nation of slavery and servitude they embarked upon the threshold of freedom and went on as a conquering people. But throughout the years God commanded them to observe their deliverance from bondage by keeping the feast of the passover. (Exo. 12:14).

Luke 22:15 records the Savior saying, "And he said unto them, with desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." At the conclusion of the passover feast he institutes the supper to be kept in "remembrance of him." Thus the passover was SUPERSEDED by the Lord's supper. All Bible students agree that the passover was for the Jews only. But with the coming of Christ, Paul says, (Gal. 3:28) "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all ONE in Christ Jesus." So as Christ brought the "new and living way" to the world, which is for everyone, He also instituted this memorial so ALL could remember and commemorate the price that it cost. The Lord's supper is greater and more perfect than the Jewish passover, in the same respect that Christ's perfect law of liberty is greater than the law of Moses. Christians today are certainly not commanded to observe the Jewish passover, as it ended as did the rest of the law with Christ. "Christ is the end of the law . . ." (Rom. 10:4). But we are commanded to partake of the Lord's supper and are specifically told to "do it in remembrance of Christ" (I Cor. 11:24).

Three writers of the gospels relate the Savior instituting the communion, besides Paul in First Corinthians. Matt. 26:26-28 "and as they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said Take eat, this is my body. And he took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Mark 14:22-24 "And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them and said Take eat: this is my body. And he took the cup and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many." Luke 22:19-20; and I Cor. 11:23-26

carry similar accounts which will be considered later on, but the above will suffice for now. The term "brake it" presents the comparison, that as this bread is broken before you, so will my body be broken for your redemption. Not that His body was broken in exactly the same way as the bread, but that His body was wounded and pierced for the world, and went through indescribable torture. When He gave them the cup to drink, He informed them that it represented His blood that was shed, or was going to be shed for the sins of the world.

The importance of this institution cannot be over-emphasized. The mere fact that the Savior informed them to partake of it on the fatal night of His betrayal will undoubtedly bring us to realize its importance. Would Jesus spend his last fleeting moments on earth relating something of no significance? When He TOLD them to partake of it, that erases all doubt and proves that it is sacred in the sight of heaven. Listen to the language of Christ (John 6:53)—“Jesus said unto them, verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.” This and kindred scriptures do not mean that one would eat the literal flesh and drink the literal blood of Christ. How absurd! ! Yet this catastrophic and impossible doctrine is taught by the Roman Catholic church. It's plain to see that the Savior was there in person when he instituted this, and He said of the bread “This is my body” thus showing that it wasn't His literal body. If it wasn't literal then, what would make it so now? When Christ said “Take eat; this is my body”, he wasn't urging or endorsing cannibalism! But the broken bread was an EMBLEM or SYMBOL of His body that was to be broken. The same applies to the blood; the fruit of the vine represents the blood of Christ that was shed. Thus in eating and drinking of this we have our minds refreshed of the atoning sacrifice that Christ made for the world. Christ has seen fit that you and I recall that event to our

minds, and the Lord's supper is the way provided. When we understand what the bread and wine represent, and when Paul says in Hebr. 9:22 ". . . and without the shedding of blood, there is no remission" we are actually remembering the event that brought salvation to the human family. Dare we say it is of little importance?

Of course, some would say, "I can't see how it will do anyone any good. Is it possible that there can be anything about a little grape juice and a small bit of unleavened bread that can do a person good spiritually?" In order for it to avail anything we must partake of it seeing its purpose through the eye of faith. Drinking the fruit of the vine and eating the bread, thinking of it as nothing, only as for physical sustenance, is no more the Lord's supper than is, every time we take a bath, baptism! But to the Child of God who partakes of it according to God's will, with the right motive at heart and realizing he is fulfilling a Divine ordinance it means much. He can look back as did the Israelites remembering the One who delivered him from bondage. There is a vast difference between seeing the plan of God through faith and just seeing it from the outward appearance. To the person who is not spiritually discerned, the folding back of the linen cloth and exposing to view the emblems of our Lord (the loaf and the wine) is all that he sees, and wonders why we hold it so sacred. But to the Christian, he sees much more than that. As the worship approaches this solemn hour, they see the love of God that prompted it. "For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son . . ." Through the eye of faith they see the Christ in his personal ministry, undergoing the ridicule of a wicked world. They see him betrayed by one of His professed followers, also standing before Pilate and the angry mob, and yet putting up no resistance to save himself, because he came to save others. We see Him deserted and made to bear his cross amid the jeers and mockery of a mad multitude, and at

last the crucifixion. "Not my will, but thine be done" comes in clarion tones to our ears. We see Jesus who was willing to endure all that you and I might have right to the tree of life. And now we can hear Him say, "Do this in remembrance of me." Dear reader, let's all remember this is a request of a dying friend—Will we forsake him? The above is what we see, or should see, in the Communion instead of the material side of it. In view of the fact of the above thoughts flashed vividly to our minds no one will deny that it will build us up spiritually and bring us nearer to God. And that is the intended purpose. Maybe some would say that I can think of all those things in regard to the Savior without the Communion, and therefore it is not necessary. In the first place that isn't the point. The point is Christ COMMANDED us to remember Him in that manner. But that doesn't exclude us remembering Him in other ways! Bless your hearts, you have to remember the Christ every day of your life, if you will live acceptable before Him. But let's bear in mind the Communion is to be partaken of in remembrance of Him on the day that God set apart for that purpose, because it is a Divine order. "This DO in remembrance" (I Cor. 11:24). The reason that I contend that the Lord's supper is important is because it is God's command and NOT my idea! "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (Jno. 14:15).

The early disciples were not "forgetful hearers" of this ordinance as some are today who pass it by as a myth or something, but as soon as the Church was in existence we find them continuing "steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in BREAKING OF BREAD, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). Here we see the early disciples breaking bread as an act of worship, just as they were doing the other things in the above verse. The Lord's supper occupied the same status as doctrine, fellowship and prayer in worship to God. And why not—the same God

that authorized one, authorized them all, the same Bible that commanded us to do one, commanded us to do them all. We are then duty bound to give them all equal consideration. We do not contend or teach that this phase of the worship is the MOST important part, as some would perhaps say, but it is **EQUALLY** as important. If a person would observe the Lord's supper and omit some other portion of worship that God commands, it would not meet His approval any more than it would to keep and do the other acts of worship and omit the Communion. God demands our servitude in every line. This principle is taught in Jas. 2:10 "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." This is, however, the most solemn part and is to be carried out with greatest solemnity. As the crucifixion and death of Christ was the most solemn event, to us, of His career, it is only natural that the commemoration be likewise. In order for us to do this in remembrance of His sorrows, we would have to be in a reverential state of mind, to do it acceptably. "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him." (Psa. 89:7).

It must be borne in mind that Christ instituted this for His followers only. Exo. 12:45 informs us that no "stranger" could eat the passover, likewise the Communion is for Christians. It is made FOR Christians and not to MAKE Christians. A person becomes a Christian by obeying the Gospel (Rom. 6:17-18), and then the Lord's command is to observe the Lord's supper in remembrance of his Deliverer. Never in the scripture do we find anyone observing it except the disciples. No commands in the Bible that are to be carried out in order that we might remain faithful pertain to the aliens to the fold. Before a person can REMAIN righteous, he has to first BE righteous. The only command that applies to those who are not a child of the King is "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins

. . ." (Acts 2:38). Then, after becoming a follower of Him, we are commanded to commune and do the other acts of worship in order to remain well pleasing in His sight.

Paul speaks forth very plainly and warns against eating and drinking the Lord's supper unworthily (I Cor. 11:27-29), "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the blood of the Lord. But let every man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup, for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." The Lord demands our full attention, and during the communion service our thoughts are to be free from everything and directed solely toward Him. The person who goes through this service as a mere formality might just as well not commune as far as benefit is concerned. They have not partaken it discerning (seeing) the Lord's body, hence have eaten and drunk unworthily. We must lay aside all other things. The man, who during this service, wonders how the fish are biting, what his wife is going to have good for dinner, or how that 'coon hound that he just bought is going to work, will get about as much good and blessing from God as the seat he is sitting in! Christ said do this in remembrance of ME!! not in remembrance of a fishing trip, a 'coon hunt or a gorgeous dinner. Let's remember to prepare our minds for this occasion, and get the benefit intended. In order to commune and not do it in an unworthy manner, a person must conform his life as closely to the Bible as possible. The individual who eats the Lord's supper regularly and lives a daily life of wickedness, is eating and drinking UNWORTHILY. The idea that a person can live any kind of a haphazard life, as long as he doesn't miss the communion, is as far from the truth as south is from north! ! We must live as close to the Bible as we possibly can SEVEN days a week. The results of their eating and drinking not discerning (seeing) the

Lord's body are as follows: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (I Cor. 11:30). Many today are spiritually weak and sickly because they are doing this very thing.

There has been much confusion and differences of opinions in regard to when this institution is to be partaken of, and how often. Still we believe that this is plainly set forth in the scripture if we use logical reasoning coupled together with what the Bible has to say about it. There are two principal ways by which the Sacred Text teaches. One, by direct command, second by example. Some have failed to recognize the latter as authoritative, but Peter speaks forth (I Pet. 2:21) on this wise ". . . Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow in his steps." But in regard to the time when the Lord's supper is to be observed we have BOTH example and command! ! The early church left us the example as to when this was to be observed, "And upon the FIRST day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread . . ." (Acts 20:73). Here we see they came together on the First day to observe this. The church had been set up quite some time prior to that time (Acts 2). If the early Christians were commanded to do it this way, why not you and I? There hasn't been a change in God's plan, so we are duty bound to keep it this way. The first day of the week (Sunday) is the day set aside by the Lord for the Communion and contribution. This is plainly taught in I Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7. Of course some will say that it doesn't say every first day, neither does it say we can't observe it every day if we want to. If man is at liberty to have the Lord's supper every day and any day why does the inspired writer specifically say they came together on the First day? There is only one answer—that's the day God intended to be used. Most everyone will agree to that scriptural and logical conclusion. But no doubt, many will widely differ and perhaps utterly disagree when we

assert that it is to be observed every first day. I ask your kindest indulgence, and careful consideration of the following. My plea to you now is the same as that which Isaiah uttered, "Come now, let us reason together." Let's see if "upon the first day" means every first day. When the Lord instructed them to observe it on that day, if he did not intend for them to keep the first day of every week, why didn't he tell them what first days to observe? As every week has a first day, so when He told them to keep the first day, it naturally meant the first day of every week. Consider with me the 20th chapter of Exodus. There is recorded the ten commandments and the fourth one reads like this: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," (Exo. 20:8). I ask you to bear in mind that it does NOT say every sabbath! Nevertheless the record in Numbers 15:32-26 relates thus: "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness they found a man that gathered sticks upon the Sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the Lord said unto Moses, "The man shall be surely put to DEATH: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp." Sounds like pretty severe punishment, doesn't it? Still I wonder why this man didn't cry unto the Lord saying, Lord, you didn't say we had to keep "every" sabbath. The reason he had nothing to say is the fact that he knew full well that God meant every one, because every week had a sabbath. Now, if "the sabbath" meant every sabbath, why doesn't "the first" day mean every first day?

When Paul informs them to lay by in store "Upon the first day of the week" (I Cor. 16:2), the phrase (upon the first day of the week) comes from the Greek—KATA MIAN SABBATON—which is, "upon the first day of 'every week'" and is rendered that way by Thayer and other lexi-

cographers. With this we have direct command in the text to take care of our contribution WEEKLY. Now with that in mind, let's go to Acts 2:42. Luke says in his record that "they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayers." This shows that the other acts of worship accompanied the acts of contributing and the Lord's supper. Thayer's Greek Lexicon assists us here again, as it gives as one definition for the word "fellowship" "a collection or contribution" thus proving that the Lord's supper was attended to at the same time that collection was! Now as the text shows us that the collection was to be taken every first day, and the contribution and communion were a joint event, thus it proves once again that the Lord's supper is a weekly observance. Couple that together with Heb. 10:25 "For-sake not the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is . . ." and it will show us beyond a shadow of doubt the importance of breaking bread on the first day of every week. The fact that Paul preached to them (Acts 20:7), shows that the Lord sanctions exhortation, etc. in connection with the Communion and contribution, thus giving us authority to carry on our Lord's day worship as we do. Still in face of all this, some, no doubt, would take the absurd position that the Book doesn't say in so many words, Thou shalt observe the Lord's supper on the first day of the week and that it just "happened" to be that day as recorded in Acts 20:7. This would be showing disrespect for God's teaching that we have already considered. It is also folly to say that God's plans just "happen." That has never been the case. Then, too, if it wasn't the right day wouldn't Paul have rebuked them when he was in their presence? Would he have tolerated something that was not according to Divine command? He always did inform people of their mistakes and error, then if they weren't using the right day, Paul failed to discharge his duty, and if he failed to do that would God have been with him in all

his labors as the record shows that he was? God never has tolerated disobedience, then or now! It is evident that theory "leaks like a sieve." There is only one safe conclusion to draw when an inspired apostle sanctions something and that is that God Himself has given the command or order.

Then there would be some who would be contentious in regard to the meaning of "the cup". In some portions of the religious world wrangle and strife over the procedure of the Communion has turned it into more of a "debate" subject than the symbol of the price our Master paid. It has lost its sacredness in the dogmas of men! I'm firmly convinced that those who have taken the position that "one" cup is all that can be used at the Lord's table, if they all carefully consider the teaching again will see its folly, as well as its IMPOSSIBILITIES! The misconception begins with thinking "the cup" is the container. It is my firm conviction that the "fruit of the vine" itself is the CUP. Let's see if Christ Himself can't assist us along that line. Matt. 26:27 "And He took the cup" and gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of it" (all of you drink of it). Then Christ goes right ahead saying that "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this "fruit of the vine" (Matt. 26:29). He is still talking on the same subject. What he told them to drink in verse 27 is the same thing he said he wouldn't drink in verse 29. "The cup" in verse 27 is the "fruit of the vine" in verse 29. The apostle Paul speaks forth again (I Cor. 16:16), "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? . . ." Certainly no one will say that a literal cup could be the communion of the blood of Christ. But the fruit of the vine is, as it is a representation or a type of the Savior's blood. "The cup of blessing which we bless" is the fruit of the vine which they offered thanks for. For a person to say it is wrong for individual communion cups he invariably has taken the position that the

"cup" means the container. If that is true there are a lot of people VIOLATING the Commands of God because Christ says in EVERY instance "drink this cup" now if the cup is the container we are going to have to start swallowing communion glasses and gulping down cups in order to carry out the command of God, and believe you me, brother, that is going to be mighty hard on digestive organs. The Savior in instituting the Lord's supper never said drink "out of" this cup. Let's remember the cup is the fruit of the vine and the container isn't considered at all. Man is at option to use as many containers as deemed necessary. Still we find those who cling to the so-called "one cup" getting caught in their own trap, because if one container is all that we can have and be scriptural then it would be wrong to start other congregations because then there would be two cups in existence. Just look where that kind of reasoning would get us. Of course, they would say that it means one cup to the congregation. The Bible doesn't say anything about such a thing as that. In order for them to be consistent in their teaching they are going to have to go clear to Jerusalem every Lord's day to commune!

The Communion stands in the religious world as a great monument, towering above everything man has had to offer. The monuments which decorate our nation bring our minds to remembrance of the great men they represent. These are not put up just because the individuals were mere men, but were put up in memory of the deeds the person did or accomplished. The Communion is in our midst to refresh our minds, and bring us to remembrance of the GREATEST being, Jesus, who was both human and Divine. Countless millions of people drive miles and miles to view and pay respect to the heroes of this nation, but fail to remember their Savior. How much more important it is to go to "the house of the Lord" and observe the monument erected in memory of the One who gave His

all for the human family that they might have access to the Tree of Life. John says (Rev. 22:14) "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Do you feel that you can qualify in the group that "do" His commands if you disregard the sacred ordinance of which I have spoken? Be honest with yourself and with your God, and we feel that you will not only look upon the Lord's Supper as a command we must fulfill, but will look upon it as a privilege and be joyfully thankful that you can do this in remembrance of the One who leads you upward. Let's bear in mind that if we fail to remember Him while in this life, He'll not remember us when we cross over to face the Record of our life.

"Do this" He cried, "till time shall end,
In memory of your dying Friend;
Meet at my table and record
The love of your departed Lord."
View Him, now, upon the cross,
Us to save from endless loss!
Dying, there, upon the tree—
Dying, there for you and me!



Roy Harris

ROY HARRIS

John Roy Harris is the son of Riley and May Harris. He was born at Brixey, Missouri on December 9, 1915, and with the exception of one year spent at Fairgrove, north of Springfield, he has lived near Brixey all of his life. It was there, during the preaching of the elderly Brother Brumback (father of Robert Brumback) that he made his confession of faith in Christ, and was immersed by Bro. Will Young.

Almartha, Missouri was the scene of his first gospel sermon, and in 1940, he held his first protracted meeting at Summersville. Roy has a great deal of talent, not only as a preacher of the Word, but also as a song director. He has composed and written the music to several beautiful gospel hymns, and has been a force for good in teaching many the rudiments of vocal music. To improve the talent thus given him, he took two courses with the Stamps-Baxter School of Music at Dallas, Texas, and is a graduate of that institution. His time is in demand constantly now, either directing singing or conducting meetings.

Why We Sing and Do Not Play

By ROY HARRIS, Brixey, Mo.

A great man once said: "Let me write a nation's songs and I care not who shall write its laws". No one can deny that songs have wielded a great influence over the lives and destinies of men and nations. What the law attempts to achieve through force, an uplifting song may accomplish by instilling ennobling sentiment in the heart of an individual while he is scarcely aware of the fact. One may get an insight into the background of a race or nation by studying its songs. Especially is that true of religious songs. Songs reflect the attitude of people as well as the condition of the times.

The faith of the reformer, Martin Luther is shown in his "Mighty Fortress". In the midst of the storms of persecution which were raging about him he could sing "A Mighty Fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing". In the "Spirituals" of the American Negro there is portrayed the simple, trusting faith as well as the longing for deliverance of a down-trodden people. When we today sing "The Sweet By And By" or "When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder" to alleviate the heartache caused by an open grave, we are demonstrating anew the hope which springs eternal in the human breast. Such songs as these, sung by earth-bound children of eternity, expressing glimpses of the rainbow's end, cheer the weary traveler as he trudges the lonely vale, lifting his soul above the clouds of morbidity and oppression, carrying his spirit on angels' wings to celestial heights of paradise.

Even the folk songs, such as Stephen Foster's melo-

dies, have played their part, indicating ones' love for home and native land. The "jazz" songs of recent years reflect the restlessness of an era of the world which culminated in World War Two, just as many of the war songs show an earnest desire for a return to peace and tranquility.

One should live the song he sings. He should let its sentiments absorb his soul. This is definitely true of the religious songs. A song becomes our own, no matter by whom it is written, when we apply it to our own lives. There is an appeal about a gospel song, lifted from sincere, devoted hearts, cracked and quavering though their voices be, which is unmatched by the music of the world. Through this medium the average worshipper expresses an intensity of feeling he is otherwise unable to utter. The religious song is at the same time warning and instructive without being offensive; sweet and appealing without being obviously sentimental; sad and plaintive but not morbid; joyful and cheerful yet not loose or abandoned.

The history of singing is interwoven with the history of man. Angels sang to shepherds the night our savior was born, and it was included by the Apostles as a part of the worship of the early church. But while singing in the worship of the New Testament church is as old as the apostles, playing upon mechanical instruments is not. It sometimes seems strange to our denominational friends that we of the Church of Christ use only unaccompanied singing. They apparently conclude we are the only religious body that has ever so practiced. Actually, it is only in recent years instrumental music has been widely adopted by the Protestant churches. Multitudes of earnest people, both living and dead, have opposed its use in divine worship. For over six hundred years it was absent altogether. Its introduction, under opposition, was effected by Pope Vitalian I. This came about not earlier than the year 666. Some authorities say 670. (See Chambers' Encyclopedia; also American Encyclopedia).

The great reformers were emphatic in their opposition. Calvin said it would be as much out of place as the burning of incense and other ceremonies of the Old Law. Luther voiced his disapproval as did Wesley, who said: "I have no objection to an organ in our chapel, provided it is neither seen nor heard". We are told that such music was not allowed by Spurgeon, one of the great Baptist preachers of England. Adam W. Clark, who wrote a great commentary for the Methodist Church, stated he had never known the use of instrumental music to be productive of good and he had known it to cause evil. Like he said, "I can say that music as a science I admire, but man-made instruments in the worship I can not approve". The Greek Catholic Church, with its millions of communicants, has never used them. Since the New Testament was written in Greek, if there was any shade of meaning there indicating their use, surely the Greeks would have found it as they were reading their native language. Especially does it seem so in view of the proneness of man to add anything of a human nature which he thinks at all permissible.

It is probably true that one who has been accustomed to special music will find ordinary singing rather "tame", and one who is interested in worship for its aesthetic rather than its spiritual value may even consider it boresome but to one who is filled with the spirit, or devotion to God it should be as unnecessary as intoxicating drink to the abstainer who needs only pure water to quench his thirst.

First, let me say I believe in the use of instruments with which to serve God. In the song-service I believe in praising Him upon the most perfect instrument obtainable. One created by the Lord. Every person has in his throat an instrument consisting of the vocal chords. The vibrations of this tiny instrument, when properly tuned and regulated, are capable of reproducing harmonious tones unequaled by any other instrument on earth. Witness the number and effectiveness of a cappella choirs in schools

and other groups of young people. However, the mere matter of pleasing sound effects would be poor authority for any act directed as worship of God. The question which will naturally govern who one seeks to please God and not himself is, what has He authorized? We do not believe the Lord has sanctioned the use of man-made musical instruments in the worship of the church of the New Testament. And to restate an old motto, we wish to speak only where He has spoken.

Music is generally classified under two heads: Vocal and instrumental. Vocal is that which is made by singing; instrumental that which is produced by playing. We will henceforth use these two terms in their accepted meanings. Let us list all the scriptures bearing upon this matter after the church was established (Acts 2) and see what the consensus of scriptural teaching reveals.

The first mention is recorded in Acts 16:25, "Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God". No instrument here, other than the vocal chords. But someone may say they did not have access to an instrument, being in prison. Possibly true, but one thing we must admit, it was possible to have an acceptable song-service without mechanical instruments.

Next see Romans 15:9, "Sing unto thy name."

(1 Cor. 14:15). "Sing with the spirit and sing with the understanding." "Sing with the spirit" is sometimes defined as meaning to sing with the proper attitude of mind. On the other hand it may have had a stronger significance to the early Christians, indicating they were to sing as they were guided by the Holy Spirit, direct from heaven. If so the principle applies today since we are to do all things as the Spirit has revealed through the word. Thus, unless He has authorized instruments we could not use them and sing with the spirit. "Sing with the understanding" shows this act of worship is one which appeals to the intelligence of man. Mechanical music alone appeals

only to the emotions. The only way an instrumental solo could appeal to the understanding would be for the hearer to associate words with it. Otherwise it would be entertainment only, pure and simple. Well, is there anything wrong with a person being entertained? Perhaps not in its proper place but have we no higher motive than that for worshipping God? Singing may awaken the emotions yet always at the same time directs itself to the understanding also.

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19). "Speaking" and "Singing" could only be done upon the vocal chords while the instrument designated for us to make melody upon is the human heart. Each of these forms of music: "psalms", "hymns", "spiritual songs", was one in which they could speak. I believe these three terms can be classified thus: (1) Psalms formed a large number of their songs of that day which were sung or chanted in unison. We still use many of the psalms, some of them rearranged that they may more easily be set to music. (2) A hymn may in a broad sense be defined as an uninspired song based upon the Scriptures, addressed principally to God. Such a song may be found in "Sweet Hour of Prayer", "Nearer My God To Thee", "Rock Of Ages", etc. They are more definitely devotional than a gospel song. (3) A gospel song or "spiritual song" may be very generally defined as an uninspired song based upon the Scriptures, chiefly addressed to man and intended for the purpose of instructing, arousing, warning, comforting or encouraging. A good example of this type is found in such songs as "Send The Light" and "Let The Lower Lights Be Burning". Often we find a song which has the combined attributes of all, or at least of both hymn and gospel song. Such a one must be called "semi-hymnal".

Both devotional hymns or psalms and rousing gospel

songs have their place in the services and both types should be used. A meeting where only grave devotional hymns are sung will usually be lacking in life and enthusiasm and we should remember that in Col. 3:16 we are instructed to "teach and admonish one another" in the song-service, thus we should choose songs of an instructive and exhortative nature as well as those of praise and devotion to God. On the other hand, a song-service of only the arousing gospel-song class might fail to create the solemn, worshipful attitude necessary for prayer, the Lord's Supper and occasions of like nature. Especially does it seem to me the hymnal type should be used on Lord's Day mornings. At mid-week or protracted evangelistic meetings perhaps the livelier type of gospel song should predominate. By all means the song-leader should give some fore-thought to the selection of songs. It is practically as important to make proper selections as it is to be able to sing. Nearly always it is better to begin the service with a good rousing gospel song such as "Send The Light", "Standing On The Promises", or "Higher Ground". Then possibly just before prayer an old hymn as for example, "Sweet Hour of Prayer." Many times, through a little planning, the songs can be arranged so they will definitely tie in with the sermon or Bible lesson.

"In the midst of the church will I sing praises unto thee." This (Heb. 2:12) expressly authorizes vocal music in the church, yet the New Testament gives us neither precept nor example for instrumental music. When we realize that God has emphatically commanded us to hear Christ, (Matt. 17:5) "**Hear ye Him**" and Jesus has given not one word that even intimates its use, no person can add instrumental music without disobeying (Matt. 17:5). You might be hearing David or some other Old Testament writer but in the presence of two such men (Moses and Elias) God commanded to hear Jesus Christ, making it plain Christ's will supercedes theirs. Why do you not offer the

bloody sacrifice or burn incense today? You may say because they were a part of the "ceremonial law" of the Old Testament. Instrumental music was not even included as a part of the original "ceremonial law". It was ordained by David and employed as a co-offering with the burnt sacrifice. (2 Chr. 29:28-29).

The worn-out argument, that Jesus did not forbid it in so many words, is a weak one in view of the fact that you can not hear a person upon a subject about which he has not spoken. Are we trying to build a practice around the silence of our Lord or upon what is written? Even the most ardent advocates of mechanized music must admit Christ did not mention it.

The word tells us (2 Peter 1:3), "according as his divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." Did He give us another music besides vocal? If not, then it does not pertain to either life or godliness. In other words, it is not necessary to have it in order to receive eternal life, nor to live a godly life on earth. Then is it not a safe plan to omit it? Is it not, in fact, unsafe to add anything which God did not consider essential to either life or godliness? Do we yet seek to please men, or God?

Again, Jesus told the apostles He would send the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth (John 16:13), who would also bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever the Savior had said unto them (John 14:26). Now it is evident, since the apostles were as silent as the grave about the matter, both by precept and example, mechanical music was not taught by our Lord, else the Holy Spirit considered it of insufficient importance to bring to the remembrance of the apostles. Too, He was to guide them into all truth so unless the Spirit failed in His mission, it is not a part of "all truth" and is not required to become free from sin, for "ye shall know the truth and the **truth** shall make you free" (John 8:32). We may safely say truth is

like the mountain peaks, he who goes beyond, descends.

The early disciples "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42). Doctrine means "teaching". To continue steadfastly or firmly in the apostles' doctrine is to abide in their teaching. Was instrumental music a part of the apostles' teaching? Ardent exponents of its use admit it was not, so how can one who uses it claim to abide in the apostles' doctrine (teaching)?

Do we place ourselves with Balaam of old who wanted to see if God would not say something "more" than He had already said? Balaam knew God had not told him to go on this mission but he asked for something more in the way of instructions and he got it, though not exactly what he had expected. But so determined was he to receive Balak's reward he interpreted it as direct testimony that God would bless him in his efforts. We know what happened. (Num. 22). Some today acknowledge the Savior did not definitely specify instrumental music but say "where does He say we can not have it?" Then, because we are determined to have it, we scan obscure shades of Scriptural meaning, grabbing at straws of divine sanction, until at last we persuade ourselves God has spoken something "more" on the subject. "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18). To insert instrumental music is to add something to Christ. Do you not think it unwise, my friend, to presume upon the mercy of God to the extent of willfully adding to his word?

Just here perhaps we should consider two passages in the New Testament which definitely speak of harps in connection with worship. (Rev. 5:8, Rev. 14:2). The first of these tells us every one of the persons seen by John had one of these harps, so whatever they were, I believe every

worshipper should have one of them if we are to use this as authority for harps in the church. But so far as the record informs us not a note of instrumental music was heard by the apostle John. Listen! "I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song." Notice John heard **voices singing**. I believe the harps here were the vocal chords. Not once does it say he heard them **playing**. Even if it had, would that alone permit us to do the same in the church today? Whatever God sees fit to have in heaven will be wholly sanctified, free from any improper influence, but that does not prove it would occupy the same status in the church on earth. We believe the Bible teaches us babies will go to heaven but that does not give us authority to sprinkle them and receive them into the church. Even among those bodies which practice sprinkling babies they are accepted into the church as "confirmed" members, thus could not contend that anything which is in heaven ought to be used in the church. After all much of Revelation is figurative. What good would **literal** harps be to angelic beings?

In the days of Christ the Jews were adding their doctrines and traditions to the commandments of God. Jesus said: "In vain ye do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of Men" (Matt. 15:9). Even historians agree instrumental music originated with man. The best that can be said for it is that it has been accepted by honest people and handed down as a teaching or tradition of men. And the kindest statement I know to make concerning it is that it is safe to not use it. The person who persists in its use because he likes the sound is placing his own feelings ahead of safety in spiritual matters. Why should we censure the Hindu when he bows down before his heathen god and thinks he is accepted because he smells the odor of sweet incense, supposing his god would not permit the sweet odor to pervade the temple if he was not pleased when we allow our "feelings" to be our standard

rather than the authority of Christ? Being guided by such standard, are we not yielding to the lust (desire) of the flesh?

Or possibly it is more often the "pride of life", since one of the most common reasons people desire an organ or piano in "their church" is so they can be like others around them. They are akin to the Israelites in that they wish to resemble the (denomi) nations about them (1 Sam. 8:19-20).

I have two complaints to lodge against instrumental music. (1) Where it originated (with man); (2) where it leads. One departure usually leads to a greater. When instruments were first brought into the church the plea was advanced they would only be utilized to assist the singer in getting the pitch and furnish a prop to aid him in keeping the tune while he sang, but soon the instrument began to be the center of attraction, rather than the singing, until the churches started trying to outdo each other with expensive organs and special instrumental numbers to attract attention. Alas, that in the edifice supposed to be erected to worship the lowly Nazarene in, pride in fancy fixtures should all too often predominate in the heart of the worshipper, instead of devotion to God. Alas, too, that the poor, who in the days of Christ had the gospel preached to them, should have money squeezed from them to buy organs and the other expensive furniture which must be included, then oft-times feeling unwelcome and ill at ease in their modest garb amid such surroundings, are forced to sit meekly down outside.

It seems man would rather be entertained, even at the house of God, than exert himself enough to develop the talent God has given him. Thus more and more a chosen (and possibly remunerated) few emphasize their skill by singing too difficult for the average communicant to even understand, calculated to show off the performers' ability more than to express the hearts' desire to God.

Man's laziness and failure to develop his God-given aptitude for singing are frequently responsible for additions to the worship. If all my brethren believed in and **practiced** vocal music there would not be so great a clamor for the instrumental. Too many practice vocal noise, apparently thinking mere racket is singing. Small wonder, under those circumstances, when denominational friends attend, they feel we should have an organ to drown out the discords. Each person needs to be taught the song-service is not for his benefit only, to give him a chance to display **his** superior lung-power. All should attempt to **blend** their voices. This does not require an enormous amount of training. A lot depends on what a person tries to do. We should at least harmonize enough that the worshippers' mind will not be distracted from the spirit of the occasion by some who are either much louder than, or half a beat behind, the rest. Especially should this be watched by one who is a poor singer. Not that he need quit altogether but he should attempt to keep with the congregation and modulate his voice so it will not blare forth discordantly. If he knows nothing about reading music he should learn. I believe the congregation ought to see he is given the opportunity, and insist that he take advantage of it if he wants to continue to participate in the singing.

How often we hear the parable of the talents mentioned and are reminded of the fate of the one who hid his talent. Yet how many of us are holding our talent for singing. Few and far between are the persons born with no natural ability to sing, though with rare exceptions none of them are good singers without both training and practice. God furnished us with a foundation of natural ability upon which he expects us to build. In the parable of the talents each one was required to make all the gain he could according to what had been given him. Yet possibly not three percent of the average congregations have ever achieved their full possibilities in the matter of singing. Even then the

singing is often surprisingly good, but shall we be satisfied with anything less than our best? You may do reasonably well as you are, still if you have opportunity to do better are you not neglecting your duty by failing to improve it? I verily believe some brethren have been more interested in arguing with their religious neighbors than in demonstrating to them that the Lord's plan will work. The greatest reasoning that can be produced against instrumental music is a church that can sing well. Let us devote some of the time we waste on argument to development of talent and many times we will find an argument unnecessary.

With the simple methods in which most of the sacred songs are written reading of notes is possible for the average member of every congregation. With the exception of the "one in a thousand" person who is tone deaf here is one phase of the worship in which every member can participate publicly. The Lord never commanded anyone to do anything impossible and if after, much study and practice one still could not carry a tune under any consideration I do not think he should attempt to sing aloud. He might still look on the book and follow in his mind, thus making melody in his heart though he can not make it in his voice, and might distract others by trying:

In concluding, there are a few miscellaneous points I feel deserve attention.

Occasionally, someone concludes if we are not to have instrumental music in worship we should not have it in the home or anywhere else. God has given us **specific** items of worship and **general** rules to govern our private lives. A little common sense reasoning will tell us there are many things we may have in the home or other places which would not be permissible to perform as acts of worship. This is so obvious it scarcely seems essential to call attention to the fact. For instance, within certain limitations we are permitted to have whatsoever we desire on our

tables at home but when it comes to the Lord's Table, Christ gave us the bread and the fruit of the vine which excludes other elements. Still, there is no scripture which says we must not have milk in the Communion service.

Again, the contention is made that there is as much authority for musical instruments as for song books, tuning forks, and similar articles. Let us take an Old Testament example by way of illustration. When God told Noah to build the ark He instructed him the material should be gopher wood. Would the Lord have been pleased if Noah had selected oak or some other lumber? You will say: "Certainly not. The divine blue-print called for gopher wood." But what has that to do with the question under consideration? Simply this: When God gave a command and also defined the means or methods to be employed, that excluded all other materials and methods, but where a command was given and the details, such as materials, methods, time, place, etc., were not specified, man was at liberty to use his judgment so long as he stayed within the bounds of other general teaching. Now for the application to our subject. There are two kinds of music: vocal and instrumental. Vocal is produced by singing, "speaking", while instrumental is made by playing. If Jesus had indicated He wanted us to praise Him with music and had not said what kind, we believe either or both would be acceptable. When "speaking", "singing", and "fruit of lips" (Heb. 13:15) are all referred to and playing is not mentioned, however, we believe that eliminates all music besides vocal. The use of song books, or tuning forks could not add another kind of music since you cannot play a tune upon either of them. Using them as aids you would still have to sing if you made music at all. In other words, vocal music is the only kind you could have, whereas a piano, organ or such like would of necessity constitute an addition, producing another kind of music.

Nadab and Abihu lost their lives by reason of the strange fire with which they offered their sacrifice of incense (Lev. 10:1-5). God had told them to get fire from the altar in the outer court. If the Lord had only said "fire" any fire might have been permissible. It was "strange" because it was different from what God had commanded them. They had been told where to obtain the fire, thus all other was excluded. These things are examples to us. (1 Cor. 10:11). Are we proffering strange music, that is, foreign to what God has commanded?

Finally, when the "tumult and the shouting dies", when the noise of reasoning, pro and con, has all died away, one fact forever remains unshaken and unshakable. It is safe to just sing. Here, then, is a point we can all unite upon. If we of the Church of Christ would reverse our attitude toward instrumental music there would still be no unanimity of opinion on the matter since there are other religious groups that will not use it. Our railroads have stressed a motto: "Safety First". Why can we not do the same in religion? Or is safety more important to us in physical matters than in religious affairs?

Learning to blend our voices in spiritual song might be a good beginning toward harmonizing our lives one with another. Let us learn to love, sing and obey the lessons taught by scriptural songs here that we may get a fore-taste of the rapture that is to come when we shall "sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, by and by, and dwell with Jesus evermore."



L. C. Roberts

L. C. ROBERTS

L. C. Roberts, son of Daniel S. and Anna M. Roberts, was born in Perry County, Ohio, Sept. 30, 1892, and spent the first 23 years of his life on a farm in the state of his birth. After a session at Normal School, in Athens, Ohio, he taught rural schools for three years. Later, upon moving to Marion, Indiana he again entered the Normal School, and took two more years of preparatory and selective work, with a 3 months intermission during which he attended his first Bible Reading.

Brother Roberts was united in marriage to Flora B. Settle (daughter of the late Stephen Settle) on March 5, 1916. They have two adopted children who have shared their love: Verlin L. and Bernadine Ruth. Verlin is now in the United States Armed Forces.

The subject of this sketch, obeyed the gospel at Rosseau, Ohio at the age of 19, being immersed by Albert W. Burcher. He was baptized on Thursday night, and put to work publicly the following Sunday, by the two aged elders of the church, who kept him in the public work of the congregation continually. His first "formal" sermon was preached at South Marion, Indiana in 1916, and on July 15, 1920 he began his first meeting with Fairview Church, near Clark, Mo. Bro. Roberts has attended three month Bible Studies under Stephen Settle, A. M. Morris, J. C. Bunn, E. M. Zerr and W. Carl Ketcherside; and six week studies (New Testament) under Stephen Settle and E. M. Zerr.

The present address is Bonne Terre, Missouri where Bro. Roberts is engaged in a year of general mission and development work.

What We Believe About Church Finance

By L. C. ROBERTS, Bonne Terre, Mo.

The church is a New Testament institution. Therefore we must look to the New Testament for its system of financing. The church is mentioned in the prophecies of the Old Testament but the promised Messiah had to come and suffer before it could be a reality. While some of the principles governing the support of the new institution are mentioned in the Old Testament as governing and regulating the Mosaic economy, and are found to be useful in the study of this subject, yet the student must go to the new covenant for positive rules and definite suggestions that must guide him in his conclusions as to how funds are to be scripturally raised and expended in the church today.

The first scripture generally cited on this very important subject is, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Cor. 16:2). This instruction is plain enough, and comes to us with the same weight of authority as any statement in the New Testament. It is evident that this "laying by in store", was to be in a public fund and not an individual putting aside. In the last instance it would still be necessary to make a "gathering", or "collection", (these two terms being rendered from the same original word), when Paul came; the very thing that he wished to avoid. However, some persons reason that this was for a special purpose, that is, for the saints in Jerusalem, hence can not be used as authority for raising funds to carry on the work of the church in general. In answer to this let me say, that as this arrangement was commanded by the apostle for a special collec-

tion, it most certainly would be a scriptural procedure to follow in raising all funds for the work of the church. That this collection was to be regular and over a period of time is evident from the language. In three translations that I have examined the rendering is, "first of every week". This rendering is supported by Thayer in his Greek-English Lexicon.

But how shall we determine what portion of that which we have been prospered should be put into the Lord's treasury? The scriptures are plain in its teaching that the Christian must, "provide for his own, and specially for those of his own house". But what principles are presented in God's word that will assist us in determining what this provision may include? Two men working in the same job and having the same income, and an equal number of dependents do not agree on their necessary expenses. One buys a new car much oftener than the other, he keeps his home better furnished, and dresses the family in finer clothing, spends much more for pleasure and outings, and feels obligated to lay much more away for the proverbial "rainy day".

The first thing that I wish to suggest that should help us to decide how much to give to the support of the Lord's work is, that all wealth that we may be able to gain does not in reality belong to us. David said, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). After David had spent much of his later years collecting material for the temple, and near the close of his life, he said in a prayer in reference to this material, "—for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee" (1 Chro. 29:14). Thus all that we may acquire is really only given us "in trust". This seems to be one of the lessons presented in the parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke 16th chapter). Verse 12 reads, "And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" Eternal life

is here spoken of as our own because we receive it forever, as contrasted with our earthly possessions which we control for such a short time. There is always the danger of man forgetting from whence his wealth came. Moses said to ancient Israel, "And thou shalt say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, —" (Deut. 8:17-18). It is dangerous to forget the source of our wealth, and to the extent that we remember this shall we be able to use that which has been given us "in trust", for the advancement of Christ's kingdom.

When the Corinthians were called upon to give of their means for the relief of the brethren in Judea, Paul says that they, "first gave their own selves to the Lord" (2 Cor. 8:5). When Deborah and Barak sang, celebrating Israel's deliverance, they said, "Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves." (Judges 5:2). Thus it has always been in man's service to God, and thus it must be in this present age. The disciple must wholeheartedly give himself to the will and service of God; presenting his body as a living sacrifice unto God (Rom. 12:1), realizing at all times that, "—your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Cor. 6:19-20). It is only then that we are in a position to give financially in the fullest sense. I believe that the poet, James Russell Lowell has expressed a fundamental requirement in true giving in his poem, "The Vision of Sir Launfal".

"Not what we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds
three,
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me."

Another thing necessary to remember so that we can give as we are prospered, is the great sacrifice that Christ made. "For we know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). When we rightly view the extreme poverty that Christ accepted as contrasted with the great riches that he sacrificed that we might be rich in spiritual things, we can appreciate Paul's statement in this passage, and in 2 Cor. 9:15 where he refers to Christ as God's "unspeakable gift". All this will help us to realize and acknowledge that the very greatest possible sacrifice that we can make in support of the Lord's institution is insignificant in comparison.

We must not overlook another principle of giving that Paul mentions to the Corinthians. He says, "For if there be first a willing mind, it is according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (2 Cor. 8:12). And again in 2 Cor. 9:7, "—not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver." Regardless of the amount of the gift to the Lord, it must be given willingly. The right act must always be prompted by the right motive. Even though we should give the greatest possible amount from some ulterior motive, to gain the applause of men or to gain an enviable position; while that amount given would go just as far in any good work, yet I doubt very much if the Lord would grant any credit to the donor. There must never be any sense of being forced, in our giving. There should be no feeling of necessity because of what some one might think or say. It is positively not to be done to create a show. These would rule out the common practice of raising funds through pledges and assessments. We are to give; not just a little, but as much as we can, according to our means, and it must be given cheerfully. So to give a little cheerfully, or as much as we can possibly give grudgingly, would neither one meet the Lord's requirements.

Next, let us notice the language in 2 Cor 9:7. "Every man as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; —": This teaches that we should not give in a half-hearted and hap-hazard manner. We should determine our giving with fore thought and system. We must give with purpose; it is not a matter of reaching into one's pocket and giving the first coin that touches our fingers. I am sure that if we gave more thought to our giving, considering prayerfully the source and amount of our material blessings and weighing carefully the need and the great gain that might be attained if all would do their part, that all of us would give more.

To spur the Corinthians into a greater effort of giving for this occasion, the apostle uses a well known illustration of agriculture. "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6). We know that this is true in nature; the farmer is not satisfied in sowing a peck of wheat per acre when he knows that at least three times that amount is required to produce a paying crop. Paul says, (verse ten of this same chapter), "Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness." Just as the farmer sows and cultivates with full expectations of a bountiful harvest only when his sowing is bountiful; so we as Christians can expect bountiful blessings only when we bestow bountiful blessings. And in this instance the apostle was talking about money. Is it possible that congregationally our increase is not all that we would wish, because perchance, we have not sown of our material means sufficiently to insure a treasury capable of doing the work needed in order to produce the desired increase. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days" (Eccl. 11:1).

A bountiful sowing in a spiritual sense is of course, "according to that a man hath, and not according to that

he hath not." (2 Cor. 8:12). So one might give a relatively small amount and yet sow more bountifully than another who gives much more, but not as much proportionately, according to his means. No better illustration of this can be found any where than in Christ's story of the widow's farthing, found in Mark 12:41-44. The last part reads thus: "This poor widow hath cast in more, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." Even as the Lord watched the rich and the poor, the devout and the indifferent as they cast into the treasury then, so he watches us today as we lay by for the support of the church. May we meet the approval of his all seeing eye.

I next wish to call attention to the language of Christ as found in Matt. 6:19-20, "Lay not up for your selves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal." I am confident that the Savior was not limiting the statement in these verses to money, but I am also certain that they include money. Large amounts can be laid up in the bank or in stocks and bonds. Banks fail, and once valuable stocks become worthless, but treasures in heaven cannot be lost in the same way. I do not know much about the "stock market", or "playing the market", I believe is the expression. But as I understand it one may have stock well secured today that may be lost tomorrow if one does not put up more cash. Now in one way laying up treasures in heaven is like the stock market. The Christian may run well for a time, doing his or her whole duty in every way, including the financing of the church; then becoming engrossed in the affairs of this life, fail to send the necessary funds to keep our "stock in heaven" active, and thus we may be eternally lost, even though we

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may have had at a former date, "treasures in heaven".

How very true is the statement of the apostle when writing to the young evangelist Timothy. "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out." (1 Tim. 6:7). But we can send it on ahead, as one might say, —"Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." (Verse 19 of the same chapter). From the two preceding verses it is plain that the apostle was meaning to teach the proper use of riches in "good works", a readiness, "to distribute", and a willingness "to communicate"; and that by this proper use of our money we can indeed lay up treasures in heaven, and at the same time show that we are not trusting in, "uncertain riches, but in the living God."

There seems to be a well established idea in the religious world that if one gives he must receive something in return. Some pleasure, personal satisfaction, or entertainment. For this reason pies and cakes are delivered to the highest bidder at many times their real value. And suppers are served at two dollars per plate that might be found elsewhere for one-half this price. These same persons would not think of giving outright so great an amount, for the same cause. One principle of true giving prohibits the idea of giving solely for the purpose of receiving in return. This principle is clearly taught by our Savior as recorded in Lu. 14:12-14. He here teaches that when one makes a feast, instead of inviting the rich that a similar invitation might be received in return, they should bid the poor to come to their feast, for then, "thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." It would be well to always keep in mind the language of Christ as quoted by the apostle Paul. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35).

The church is a self-supporting institution. The New Testament nowhere teaches, or even intimates that the

world should support the church. The church is a spiritual institution, but must have financial support for its maintenance and advancement, and the Lord looks to the membership for this support. The church should never seek funds or gifts from the world, or out side her own membership. Gifts can be scripturally accepted only when the giver in no way ingratiates himself with the church by his gift. This is not only true of all men of the world, and other religious institutions, but may apply to a worldly member of the church. I have known cases where sin was winked at in the church because the individual was a good payer, and the elders and leaders knowing that a just reprimand of this one would close this source of revenue, they continue to tolerate his sin in order to receive the gifts. This is too much like the licensing of sin. Martin Luther condemned the sale of indulgences in the reformation of the 16th century. Let us beware lest we return to it.

I sometimes think that the idea of giving to the support of the church, as being an individual matter, is overstressed. The conclusion often reached is, that the church as a whole and especially her elders are in no way responsible in this matter. Is this true in the light of God's holy word? Paul defines covetousness as idolatry in his letter to the Colossians. (3:5) The membership should be taught on this subject, and the individual who does not give as he should, because of his covetousness comes under the condemnation of the scriptures. In the fifth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians the apostle classes the covetous man with the fornicator, idolater, railer, drunkard, and extortioner. (See verse 11). In verses 12 and 13 he shows that it is the business of the church to, "judge them that are within", and concludes by commanding, "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

In both the Old and the New Testament God pictures covetousness as a very terrible sin. He has given a history of Balaam in the 22nd chapter of Numbers, whom Peter says was covetous, and "loved the wages of unrighteous-

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ness" (2 Pet. 2:14). We have the story of Achan who disobeyed God because of his desire to obtain some silver, a wedge of gold, and a Babylonish garment. (Read Josh. 7th chapter). Gehazi and his descendants received the leprosy of Naaman because of his greed for the reward that the generous old prophet had refused. (2 Kings 5th chapter). And there is Judas who sold his Lord for a paltry thirty pieces of silver, and Ananias and his wife Sapphira who lied unto God, keeping back a part of the sale price of their land, but pretending to give it all. (Acts 5th chapter). As in these cases just cited, covetousness nearly always leads to other grievous sins, that bring the condemnation of God upon man. Are we robbing God today by withholding our support due to his glorious church?

Let me also suggest that our inability to do one or more things that are commanded, does not excuse us from doing that which we can. Sickness or some other condition may keep us away from the assembly on Lord's day morning, but this does not excuse us from giving as we have prospered for that period of time. Isolated disciples should send their contributions to some congregation where it will be put to the Master's use.

In conclusion, I wish to quote from a sheet that I picked up on the street just yesterday. It expresses my conviction on this subject. "Foundationally and fundamentally the only motive for Christian giving of any kind is love for our Lord. Jesus is our authority for the idea that love for him is the impelling force in obedience and service, and that such are not to be expected from him who does not love Jesus. We would take the position that without love for him we cannot please him with our contributions, no matter how large they are; our Lord is not a pauper, nor does he need our gifts grudgingly made. But he does need and crave our love, and our love needs the enrichment of expression. Why should we give? Because we love Jesus. The amount of our gifts will be determined by the measure of our love in terms of our ability to give!"



A. R. Moore

A. R. MOORE

Albert Ross Moore, son of Isaac N. and Anna E. Moore, was born in Johnson County, Iowa on March 20, 1860. He received a common school education. On December 15, 1886, Brother Moore was united in marriage to Miss Millie Dotson at Jamestown, Kansas.

He obeyed the gospel in 1895, near Concordia, Kansas and was baptized by Frank Harmon, of Oberlin, in that state. His first sermon was preached in the vicinity of Concordia, and there he held his first protracted meeting in 1900.

Bro. Moore lived in Kansas for 40 years, 15 years on a farm, five years in Ottawa and 20 years in Concordia. He was elected and served as County Clerk five years, County Treasurer three years, and County Assessor three years. He was chosen as purchasing agent for the county and assisted in compilation of an atlas of the territory.

He has long been noted for his attention to detail, and his remarkable ability to write so as to attract and hold the attention of all, both old and young. Most of his writings have been short essays, samples of which are reproduced in this volume. As we go to press, Brother Moore lives at 7519 Jefferson, Kansas City, Missouri. He has lived in that city for 44 years and is at this writing 84 years of age. Brother and Sister Moore have four sons, Herman H., A. Ross, Lawrence K., and Richard W. We are honored to have the privilege of printing the lessons of this grand old brother of the faith.

Spiritual Sketches—Sermonettes

By A. R. MOORE, Kansas City, Mo.

MAN IS MADE FOR TWO WORLDS

Christ could not die minus the consent of his Father. He could give his life and take it again, because his Father told him so (Jno. 10:18). He was God's gift to save the world of mankind. Man is God's only counterpart in creation. He was made for two worlds, hence is vested with responsibility. Each adult is the custodian of a body, a mind, a soul and a destiny. His body is his workshop, warmed, wired and ready for use. Here we sharpen our intellect, build our character, brighten our hope and get ready for world number two. That home is not only invisible and indefinable, but "its builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

So God through nature builds the human machine, supplies the power, creates the field of action, then turns it over to a governor; tells him to adjust its parts, regulate its speed and steer its course; and if he wants to meet a character in the world to come that will be an honor to God, a blessing to others and insure him a happy hereafter, he must grapple with passion, subdue pride, oppose error and hold an inquest over every false way. Man is made for the glory of God (Isa. 43:7). There are two worlds in which to give him glory. Christ has glorified the Father on earth and now honors him in heaven.

THE PECULIAR LIFE OF AN AGED MAN

Methuselah is a long name connected with a long life and a short history. He was 187 years old when a son was born, after which he lived 782 years and begat sons and

daughters, then died at the age of 969. Nothing is said about his burial. This is the substance of his Bible history.

Though like the generality of mankind, he was a babe, a child, a youth, a son, a father, a husband and a grandfather. He lived to be 39 years older than Adam, 19 years older than Noah, and 604 years older than his father. His grandfather was 962. Methuselah lived and died before the flood; he was the son of Enoch, the grandson of Jared, the father of Lamech, the grandfather of Noah and the ancestor of Christ. During his earthly walk he had plenty of time to have talked with Adam, Seth and Enos, each of them like himself a progenitor of our Lord; who was the Star of Jacob, the Lion of Judah, the Rose of Sharon, the Babe of Bethlehem and the Prince of Peace.

Abraham was noted for his faith, Job for his patience, Samson for his strength, Solomon for his wisdom and Methuselah for his age. His years were 969, reading either way. In the book of Genesis, God has told Moses to write the name of Methuselah with his special relation to Adam and Christ, also his place in the human family; but is silent concerning his wife, his home, his health or his religion. Nothing is said about his craft, his credit, his character or his conversation. Methuselah said nothing to be recorded during his life of 969 years. Christ lived on earth but 33 years, yet his recorded words are 38,422.

THE GOSPEL IN PROMISE

The Hebrews leaving Egypt and on their way to the land of promise, were unconsciously writing, in their journey, the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, fifteen hundred years before the Christian era.

The priest, the altar and the lamb; the ark, the lamp, the laver; the robe, the mitre and the breastplate; were all part of a divine vocabulary to be ordered, known and read

in a future age. This ancient mode of worship has been annulled, but the principle remains. Like the ancient writing on the wall—the king, the palace and the city are gone—but the Divine alarm, “weighed and found wanting” continues to ring.

The seed of Abraham were not merely writing the plan of salvation by their travels but were made to teach the same lesson by the tabernacle, from place to place. They pitched it, packed it, and handled it in every instance according to Divine instructions. They were not planning but acting. They were not writing the play, but taking the place assigned to them on the stage. This nation was God's instrument in His own hands, to set before the world Divine ideas, heavenly principles and essential lessons, so necessary to an understanding of the gospel, which was at that time, yet future. Israel, when divinely organized, embraced a nation of warriors, a tribe of workers, and a family of worshippers. This shadowed forth three phases of the Christian life, to wit: fight sin, follow good works, and worship God.

Aaron, a type of Christ, went into the Most Holy Place, a type of Heaven, wearing the breastplate over his heart, bearing the twelve precious stones (representing the twelve tribes) shining in all of their lustre before the ark of God. Christ, our high priest, appears in heaven in all of his sublime majesty, bearing on his heart the claim and title of his redeemed people, called “his jewels” (Mal. 3:17). They may not shine in the eyes of the world but they sparkle as God sees them—the world is always wrong.

The heavenly program of redemption with all of its accessories was thus divinely imposed, that his people in the gospel age might be fully equipped, walk in the light and not transgress (go beyond) the doctrine of Christ (2 John 1:9). No wonder that—then and there—every transgression received a just recompence of reward (Heb. 2:2). If the professing church will look at these things through

the divine eye, clouds will vanish, the smoke clear away, and we can see "face to face". Human vision is obscured because of faulty optics. If we fail to see things in the proper light, it is not because the system is wrong, but our faculties have been deranged by sin. God's business is to weigh by a divine scale—all others are wrong. The clock is often wrong, but the sun is always right.

GOD'S GREATEST GIFT

The Savior of the world is God's universal gift. Not one member of Adam's race is exiled or forgotten. Why, when and where Christ was born is a matter of unbiased history. Every legal transaction from the nativity of Christ to the seal of the modern tax receipt, tells the number of years since the virgin birth, while with every tick of the clock, some thoughtless soul writes the date of the Christian era.

Here are the divine birthmarks of his undisputed ancestry. The faithful line begins with Abraham, the priestly line comes from Judah, the royal line starts with David, while the deathless line, covers the "ransomed race" from Adam to the virgin Mary (1 Cor. 15:22).

Christ's biography is complete enough to satisfy, broken enough to excite, barbarous enough to arouse, and pathetic enough to appease. These conflicting elements serve as an incentive to mental activity and act as a balance wheel to man's intellectual powers. God alone could prepare a body, build a character, and sketch a life with sufficient "checks and balances" to remove sin, quicken the heart, raise the dead and save the soul. Christ is the priceless gem and the gracious gift that binds the heart of God to the heart of man; His love feeds the hungry, clothes the naked and shelters the poor; it does all this and more—it pardons the erring, leads the blind, strengthens the weak,

cheers the lonely, walks beside the weary, and lingers with the brokenhearted in the "garden of tears".

MAN IS IMMORTAL

Nowhere in nature, from the lowest to the highest form, is there an instinct, impulse or desire implanted but what are found ample provisions, conditions or opportunities for their realization. The wildfowl by mysterious impulse migrates from the frozen north to the tropical zone. The fish of the tropic gulf stream seek their spawning grounds in the cool, clear waters of the north. The bees find in the flowers and ferns the treasure to seal in their cells. The wolf, the tiger and the lion are provided with their prey.

Look at humanity! Man's imperfection, his thirst for knowledge, his unconquerable desire to penetrate the future are all manifest. His reservoir of thought cannot be filled. Our appearance on earth is not voluntary, we come here with sentence of death already passed. No criminal can have greater punishment than death. But Christ hath conquered death and brought life and immortality to light (1 Tim. 1:10; Acts 1:3).

THE WORLD'S GREATEST TRAGEDY

Christ was convicted by two courts—Jew and Gentile. He said he was the Son of God and the Jews condemned him for heresy. In Pilate's court the charge was "King of the Jews". In either case they convicted and executed an innocent man. Christ made no defense. This whole program was disapproved by the following:

At the crucifixion, the veil was rent by an unseen hand; the earth quaked, the rocks crumbled, the graves opened and the sun refused to shine (Matt. 27:50-54). The third day Christ rose from the dead, and many bodies of the

saints that slept did likewise. Herein, we have an outspoken refutation of the justice of our Lord's crucifixion. These seven supernatural testimonies have stood the test for 1900 years. They are facts unchanging and changeless (Acts 1:4). While Christ's innocent death is the "world's greatest tragedy", Heaven has lost nothing in this sublime mystery. Satan has been defeated (Matt 4:11), the atonement has been made, death has been conquered, the resurrection assured, the church established and our Lord has returned safely to His home in heaven. The injustice of human courts in the crucifixion of Our Lord, makes it clear that Christ has taken man's place in judgment, that the faithful of the earth may be declared innocent at the last day. Our Savior suffered 360 minutes on the Roman cross and that was the price of redemption. Man is not valued by what he is worth, but by what it cost heaven to redeem him.

THE CUP OF SUFFERING (Mark 10:38)

Our Lord did not drink the cup of suffering because he wanted to, but because it was the Father's will (Heb. 10:7; Jno. 18:11). Christ prayed the Father to let the cup pass. This prayer was never answered. To drink the cup was to save the world; to let it pass was to lose the world, including you and me. Christ drank the cup, or did God's will, or paid the debt; which meant six hours on the cross between two criminals. God charged his son with the sin of the world and could not release him until the debt was paid, or until He drank the cup (John 8:29). Jesus has paid the debt in full, once for all men and all times; thus the loaf and the cup on the Lord's table testify 52 times yearly in the most solemn manner that the debt is settled, and God is satisfied with the crucifixion of the innocent in place of the guilty (Isa. 53:11). God is now justified in

the pardon of any sin resulting from temptation, when the heart is right and the guilty man meets the requirements (James 1:14). Yet, we have no license to sin (1 John 2:1).

CHRIST FROM THE BEGINNING

From Genesis 3:15 to Matthew 2:11, we follow the golden chain of prophecy amid the fall of empires, the doom of cities and the death of kings, unchanging and changeless, until we see the wise men lay their gifts at the feet of the young Prince, and fall down and worship him. As the tide of the Mississippi floats the contents of her tributaries into the sea where they mingle and are lost; likewise the volume of inspiration carries forward the sacred landmarks of a coming Redeemer until they converge and are lost in the Son of Mary. This is the end of the line. How wise, benevolent and thoughtful on the part of Jehovah to thus enlighten his people. You will find every link of this divine chain which brought Christ to earth; written in Luke 3, in the last 17 verses. You will find also a Son of God standing at each end of the line. How marvelous (Isa. 9:6). This shows how God writes the first and last Adam and calls each of them a Son of God. Truly God knows the end from the beginning.

GOD MAKES NATURE TALK

Nature would be useless and worthless, minus a supreme ruler behind it, to make it talk. As the sun ray points to the solar orb; likewise, we can trace Jehovah from many angles. His covenant people (the Jews) served as an index to Jehovah himself, to show forth His divinity. For Moses, God opened the sea; for Joshua he held the sun and for Elijah, he sent the rain. For Paul he wrecked the prison and for Peter he raised the dead. These were all miracles and these men were all Jews or servants of the Lord. God

chose them to show what he could do, and what they could not do alone—a Supreme being was behind it all. Jesus was also a Jew; for him the trees and the rocks, the wind and the waves, the fish and the fowl were made to register the divine will.

The same Jew was crucified, laid in a tomb and raised again the third day. His disciples went early that morning to anoint him, but he was gone. God had raised him (Col. 2:5). God can make the dead rise, walk and talk. He is ALMIGHTY. Fire, famine and flood cannot stand in the way. Our Lord passed through 75 generations on his way to earth, all of them named in Luke 3. He was 4000 years making this journey. There are but 18 words of his speech recorded before the age of 30. At this age, he was baptized and anointed, then his official life began and continued forty-two months, and when his work here was finished (Jno. 17:4), he returned home by a shorter route starting from the Mount of Olives near Bethany (Acts 1:9). He is now in the presence of God for us (Heb. 9:24).



W. Carl Ketcherside

W. CARL KETCHERSIDE

W. Carl Ketcherside is the son of William and Annie M. Ketcherside. He was born in Flat River, Mo., May 10, 1908, and is the oldest of six children. The father was a miner originally, and due to ill health moved the family in succession to Marshalltown, Iowa, Chillicothe and Gilman City, Mo.; Pearl, Ill.; and Topeka, Kansas.

Carl obeyed the gospel at Old Pearl, Ill., and was immersed by one of the elders, Jesse Jackson. He began preaching at the age of twelve, using as his first topic, "Counting The Cost". During his entire high school and special college career he utilized every opportunity to proclaim the truth and has baptized several thousands of persons into Christ. In one year alone 495 people accepted the truth as offered by him.

On June 24, 1928 he united in marriage with Nell N. Watts, of Flat River, Mo. Two children, Gerald Bernard, and Sharon Sue, have come to bless the home. Carl is publisher of the Missouri Mission Messenger compiler of the companions to this book, "The Ship Of Zion" and "Strings on Your Fingers", and has done a great deal of special speech work in addition to his preaching labors. At present the family have their home in University City, Mo., making it convenient for the teaching of the annual protracted Bible Study in St. Louis.

What We Believe About Unity

By W. CARL KETCHERSIDE, University City, Mo.

A few months ago, I was conducting a series of meetings in a little Missouri town. Among the regular attendants was a boy of High School age, who impressed me much with his ability to learn and his serious consideration of the things that were being preached. I resolved that I would speak to him about his soul and eternal welfare before the services concluded. Accordingly I sought him out one day, and asked him, "Since you seem so much to appreciate the things that are spoken from the pulpit each night, why do you not obey them and be baptized into Christ?" His eyes filled quickly with tears. With broken voice, he replied, "I should like to do that but I guess I'm just not strong enough for the decision yet." I mentioned to him that all it required was faith since this is the victory that overcometh the world. But he answered, "You cannot realize my position. You see my father goes to one place and my mother another, to church. Both of them are very good to me. and I do not want to offend either of them. Why can't people see alike in religion? Why do they have to be divided?"

Some years previous to this occurrence, I was laboring in another community. It was quite upset. The reason was given me before I was there many hours. It seems that there were two strong denominations in town, each of which had equal representation on the local schoolboard. But now one of the directors had resigned and it appeared that one of the churches would get more men on the board

than the other and thus be in a position to hire more teachers of their faith. It had gone to such an extent and the feeling was so bitter, that partisans of the two churches would not speak when they met on the street. The whole community was divided into warring factions, and even those who were not members of either church were taking sides on a religious basis. Needless to say, the gospel of Christ had little effect during the meeting I conducted in the midst of this furore.

You have perhaps heard, too, of the missionary who went to a foreign land to convert the heathen. Varied doctrines had been taught, and sundry ideas advanced. All differed from each other in a number of ways, but all had one thing in common, a mutual hatred for idols. However, one grisled patriarch of the tribe being evangelized, stood up in the council and uttered these profound words, "We are too dumb to understand. We worship many gods in one way, you worship one God in many ways. What is the difference?" I have never heard what answer was given, but I'd really like to know, wouldn't you?

I want to assert without further discussion, that anything which divides homes, breaks up communities, and confuses the minds of men of all nations is not of God. "God is not the author of confusion but of peace". Denominationalism, sectarianism, factionism,—these things are not of Heavenly origin. Rather they are set on fire of hell. They constitute the devil's best weapon in his warfare against God. They divide the forces of the army which battle against sin, and turn the weapons of the various contingents against each other. They can never achieve the purpose of Christ on earth. They should be banished from Christendom, and must be, if the Word of God is to have free course and be glorified. The purpose of this sermon is to tell you what the Church of Christ believes about the subject now so widely discussed, that of, unity of believers in Christ.

What Unity Is Not

To eliminate misunderstanding, let me say that we are not here talking about "union". There is a vast difference between "union" and "unity". It can be illustrated perhaps by the marriage contract. A man and woman take solemn vows to love, honor and cherish each other as long as life shall last. They take up their life together under one roof. If children are born, we say they came to bless "their union". But those same individuals may fight, strive and bicker with each other until their very union is a disgrace to the neighborhood. There is no "unity" in their married career. They are joined together but are not of the same mind one toward another.

You might gather together lumps of gold from California, Alaska and Mexico and pour them all out of the pouch on the table together. That is union, for it is the bringing together into one place, of a number of elements from different localities. But in order to achieve unity you would have to melt them together into one lump, so that the various atoms integrate and fuse into one inseparable piece of gold. I have crudely said often, that you can tie the tails of two tomcats together and you have union, but just throw them over a clothesline and you lack a lot of having "unity".

We are not interested in or concerned with "Christian union" as the religious world today generally uses the term. By such, they mean the temporary coming together of a number of divergent elements all of whom will still hold their varied beliefs, for a special work. After the work is over they will go right back to the preaching of their same sectarian tenets and the advocacy of their different creeds. That kind of arrangement has no foundation of authority and no sanction in God's Book, the Bible. It usually results in greater confusion. I knew of one "big preacher" who could not be supported amply enough to suit his desires by one church in a city, so he got them all to go together

during his meeting. The candidates were to choose then to which church they would give their alliance after the meeting! So all of the pastors agreed to forget their differences during the stay of this man. A bold front was made. But after the meeting was over it was found one church received a majority of the converts and then they got into such a hubbub over division of the "spoils" that a lot of people got angry and quit the churches. This sermon is not concerned with that kind of thing. We wish to have no part in it.

The unity of believers spoken of in the Bible is not a "federation of churches". I am sometimes asked by an interested friend if I do not think it would be a wonderful thing if all the churches in this country were to unite in one grand group? My answer is that I have no desire to see all churches as such come together in any such arrangement, for it would be dangerous to life and liberty of minority groups who would not agree to such federation, and besides it is contrary to the wisdom and teaching of the New Testament. The Word of God offers only one solution for the unity of all those who love him and hate division, that is to "come out from among them and be ye separate". So in truth, God's method of unity contemplates not an arrangement which would preserve the identity of these separate organizations, but one which would destroy everyone of them from the earth, as being inimical to the very result which is to be achieved.

What Then Is Scriptural Unity?

In answer to this question we shall lay down certain definite assertions and give our scriptural proof of each. We only ask of each of you a clear, unbiased investigation of all that is said, and we are then willing to leave the issue with you.

1. Scriptural unity is the kind of harmony for which our Savior prayed. Almost in the shadow of the cross, the Redeemer of man said to His Father, "Neither pray I

for these (the apostles) alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:20, 21).

Nothing can be clearer from this dying petition than the following truths: (a) We are to be one as Christ and His Father are one; (b) We are to be one in them; (c) This unity is for the purpose of causing the world to believe. Now any other type of union than that advocated in the first two points cannot achieve the third point, therefore is useless. Did Christ and His Father agree to work together in spite of their differences? No, for they had no differences! Did they agree to fellowship each other temporarily in spite of their diverse doctrines? No, for they both taught the same thing! And how does it happen that they both spake the same thing? Let Christ answer, "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which hath sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that the commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John 12:49,50).

Thus we see that Christ and His Father maintained perfect unity because the Son was careful never to speak anything except what His Father had commanded. Then it stands to reason that in order to maintain that unity we must do the same. We have no authority to speak religiously that which Christ has not commanded. Hear Him again, "As my Father hath loved me so have I loved you: continue in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love" (John 15:9,10). That produces a wonderful chain if it is properly connected in our mind. Let us consider it. God gave Christ his commandments and he kept them, so perfect unity existed between them. Christ gave the apostles his commandments

and they kept them, so perfect fellowship existed between them. Then Christ prayed for those of us, "who should believe on Him through their word". If we will keep the apostles doctrine as delivered, we will then, and then only, enjoy that unity of fellowship for which Christ petitioned. Now the apostles understood this!

One of them, John, affirmed, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3,4). But someone will say, "The church has never been perfectly united as Christ wanted it to be." That statement is not true. Turn with me to the book of Acts, the second chapter. Here we learn that the church was established and we are told that the "same day there were added unto them three thousand souls" (verse 41). Now the record says, "They continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine" (verse 42). If what we have affirmed above is true then, the church should have had perfect unity at that time. Did they? Let's investigate. "And all that believed were together . . . and they continuing daily with **one accord** . . . did eat their meat with gladness and **singleness of heart**" (verses 44-46). Together! One accord! Singleness of heart! What beautiful words! What a glorious condition! The last term means that it was as if one heart beat for the whole church. So we read again, "And the multitude of them that believed were of **ONE HEART** and of **ONE SOUL**" (Acts 4:32). Perfect unity as exists between God and Christ.

But notice another feature of the prayer of the Master. He declares that the progress of the kingdom depends upon the maintenance of such unity. The advancement of the church is contingent upon the practice of harmony and accord by those already members thereof. I do not hesitate then to affirm that the divided state of the religious world today is defeating the very purpose for which the

Savior agonized upon the cross. It nullifies his death, invalidates his sacrifice, and overthrows his Word in the hearts of millions who otherwise might believe. Notice that at the time when the church was perfectly joined together, we are informed that "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:14). Nothing can stand before, nothing can overthrow the work of the Lord's people when they are acting by divine authority and standing together for the right.

2. Scriptural unity is the kind which the inspired apostles commanded. To the church of Corinth, which was torn asunder by local jealousies and infected with the virus of hate and strife, the apostle Paul wrote, "Now, I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there may be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10). Here we learn that perfection of unity in mind and judgment must be maintained. And immediately I hear someone declare that such is an impossibility because we can never understand the Bible alike! Such reasoning (or abortion of reasoning) is absurd. What you mean to say is we can never MISUNDERSTAND the Bible alike. Now the Bible only says one thing! It says the same to me as it says to you. If you understand it at all and I understand it, we will have to understand it alike! We cannot understand it differently. That is a paradox! We might misunderstand it a thousand different ways, but we can only understand it one way, and that is the way God said it.

But it may be queried further as to how we can be joined together in the same mind, when all minds differ. There is a solution for this apparent difficulty. To the Philippians, Paul writes, "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (Phil. 2:2). And almost as if anticipating the objection that would be offered to his proposition he says

in verse five, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus". Now Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. If you have the mind of Christ in you and I have the mind of Christ in me, then we shall be able to always do the things which please God and that in the perfect fellowship which he has prescribed. Too often we want to follow the inclination of our own minds instead of listening to what Christ has commanded. Thus oneness is broken up. We are like the wife described by the husband who said, "My wife believes that we two are one all right, and she thinks she is the one".

3. Scriptural unity is "unity of the spirit in the bond of peace". In that great chapter which sets forth the platform of the Christian in a few brief words, the apostle says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:1,2). The unity of the Spirit is the unity which is dictated, described and provided by the Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit makes known the revelation of God through the written word in this age, we are safe in saying further then, that the unity of the Spirit is that unity which is authorized by and regulated in the New Testament. The apostle in this same chapter from which we have just quoted specifies at least seven basic principles underlying that unity. They are as follows: There is

- One body
- One Spirit
- One hope of your calling
- One Lord
- One faith
- One baptism
- One God and Father of all.

Without an acceptance of all of these fundamentals

there can be no unity of the Spirit. It is an impossibility for us to work in absolute harmony with those who believe there is more than one god, for such is idolatry and the scripture says, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? . . . and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" (2 Cor. 6:13,15). Neither can we unite with those who contend there is more than one Christ, for such characters deny the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction (2 Peter 2:2). Neither can we unite with those who contend that there is more than one Spirit of God for to do so would be to deny such passages as 1 Corinthians 12:13.

Then how can we work together with those individuals who insist that there is more than one faith or system of righteousness? Does not the same passage tell us that there is one faith which tells us that there is one God? Is not the teaching that there is one faith as much a part of the doctrine of the apostles as is the idea that there is one Lord, or Christ? Then if men come preaching many faiths, or other faiths can we fellowship them? We are plainly told, "If any come unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 1,11). And what about those who teach a multiplicity of baptisms? Can we endorse such doctrine, when the inspired apostle plainly says there is but one?

How Can We Bring About Unity?

The answer to this question has been sought earnestly by many who are sincere. Yet often they have sought it in the wrong place and in the wrong way. It seems rather simple according to God's Book. All we need to do is to find the cause of our trouble, then eradicate that cause. But what is the trouble? We have learned that as long as all continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, that long

there was one accord among the disciples. Then, if following the doctrine of these inspired men makes for unity, and we do not have that unity at present, it stands to reason that someone has not continued steadfastly in the doctrine. What shall we do? Shall we search out something else we can agree upon? Shall we write a new creed? That is the common attempt at solution. But it can never produce the desired result. The only thing that will unite us is to drop our party names, our sectarian creeds, our doctrines and commandments of men, and return to the apostolic teaching.

We should not attempt a reformation of the church to which we belong, for even if reformed it would still not be the New Testament church. Martin Luther attempted a reformation, and what was the result? He created another denomination, and that denomination finally split into other groups and made more confusion than ever. We need not a reformation but a RESTORATION. A restoration of the New Testament teaching in the hearts of men. Creeds invented and devised by human power can never lead us into unity. There has never been one set forth yet, but what it has caused another schism. The history of creed-making is the history of religious strife. Even if we were to unite upon such a creed or basis of union as men might devise, we would still not be united with God.

Some will object to the discarding of their creed on the argument that it is essential to clarify and explain the word of God to the untrained minds of the membership. Does that mean that man can explain God's thoughts better than he could explain them? Long ago it was proven that such an argument means either that God was not so good as man, or else he was not so wise as man. For, if God **could** have made His Word simpler and yet **would** not, then he was not as benevolent to humanity as we are; but if he **would** have made His word simpler and easier to be understood, and **could** not, then he was weaker than

man. Here is a dilemma that the creed maker cannot escape. But if you will examine the confessions of faith, the books of discipline and the articles of confederation which have been devised to guide the religious bodies of the earth you'll find them full of vague statements, abstract ideas and metaphysical reasonings which make their dogmas either above the comprehension or beneath the dignity of the ones who profess to follow them. My experience with those who are in various denominations is that few of them outside the "kingdom of their clergy" know anything at all about their various items of faith, and even the preachers cannot explain them fully, as witness their debates and disputings among themselves.

It is the contention of the Churches of Christ, that we have in the New Testament a perfect law of liberty. We are firm in our conviction that "All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16,17). We accept at face value the declaration of the apostle Peter, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us **all things** that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us to glory and virtue" (2 Peter 1:2,3).

We urge against the modern creeds of today the following points:

- (1) The early church was united without them, therefore they are not essential to unity of the Spirit.
- (2) To contend that such creeds are necessary is to deny the efficacy of the New Testament.
- (3) The creeds foster division, and uphold sectarian strife, so cannot share in the approval of God.
- (4) The adoption of a creed devised by man is the enthronement of human reason above the inspiration of the

Spirit and a consequent disregard for the plan of the ages set forth by the Lord.

(5) The inauguration of such a creed frustrates the plan of Christ to unite us all "in one body" and defeats the prayer he offered in the closing hours of his personal ministry.

In the face of these accusations and charges made in all sincerity, we plead for unity based upon the New Testament. If you are today in an institution that is not wearing the divinely authorized name, or that is worshiping under some other authority than the one given by the apostles, we plead for you to heed the gospel call. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues". This was the clarion call that went forth (Rev. 18:4) to summon God's people from the Babylon (confusion) of the religious world. Will you answer that call today, sincere, seeking soul?

Back then from the wars of parties and the conflicts
of the creeds,
To the word of God alone,
To the blood bought church of God, yea, to the way
the Spirit leads,
Thus in Him we may be one!

The Church of Christ

The Church of Christ is that institution which Jesus said he would build (Matt. 16:18). It was erected upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself, being the chief cornerstone (Eph. 2:19,20) and was established to save the souls of those who obey the truth (Hebrews 5:9). It cannot be "joined" as can human organizations, but upon obedience, we are added to it by the Lord (Acts 2:47). Faithful members of this church are known as Christians (1 Peter 4:16) a name first applied at Antioch, in the first century (Acts 11:26). They dare not be called by the name of any man, not even one of the apostles (1 Cor. 1:13-15) for there is salvation only in the name of Christ (Acts 4:12).

The Church is . . .

1: A KINGDOM. As such, Christ is its king and supreme lawgiver (1 Tim. 6:13-15). The territory of his reign is the whole world (Mark 16:15) and His subjects, the believers out of every nation (Matt. 28:19,20). The law which governs in this kingdom is the New Testament (2 Cor. 3:6). It is a perfect law of liberty (James 1:25) and is able to save souls (James 1:21).

2. A BODY. As such, Christ is the head (Col. 1:18). He arrived at this position after his resurrection from the dead (Eph. 1:22,23). All Christians are members of this body (Rom. 12:4,5) and have been given talents for service according to God's pleasure (1 Cor. 12:18). Since a body without a spirit is dead (James 2:26), the church is filled with the Holy Spirit of God, which dwells in every

member (1 Cor. 6:19,20). There is only one body meeting the approval of God (Eph. 4:4) and in this one body we obtain reconciliation with God (Eph. 2:16).

3. AN ARMY. As such, Christ is the captain (Heb. 2:10). Each member is to fight the good fight of faith (2 Tim. 1:12) and endure hardships as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 2:3). Our warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual wickedness (Eph. 5:12). We must resist the devil (James 4:7) and for this mighty weapons are provided (2 Cor. 10:4). It is essential that we put on the whole armor of God that we be able to stand (Eph. 6:13). The chief factor in securing victory over the world is faith (1 John 5:4).

We Became Christians by . . .

1. HEARING THE WORD. We must take heed what we hear (Mark 4:24) and how we hear (Luke 8:18). Faith comes only by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). Hearing alone is not sufficient (Matt. 7:24-27) as doers of the will of God shall be saved (Matt. 7:21).

2. BELIEF OR FAITH. Christ entered the world to produce faith (Jno. 3:16). For this reason he performed his miracles (Jno. 20:30, 31). Thus we must have faith in Him as the Son of God (1 John 5:1) and must believe in the fact of his resurrection (1 Cor. 15:13,14). But faith without works is dead being alone (James 2:17) and we must show our faith by our works (James 2:18). One of these is

3. REPENTANCE. Except ye repent ye shall perish (Luke 13:3). Repentance is produced by fear of judgment (Acts 17:30) and consideration of the love and goodness of God (Romans 2:4). It is not sorrow but the result of sorrow (2 Cor. 7:10), culminating in a reformation of life and deeds (Acts 26:20). It is a command of God (Acts 2:38) and a fruit of his longsuffering (2 Peter 3:9).

4. CONFESSION. We must confess Christ before man (Matt. 10:32) and this must be an oral act (Rom. 10:9,10). The confession must consist of a statement of our conviction that he is the Son of God (Acts 8:37). This confession was made by God himself (Matt. 3:17) and also later by the apostle Peter (Matt. 16:16).

5. BAPTISM. This act is a burial (Rom. 6:4) The immersion must be in water (Acts 10:47). It requires much water (John 3:23), a going to the water (Acts 8:36), a going down into the water (Acts 8:38), and a coming up out of the water (Acts 8:39). It is to be administered to men and women (Acts 8:12) and these must first be capable of believing (Mark 16:16) and must also repent of their sins (Acts 2:38). Baptism is in order to obtain remission of past transgressions (Acts 2:38), to fulfill all righteousness (Matt. 3:14, 15), to wash away sins (Acts 22:16) and to obtain the answer of a good conscience toward God (1 Peter 3:21). It brings us into Christ (Rom. 6:3) and by it we put on Christ (Gal. 3:27). It is always obeyed by those who gladly receive the word of the Lord (Acts 2:41).

As Christians We Have . . .

1. A RESPONSIBILITY TO GOD AND CHRIST. This requires absolute subjection to their authority (John 15:14). It requires that we honor them (John 5:23) glorify them (1 Peter 4:11) and reverence them (Heb. 12:9). We must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is (Heb. 10:25). We must study the Word (2 Tim. 2:15), continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42) and preach the gospel (2 Tim. 4:2). We must pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17), for preachers of the gospel (2 Thess. 3:1), for those in civil authority (1 Tim. 2:1,2), and for all men everywhere (1 Tim. 2:1). We must keep in memory the Lord's death by the communion service (1 Cor. 10:16) on the first day of the week.

(Acts 20:17), ever discerning the Lord's body (1 Cor. 11:29). We must give of our finance to aid the needy (1 Cor. 16:1,2) and to support the preaching of the Word (1 Cor. 9:14).

2. A RESPONSIBILITY TO OTHERS. We must honor our parents (Eph. 6:1,2), love the brotherhood (1 Peter 2:17) and respect each other as fellow-laborers (1 Peter 5:5). There must be no hypocrisy or sham in our attitude toward each other (Rom. 12:9) but we must in honor prefer one another (Rom. 12:10). We must share our earnings with the saints in their need (Rom. 12:13), visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction (James 1:27) and relieve the destitute of our own kin that the church be not charged with their upkeep (1 Tim. 5:16). We cannot permit gossip to issue from our lips to the hurt of others (1 Peter 2:1) but must employ sound speech that cannot be condemned (Titus 2:8). In all things we should be a pattern of good works (Titus 2:7) and let our lights shine before men, that they in seeing our good works may glorify the Father (Matt. 5:16).

We Must Be . . .

Saints of God insofar as character is concerned (Rom. 1:7) disciples of the Master ever learning of Him (Acts 9:26), brethren in Christ, partakers of the heavenly calling (Hebrews 3:11) and laborers together with God (2 Cor. 6:1). Priests offering up spiritual sacrifices (1 Peter 2:5) Kings reigning over our bodies and passions (Rev. 1:6) and strangers and pilgrims on earth (1 Peter 2:11). May God be with us and grant that by our faithful continuance in His word, we may merit and some day receive the crown of life that fadeth not away, which God the righteous judge shall give us in that day (2 Tim. 4:8).

Compiled by W. Carl Ketcherside.