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PARKER MAXEY'S EDITORIALS -- (1977)

Editorials from The Missionary Revivalist
Compiled by Duane V. Maxey

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January, 1977 Editorial
UNTO THE THIRD GENERATION

The Scriptures indicate that the effects of spiritual fatigue overtake the third generation of a spiritual movement.

Every movement starts out with the expenditure and display of great spiritual energies. Mighty convictions grip the heart; great Biblical truths are embraced and held to be precious and sacred. Tremendous energy is expended in keeping these alive and in propagating them to others. Interest is centered on spiritual life and kingdom work as contrasted with the carnal and secular pursuits of life. Signs of spiritual fatigue are detected and overcome. We are talking about Holy Ghost energy coupled with sanctified human enthusiasm.

History has revealed, however, that no group of Christians has retained the freshness and vigor which it had in its beginning nor has been able to successfully pass it on to succeeding generations. As a rule it has been the "second generation" of a movement that has been charged with the responsibility or guilt of having let decadent forces enter the ranks that have eventuated in an apostate body. But, on second thought, could it be that the "first generation," for one reason or another, ere the scepter is completely passed on to their successors, have allowed waning enthusiasm or battle fatigue to invade their ranks to the degree it has had tellingly affected the generations to come?

It is a fundamental axiom that spiritual possessions cannot be inherited. Every new generation must lay hold for themselves personally and individually on those blessings their spiritual fathers possessed. However, influences and trends have had and apparently do have an undeniable and telling effect.

Whether there is a failure to continuously fight off signs of spiritual fatigue by the "first generation" as they grow older and less active and thus, this "ease in Zion" spirit invades their ranks and introduces a trend, it has always been the "third generation" that suffers loss most tragically.

We read in Judges 2:7, 10, 12: "And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua (first generation), and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel (second generation).

"And all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another (third) generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

"And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were found about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger."

This is certainly a sad picture and a sad outcome and aftermath of a once mighty force of conquering armies. And now we stand at a point in history where the passing of the scepter from one generation to another is taking place. Whether we can successfully stem the tide of a natural trend or successfully pass on the scepter to an oncoming generation, or whether we cannot, we dare not march to the judgment without recognizing our responsibility to oncoming generations and do our best to act now so as to stand uncondemned before the judgment bar of God. The sober fact is that there may not be time left for a third generation to appear ere our age comes to an end.

Lukewarmness characterizes the age in which we live. In these days a satanically designed weariness is affecting the saints (Daniel 7:25) until a spiritual "faintness" is taking possession of them. Affluence and materialism have had their influence in a quenching of the Spirit's ministry. A moral weakness is subtly invading the ranks of the sanctified, bringing with it a questionable integrity and righteousness. Our only hope to save ourselves and those who follow us is to:

Keep energized with the Holy Spirit. We need the mighty energy of God to survive this day and to carry on the work of the Kingdom. We read in Isaiah 40: 28-31:

"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

"Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint."

The human tendency is to faint and grow weary. There is only one way to keep from fainting and growing weary and that is to pray -- to constantly appropriate to ourselves through

prayer and meditation, divine energy. Without this God's people become a "fainting" people, powerless, unattractive, spiritually lifeless. A prayerless people is a weary, fainting people.

This is a prayerless age. E. M. Bounds puts it strongly when he says: "Little prayer is the characteristic of a backslidden age and of a backslidden church. Whenever there is little praying in the pulpit or in the pew, spiritual bankruptcy is imminent and inevitable. The cause of God has one golden age, and that is the age of prayer. When its leaders are men of prayer, when prayer is the prevailing element of worship, like the incense giving continual fragrance to its service, then the cause of God will be triumphant."

Where are the mighty pray-ers in our day? It takes time -- seasons of waiting before God -- to release the mighty, supernatural energy in our midst. But we are too busy doing God's work -- too busy, busy, busy -- to be channels of mighty Holy Ghost power. Has Satan kept us so busy in Kingdom work that we are rendered powerless to really do God's work? We are passing on the "organizational gimmicks" of a know-how to our successors, but through our loss of divine energy, have we denied them a vision of what it really takes and what it is really all about? What do we know about waiting before the Lord? Those who observe us, who are our understudies, do what we do and not what we say. What are we, by our lives, teaching those who are following us?

The promise is that they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

We don't hear much any more of all night prayer meetings; of days set aside for prayer and fasting and waiting for God. Churches used to set aside days for fasting and waiting before God; Divine energy was released; the Spirit of God was mightily manifest. We know how to raise money, buy new pews, rug the church from wall to wall; preachers know how to go out and get a job and earn money; we all know how to fill our days and hours jam full, but do we know how to take time or make time to wait before God until His power, His energy, His wisdom become the dominating factors in our midst? It is no wonder that a third generation arises that knows not the Lord!

We need not only to keep energized by the Spirit, but to keep Holy Ghost equipped if we are to fulfill our responsibility to oncoming generations -- yea, even to our own selves and our day. We have space only to briefly mention that the gift of God to His sanctified ones is that which pertains to an adequate equipment to do kingdom work -- the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (II Timothy 1:7)

The Spirit of power to demonstrate God in our lives and in our churches -how many times have we gone out to do God's work in the energy of the flesh instead of the power and demonstration of the Spirit?

The Spirit of love that motivates and impels us into service -- The Spirit of a sound mind that gives us a clear understanding and an ability to regulate our life according to the divine plan-- Oh, for this Holy Ghost equipment! Finally, we need to keep a holy enthusiasm. The writer of Hebrews talks about provoking one another unto love and good works -- an enthusiasm that is Holy Ghost inspired. There are some people I have been with -- not many, only a very few -- who have carried with them an atmosphere or spirit that has put me under deep conviction and hunger to

be more like Jesus. They have maintained a carefulness in life -- their words, their conversation, their conduct, their interests, their enthusiasm for God, their carefulness not to grieve Him, their singleness of mind to live only for God's glory -- that has provoked me to a genuine hunger and longing to be more like the Master. Their lives are the revelation of an enthusiasm that breathes of holiness and heaven. Oh, that this number might increase!

May another year, if Jesus tarries, find more among those "few" who are the real conservators of Holy Ghost energy and enthusiasm!

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February, 1977 Editorial
THE HOUR CALLS FOR DESPERATION

These are days of desperation. Certainly the spirit of discouragement and defeatism should never take hold of God's sanctified church, but neither should the spirit of mutual admiration or self-complacency. This is not an hour for such. Neither is it an hour to ignore conditions as they are and cry peace and safety when we know sudden destruction can strike any time. When we look at our own record in the light of our spiritual growth and the world's needs about us, wherein would we have to boast? One of Jesus' methods of silencing opposition and of getting at the real heart of a matter was to ask a question that implied a self-evident answer. If we would honestly face ourselves and ask ourselves some questions, such as -- why are we winning so few souls to Christ? Why do our churches grow so slowly? Why do so many Christians live on such a low plane? How does our prayer life appear in God's record book? Do we possess the true liberty of the Spirit? Are we living a sanctified, Spirit-filled and Spirit-directed life? -- to say the least, we would be sobered and begin more desperately to cry out to God to help us in these present, pagan, demon-infested, Satan-worshipping days.

These should be days of soul searching. A defensive spirit or self-justifying attitude could prove fatal. We are facing another year. May God keep us alert to the awful times in which we are living and to the dangers that confront us. The devil would delight in nothing better than to get us "puttering around with pet projects and half-way measures" --all those things that are or should be means to an end -- the intricacies of running a church program, getting men into office, raising money, etc., -- but never getting to the main task of the church. Or, if the devil could, he would get the church sidetracked into appeasing carnality, failing to condemn sin, hunting for new tricks to solve our problems, but failing to give ourselves to importunate prayer and the task of keeping the glory down while multitudes we could get to God slip through our fingers on their way to hell. In the words of the Apostle Paul I would add, "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak" (Hebrews 6:9). Does God still have a remnant of sanctified saints that know how to give themselves to importunate prayer? If so, "let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. 5:6-9)

We quote here an article by Vance Havner, "Desperation and Revival." We feel that it has a message for this hour that our people should read and heed and wherever the shoe fits we should be humble enough to acknowledge it and walk in the light of it that we might prosper by it.

"... the present pagan, antiChristian world-order is of the devil, but true believers who have really contended with satanic forces in the heavenlies understand whereof we speak. Satan, knowing that his time is short, is using every wile and device, as a roaring lion, an angel of light or a great accuser, to devour, deceive or discourage God's people. He attacks body, mind and spirit.

"While the Great Avenger tarries, the great adversary besets the widowed Church. Truth is on the scaffold, wrong on the throne. Bible students generally agree that our Lord's message in Luke 17 concerning His return, and the parable of the importunate widow in Luke 18, are one discourse. Woven together, they reveal that the last days will be marked by worldliness, as in the days of Noah and Lot; by corruption, as the carcass awaits the vultures; and by faithlessness: 'When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' In such an hour the Church, like a widow beset by adversaries, must find her greatest weapon in importunate prayer, lest she faint. The prayer is not for vengeance but for justice: 'Vindicate me against my adversary,' says a new translation.

"Certainly we have today the worldliness, the corruption and the faithlessness. Surely we have the adversary. But the Church has not yet learned to pray and not faint. The situation is desperate, but we are not desperate. We have not come experientially to holy destruction. the extremity which is God's opportunity. We are still trying to save our faces, puttering around with pet projects and half-way measures. We have not learned that we are too far gone, that it is too late in the day for all that. When we find that out we shall quit boasting of our great numbers, our big preachers, the money we have raised. We shall quit bargaining with the adversary, letting the king of Sodom make Abraham rich. As long as we have a few tricks up our sleeves, we shall never get down to importunate prayer. We need to be 'shipwrecked on God.'

"We have done and are doing a lot of strange things. We have failed to condemn sin. We have tried to adapt our gospel to trends and tendencies, instead of demanding that the age conform to the Gospel. We have acted as though we felt better about, our religion every time a scientist spoke favorably about it, instead of letting God be true if Science never spoke in His behalf. We have let higher criticism almost scare us out of taking texts. We have made man and not God the center of the universe. We have confused evangelism with revival and added numbers to churches already loaded down with members that have been 'starched and ironed, but not washed.' We have imagined that we had a revival every time a church paid out of debt. We have seen Modernism sneak in while shepherds have failed to warn of wolves in sheep's clothing. We have succumbed to the fad for tolerance until we have become 'dumb dogs (that) cannot bark' (Isa. 56:10).

"The Saviour, in the parable of the importunate widow, spoke concerning His return. That precious truth has become a poor relation in the family of doctrines recognized with embarrassment, if at all. Yet it may be questioned whether there will ever be another awakening until the Church, aware of her desperation, recovers the prayer, 'Even so, come, Lord Jesus; avenge me of mine adversary.' One does not hear that often, for since Constantine we have been building the kingdom here but not looking for the King hereafter.

"But how could such a prayer produce revival? Because when men really have this hope within them, they purify themselves -- and that is revival.

"When the saints become as desperate as the situation, something will happen!"

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March, 1977 Editorial
PLANTED FOR INCREASE

God's method of salvaging humanity from the quagmire of sin, healing their wounds, and assuaging their griefs, is the planting of the sons of God in their midst. We must not fail to grasp the Master's conception of building His Kingdom in our age if we are to do the best work in it for His glory. It is through men that God designs to evangelize lost men and bring them into the Kingdom of God.

God "planted" the Apostle Paul in the prison houses of his day, on islands of the sea, in the great pagan centers where the population was the most concentrated and through him brought forth an abundant increase. It was not so much Paul as it was the gospel through him. When he spoke these words under divine inspiration, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." he struck a keynote in this matter of kingdom increase. The gospel of Christ proclaimed by human lips and revealed in the lives of God's children is truly the power of Christ unto salvation to everyone who heeds and believes.

The Apostle Paul became effective in the increase of the kingdom when he became the total property of God. When he, by his free choice, became the "love slave" of Jesus Christ, then God "planted" him where he wanted him and from that "sowing" of Paul into his age there was always an increase of souls born into the Kingdom of God.

It has been said that no one becomes a Christian apart from a human link. It takes a Christian person somewhere in the chain of circumstances to lead another person to Christ. In the parable of the sower (Matthew 13:1-23), Jesus Christ is represented as the sower; the seed represents those who profess Christianity; the soil is the age in which they live. According to Jesus' teaching in this parable, three-fourths of professed Christians are non-productive in the increase of the kingdom of God and only one-fourth are productive.

There are some professed Christians that are like the seed that fell by the wayside. There is absolutely no movement in their lives that would indicate or suggest any productivity for the kingdom of heaven. There is no harvest in their homes. There is no harvest for God on the job where they work. Men all around them go on oblivious to a power that can save from sin. Their lives produce no compulsion toward the kingdom. Their relationship to the kingdom proves to be only nominal and void of real life giving power. They are totally unproductive. True, they may be faithful attenders, tithers and supporters of the work, and yet from them comes no increase in the kingdom of heaven.

There is another class of professed Christians who are like the seed that fell on stony ground. In their lives there is a momentary flash of spiritual life. Those around them are aware of a sudden change but almost as suddenly as the light flashes, it goes out. They fail to keep pace with the light. When the word of God sets up its imperial demand in their heart, they draw back. The light of God shines on them, but they draw back into the more "comfortable" shadows of a self-centered life. They have no root they lose connections with spiritual life. It could be through man fear; it could be through pride, not wanting to identify with the reproach of holiness. Something withers them it renders them nonproductive for the Master. They fail to receive the love of truth in their hearts and the result is an aborted yield for God.

A third group of professed Christians are like the seed that fell on thorny ground. Never in their deepest selves have this class ever been delivered from the age itself. This kind know how to "get on" with the here and now. This age is the emphasis with them. They are like those described in Luke 17:26-28:

"And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man.

They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded."

There is nothing in itself evil or sinful mentioned in this passage. These people were domestically and commercially pre-occupied and as a result they were non-productive. Barrenness was the result. Planted by God in this age for increase -- yielding nothing!

Thank God for a fourth group who are like seed planted in good ground. These are they who bring forth an increase in the kingdom of heaven. The planting is of God; the increase is through the power of the gospel; the instruments are those who are living for the glory of God and to bring forth an increase of the kingdom.

God planted Charles E. Cowman, a true son of God by the new birth, in a telegrapher's office in Chicago. Ere long there was an abundant harvest of born-again souls among the men who worked under him. A revival broke out all up and down the telegraph line. Later on God planted the Cowmans in the Orient and the increase of the kingdom continued on.

God planted Betsie ten Boom along with her sister, Corrie ten Boom, in Ravensbruck prison, barracks no. 28. She died there but not until there had been an increase in the kingdom of heaven. In that dark, dingy, foul-smelling, overcrowded, flea- and lice-ridden barracks Betsie prayed, "Lord Jesus, send your peace into this room. There has been too little praying here. The very walls know it. But where you come, Lord, the spirit of strife cannot exist." Betsie seemed to realize that where God planted her or what she was called upon to suffer or to be in want of was not the important thing if God could minister through her to bring about an increase in His kingdom while she was here on earth. She represented seed that was sown in good ground.

We are planted by God in this age for increase. It is God's method of bringing the kingdom of God into the hearts of men. Reader, are you a productive or a non-productive planting of God?

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April, 1977 Editorial
RESURRECTION GUARANTEED

"It is the Gospel alone that gives the well-grounded hope of eternal life; and the ground on which this hope rests is the resurrection of Christ himself. The certainty of our Lord's resurrection is the great seal of the Gospel." -- Adam Clarke

It is by the resurrection of Christ that we who are saved have been "begotten again unto a lively hope." and to "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," as we read in I Peter 1:3, 4.

The phrase "begotten again to a living hope" has reference to the author of this passage in particular, and to those of his fellow apostles at the time Christ was taken by the Jews and put to death. They had accepted Him as the Messiah who would redeem Israel but when He expired on the cross and was buried their hopes died with Him and were buried with Him in the grave. By His preaching and miracles they came to have a hope of eternal life, but when He died all hope perished, His resurrection made the difference and by this they were "begotten again unto a lively hope."

Bodily resurrection is one of the great blessings the saints of God have to look forward to. The resurrection of the body is possible solely through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. His resurrection is the transfiguration of humanity in Him as its Firstfruits (I Cor. 15: 20, 23; Col. 1:18). His triumph over death guarantees to us our own resurrection (Rom. 8:11; I Thess. 4:14). His body of glory is the pattern and type of our own future bodies (Phil. 3:20, 21; I Cor. 15:49). "What will our glorified bodies be like? For the most part it is beyond our present conception. We can gather some intimations from the Scriptures, however, that will give us at least a partial answer. Our glorified bodies will be characterized by:

Spirituality. The body of humiliation is a "soulish" body, the body of glory will be "spiritual" (I Cor. 15:44-46), which means that in the former the soul predominates, in the latter the spirit.

Subjection. The body of humiliation is often a limit and restraint; the body of glory will be entirely serviceable. Our present body has a certain independence of the spirit, an independence which quite often amounts to conflict between body and spirit and thus, Paul states that he exercised himself to keep his body under. But the body of glory will be completely ruled by the spirit. In unrestricted dependence it will be at the disposal of the spirit, a perfect instrument of the perfected life.

Superiority. Our physical body, which is in a measure independent as regards the spirit, as regards natural conditions is dependent and bound; the body of glory, which is dependent upon the spirit, is independent and free as regards natural conditions. In the present state there is the need of nourishment and the danger of sickness and misfortune. In the future state there will be a royal freedom and superiority to restrictions of matter, space, and time. It can eat but without its being necessary (Luke 24:41-43); appear in a room with closed doors (John 20: 19); and will be immortal in eternity (I Cor. 15: 54, 42).

Exaltation. The body of humiliation, because it is such (Phil. 3: 21), is a body of "dishonor" (I Cor. 15:43). But the body of glory will be a body of exaltation. The lowliness of the present body is shown by sickness and death, as also by conception, birth, and the manner of its being nourished (1 Cor. 6:13); it therefore belongs to the dignity of the future body that these conditions shall cease: "in the resurrection they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; but are as the angels of God in heaven," (Matt. 22:30).

Happiness. The body' of humiliation goes through sorrow and pain (2 Cor. 5: 2, 4); the body of glory will be full of bliss. "They shall neither hunger nor thirst" (Isa. 49:10; Rev. 7:16, 17). "Neither mourning nor crying nor pain shall be any more; the first things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4). "It is sown corruptible, it is raised incorruptible. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness and is raised in strength" (I Cor. 15:42, 43).

Splendor. Our physical body is a poor tent, the body of glory is a transparent, radiant palace. "The righteous..., shall shine forth in their Father's kingdom" (Matt. 13:43). The Bible speaks of man in his glorified state as transparent dew (Isa. 26:19); as the moon and stars (Dan. 12:3); as the sun in its might (Matt. 17:2; Rev. 1:16); as the Lord Jesus Himself in the light of His glory (Phil. 3:21).

Conformity to Christ. The most glorious feature is that the redeemed will be conformed to HIM. "We shall be like him,' for we shall see him even as he is" (I John 3:2). "For the first man is of earth, of dust; the second man is of heaven. But as he who is of dust, so are they who are of dust; and as the heavenly One so are also the heavenly ones. And as we have borne the image of the one from dust, so shall we bear also the image of the One from heaven" (I Cor. 15: 47-49; Darby).

Bodily resurrection, however, not only awaits the saint but the sinner also. The Scriptures reveal this. It is called the "resurrection of the unjust" (Acts 24:15); resurrection "to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12: 2). This also will be wrought by Christ, the Awaker of the dead (I Cor. 15:21, 22; John 5:26-29).

Terrible is the difference between this resurrection and the resurrection unto life. In both cases the new body has in' itself the nature and the essence of the old body, but each in a contrary direction and a fully, matured form. In the case of the redeemed the earthly body had been a "temple of the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 6:1.9), its members, in principle, "instruments of righteousness" (Rom. 6:13),. and its resurrection element a seed of God; therefore it will be raised unto salvation. But in the case of the lost it has been only a body of sin and death, its members "instruments of unrighteousness" (Rom. 6:13), and its resurrection element a seed of the Devil; therefore will it now become a body of darkness and damnation.

Thus does all "seed" attain to ripeness (I Cor. 15:42-44). Every body is at the same time an expression of inner spirit reality; and as the body of the saved bears the imprint of holiness, so the body of condemnation of the lost bears the imprint of godlessness, and it brings them to "shame and eternal abhorrence" (Dan. 12:2).

But sad is the fact that even the resurrection of the sinners will show them that they had no need to have remained in death, for their resurrection also is an outcome of the bodily resurrection of the Crucified One (John 5: 26-29; I Cor. 15:20-22); and Christ the Prince of Life, whose resurrection power they now experience in their own bodies for a purely judicial reason, would have been able to have freed them, exactly as the others, from the bands of every form of death.

But alas! this kind of resurrection grants nothing. It is the passing from the forecourt of hell into hell itself, the transfer from the intermediate place, the place of "torment" (Luke 16:23, 28), into the "eternal fire."

The Scripture gives a fearful picture of the lot of these the lost. It speaks of "tribulation and anguish," of "howling and gnashing of teeth," of a "furnace" and a "place of horror," of a "prison" and an "abyss," of a "hell" and "eternal torment." It speaks of a "worm that dieth not," a "fire that goes not out," a "sea which burns with fire and brimstone." It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." "It were better for that man (Judas, for example) never to have been born," and "the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever" (Rev. 14:11; 20:10).

Yes, resurrection is guaranteed! Will resurrection for you mean glory or damnation?

The above article was largely taken from the book, Triumph of the Crucified, by Erich Sauer.)

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May, 1977 Editorial

COINS THAT HAVE NO VALUE

There is a Scripture verse in Titus 1:16 that is startling -- at least it should startle us -- and it reads like this, "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (i.e., counterfeit). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells about those who profess that they belong to the Lord but are not really members of His Kingdom (Matt. 7 21-23); They are the ones who hear His sayings and do them not. Their mouth says one thing and their life says something different. They are termed by some "conventional Christians."

Conventional Christians are practical atheists. They deny God's authority in every-day life. They ignore the claims He has on them, their existence, their talents and their possession. They deny His teaching that spiritual interests are supreme by declaring in their daily life that temporal interests are paramount. They deny His teaching that no man liveth unto himself by declaring that self-interests are uppermost. Jesus likened them unto a foolish man. In our ranks we might term

them Calvinistic Arminians. There are three ways men can deny God with the tongue; with the heart; with the life or action.

Are we denying God with our life or action? I wonder! We are if we think, just because we profess Christianity, we are released from the requirements of the law of God. We are if we think we do not have to obey God's word until we feel some peculiar kind of impression, leadership, or prompting of the Spirit. We are if we think we can keep saved and still live day after day on a carnal, fleshly level, never becoming involved in a life of service for the Master.

To know the Word of God, its teachings, laws and commandments, makes us responsible for the doing of them. We make void the law of God when we think we can keep saved and still do nothing. We separate saving faith in God from works of faith. We seem to forget that our works of faith make genuine and prove the reality of our saving faith (James 3: 18).

How many of our young people who testify to being saved, spend their long summer evenings in pursuit of pleasures innocent in themselves, meeting at some hamburger joint or eating place, or pee-wee golf link, or gathering for a wiener roast, or out-door recreation, or just sitting around in a "jam" session and never seem to be moved to go calling or witnessing or to get involved in a red-hot prayer meeting to pray for the souls of the lost? All this when the Bible plainly indicates that the new-birth experience creates a zeal in the heart to seek out the unsaved. But instead of responding to this God implanted zeal and entering into a life of service, they have let this zeal die and have found themselves just one of the gang out for a good time. Having lost the soul-yearning to do something for the Master, they now wait until there is a special organized effort before feeling obligated or making an effort to witness. They thus set the authority of God's Word aside. They make void their faith by lack of works and by this testify that their faith is no longer genuine and they are back again in their sins, for he that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

While there are a few who for physical reasons cannot fast, many do not for the simple reason they feel no obligation to obey the Word of God concerning systematic fasting. By their lack of "works" they make void the Word.

If we have Bible faith it will produce conduct in harmony with the laws and teachings that are revealed in the Bible. To demand special light before we will obey the plain instructions and laws of the Bible is to fall into the error of antinomianism. Our spiritual fathers found their light by the help of the Holy Spirit in the Word of God. They tithed because it was set forth in the Word. They dressed modestly because the Bible taught them it was God's will. They witnessed to the lost because God commanded it (Matt. 28:19, 20), and it was in harmony with their heart desire. They were doers of the Word. They had a love for the Word and searched it to know and obey its revelations.

Many a young person has wrecked his or her life by not obeying God's law. They ask counsel of God for a life companion and then take up friendship with some ungodly person, which is contrary to the Word of God.

Many today make void God's law by claiming they have no convictions of their own on certain things they allow. When they face the standards of holy living that cut across the fashions of the day, they excuse themselves on the ground that they have no conscience about those things, but they never seem to have a concern or sense of responsibility to "search the Scriptures daily" to see if those things be so.

We need to get back to a practical living based on a "thus saith the Lord." Have we become accustomed to letting the Word of God go into one ear and out the other? We are commanded in the Word to keep the "precepts" of God. Precepts are the teachings of God's Word that get into the sphere of "little" things. The Bible has a lot to say about our thought life -- bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; our words -- every idle word must be given account of at the judgment of God; our dress -- simplicity and modesty is the rule here; our daily walk -- we are to walk in the Spirit, redeeming the time; the Lord's day -- we are to keep it holy, avoiding unnecessary labor; witnessing -- carrying out the great commission. These are just a few among the many things the Word of God gives specific direction in.

How many in this day are caught up in the whirl of fleshly, earthly living, not willing or too indifferent to know and obey the commands of God? These are not Bible Christians. They are in the antinomian crowd who set aside the Word of God and live as they choose while claiming the benefits of salvation.

Getting back to our Scripture, Titus 1:16, we find that professors of salvation deny God in works by being abominable -- abominable means having unnatural lust. How true it is! We are either serving God by our works -- keeping His commandments, zealous of good works, or are taken up with all kinds of unnatural lusts -- lusting after pleasure, having constantly to be entertained; lusting after the latest fads and fashions; lusting after the approval of the carnal crowd; lusting after "gab" sessions to hear and tell the latest juicy "news." This is the crowd that asks the question, "what harm is there in it?" If they ever had spiritual life they have lost it. Thus they are "disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate," i.e., counterfeit. They are like a bad coin, without real value. Even if they do good works they do them not from the heart or in the spirit in which they should be performed.

What will the judgment be for those who have not the fruits of righteousness in them? May God have mercy on us and save us from this awful antinomian trend that spells death to any spiritual movement. Bessie F. Hatcher caught the need of the hour and the prayer that should be prayed by many in these days when she wrote:

LET ME BURN OUT FOR THEE

O God, the world is lost in sin,
And so few that seem to care!
Many of whom profess Thy name
No burden will help to bear.

We need a passion, Lord, for souls,
To bring the lost back to Thee;

Our hearts must be stirred, till all have heard
At least once of Calvary.

Chorus

Let me burn out for Thee, dear Lord,
Burn and wear out for Thee.
Don't let me rust, or my life
Be a failure, my God to Thee.

Use me and all I have, dear Lord,
And get me so close to Thee
That I feel the throb of the great heart of God,
Until I burn out for Thee.

How cold has been our giving, Lord!
How selfish our love has been,
Keeping from those who never heard
The gospel that saves from sin!

How often we have turned aside,
Neglecting to do our part,
Forgetting Thy tears and agony,
Forgetting Thy bleeding heart!

Meet us and break us up, dear Lord,
Until driven to our knees.
Bare to our gaze Thy cross and love,
Of blood-baptized Calvary.

Speak till we hear again Thy call,
And hold nothing back from Thee.
Oh, burn on our hearts the hopeless wail
Of souls damned eternally.

O God, with shame I humbly bow,
In tears and with contrite heart.
Forgive me for the broken vows,
And failure to do my part.

I heed Thy call and say, "Farewell,"
To all that would hinder me;
Thy grace and Thy love to lost ones tell,
And my life burn out for Thee.

* * * * *

June, 1977 Editorial
HOW TO PROVE WHAT IS BEST

Check your patterns of thought and action. To what standards do they conform? It is the natural and accepted thing to adhere to the patterns of behavior that are common in the social environment in which we live. We have a natural inclination to become like those around us. In Christian living, however, there are patterns that must not be adhered to -- "be not conformed to this world" (fashioned according to) Rom. 12:2. We must break the pattern barrier of worldly dress if we would survive spiritually. Later on in the same chapter, Paul enjoins: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (v. 18). This certainly suggests that if we set out to fashion ourselves according to God's design and not that of the world we will have to face conflict. Our motive, however, must not be to stir up trouble, but to be obedient to the commands of God whatever conflict that may impose.

Three things are to be noted about this injunction in Romans 12:2.

(1) It is negative. A Christian cannot avoid being negative if he faces reality. He must take into account the presence of sin. The one test that God placed upon the first pair in the Garden of Eden was negative because there was the liability to sin. Eight of the ten commandments are negative because there is sin that must be shunned. The first evidence of genuine Christian faith is turning from sin. It is said of the Thessalonians that they turned to God from idols to serve the living God. In I John 5:19 we read, "the whole world lieth in wickedness." It is impossible for a righteous person to avoid being negative while living in a world where sin and worldliness abound. To survive physically we must be negative toward everything that would threaten that life. Likewise in the spiritual world.

(2) We note next the meaning of "this world" or "age." Its meaning is determined by the contrast with the age to come. "This age" is that which stands on this side of what we call eternity, It is the temporal and transient. To conform to this age is to be all wrapped up in things that are temporal -- to be a time server. How tragic such thoughts and actions -- to have all calculations, plans, ambitions to fall within the narrow scope of life here in the flesh -- children of this age only. Not only so, but children of an evil age at that (I Cor. 2:6, 8; Gal. 1:4) and if our fashion be of this age, then the iniquity characteristic of this age governs our life. How condemning "to be fashioned according to this age."

(3) We note the word "fashioned." By this we are aware of the difference between the pattern of which we are to divest ourselves and the pattern after which we are to be transformed. There is nothing abiding in that by which this age is characterized. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (I John 2:17) We must have patterns that abide, patterns that are the earnest of and are continuous with the age to come. This should ever be our criterion -- calculating our whole life after the interests and hopes which the age to come demands. Our attitude should ever be the attitude of pilgrims and strangers passing through this life, seeking for a country beyond, a heavenly country, the place of permanent abode. For one who is just passing through, how unfitting it would be to linger along the way and take up

the customs and ways of those who are dwellers in the land. He should be attired in garments and speak a language befitting the country toward which he is traveling.

If we are not to conform to this world, then we are to be transformed -- literally to take another form. The word implies a radical, thorough, and universal change, both outward and inward. It is an inward change that produces the outward. The renewing of our mind is our being brought to have the same mind which Christ had. "I came to do Thy will, O God," is the language of the Son. The renewing of our mind is making that language our own. Naturally, self-will is the ruling principle of one's mind. Insubordination to God is that "fashion of the world" to which we are not to be conformed. Christ voluntarily humbled Himself to do the will of God. Equally voluntary must be the change on our part. We must say, with complete death to self and full consecration of our redeemed being, entering into His mind, "I come to do Thy will, O my God." In all this, both in the life of Christ and in us, we recognize the agency and work of the Holy Spirit. If this transformation in us be like it was in Christ when He came and was transformed into a humble, obedient servant of His Father, we, like He, will "empty ourselves" --we will lay aside that usurped position of seeking to be equal with God (i.e., endeavoring to be our own God) and as sons of God will come to do the will of God.

But let us notice the end of this transformation. Thus transformed we will be able to prove what is that "good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

The probation of man turns upon the willingness of man to put the will of God to the proof. The command not to eat of the fruit, as it was announced in paradise, did not obviously commend itself as "good," "acceptable," "perfect," as Adam and Eve were able to conceive it at the time. Doubtless, if they had kept this simple, positive command of God. they would have found by experience (1) that it was in itself "good" as the seal of God's covenant of life, and as the preparation for the unfolding of His higher providence; (2) "acceptable," suited to their case and circumstances, deserving of their acceptance, sure to become more and more well-pleasing as they entered more and more into its spirit; (3) "perfect," that thus only God's perfection would or could be vindicated -- the perfection of His sovereign right to rule; that thus only could the perfection of the creature be wrought out in an onward and upward path of loyalty and love. All this our first parents would have learned concerning the will of God, if only they had consented to prove it. But this they would not do. They passed judgment upon it unproved; they refused to give it a fair trial; they chose rather to make the opposite experiment, and they have left this experiment as their sad legacy to their descendants. And now the bulk of mankind are occupied in proving, trying, how they may be best conformed to the world so as to make the most of it (this age); proving, in short, what is the will of this world and this world's prince.

The probation of Christ proceeded upon the very same principle. He was tried as the first Adam was tried, and upon the same issue -- His willingness to prove the will of God. In His case also the will of God was so presented to His human soul as to appear neither reasonable nor desirable. And in such a light Satan tried to put it before Him. The pain, shame, weariness, and blood awaiting Him, the tempter ingeniously contrasted with the shorter road to glory which He would have Him to take. Jesus refused Satan's subtle offer and so He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. He proved it and in proving it He found it to be "the good," "the acceptable," and "the perfect."

It is into this "proving that will of God" we must be transformed and therein alone will be discovered that "good, and acceptable, and perfect." B. D. Ackley ably expressed the key to it all in the following words:

Transformed by grace divine,
The glory shall be Thine;
To Thy most holy will, O Lord,
We now our all resign.

* * * * *

July, 1977 Editorial
KEPT

Revelation 3:10

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

Few are being "kept" from the spirit and evils of this day, yet this is the promise God has made to those who love him -- "I will keep thee from the hour of temptation" -- indeed, a happy exemption from the spreading calamity, a calamity that is overtaking the whole earth- Christians, Jews and heathen. Premillennial-pretribulationists interpret this as the rapturing of the church prior to the seven years of tribulation. By-passing the thought of the Rapture, we want to consider here the keeping power of God in the hour and article of temptation.

In the second and third chapters of the book of Revelation, the Divine Author has given us seven photographs of the church age that spans the time from Pentecost to Christ's second coming. The Church of Ephesus became known as the backslidden church, having lost their "first love." The Church in Smyrna was known as the persecuted or martyr church and history records that during the ten persecutions that broke upon the church prior to Constantine's time, many recanted from the faith under the pressure of threatened death. Pergamos was known as the licentious or worldly church and represents those individuals or churches who have allowed themselves to become more like the world than like Christ. The Church in Thyatira has been called the lax or spiritually corrupt church and represents Rome and the strangle hold ecclesiasticism and popery has had and is having on multitudes. It also represents those who are more bound by their loyalty to their church than they are by their loyalty to the Holy Spirit Sardis is called the "dead" church -- "thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." The church in Philadelphia is the one bright spot, being known as the favored church. Finally, the Church of the Laodiceans -- which represents this present age -- is the lukewarm church. These are they who testify to having need of nothing but know not that they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." How sad! It is well to note that, although each church age is predominantly characterized by one mark, each age has in it the characteristics, more or less, of all ages and especially is this so of the present age.

While Jesus was on earth he gave "security" talks to his disciples. These were concluded in His high-priestly prayer (John 17) in which He prayed, not for the world, but for His own that they might be kept. We make three observations:

We will be tested. Always, the main thrust of our testing is at the point of our faith in God's love for us. Peter warned, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." Down through the ages God has always had a remnant of true, victorious saints who have come through their hour of temptation with victory. Like the saints in Ephesus, the genuineness and supremacy of our love will be revealed through testing. Abraham's was. For him it was between his love and faith in God and his love for Isaac. Job's was. For him it was the matter of maintaining trust in God in the face of total loss of all earthly possessions, with added physical affliction and accusing "comforters." The Ephesians were. They left their "first love" for a mechanical operation of the church.

Like those in Smyrna who were persecuted unto death, loyalty to God is being tested today in a way and after a manner from which there is no escape. God will engineer us into circumstances that will force us to reveal what we really are. Daniel was, and he chose the lion's den in his unswerving loyalty to God. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were, They chose the fiery furnace and in doing so, proved their loyalty to God and His faithfulness to them. Nathan was when God called on him to uncover the sinful deeds of a king -- David. The Wright brothers were -- successful builders of the first aircraft -- when they refused to fly their machine on Sunday, the Lord's day, in the face of what appeared a "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity for public acclaim and success. Pilate was, and he refused to put himself on the line with Christ, but offered Him over to crucifixion and himself to eternal damnation.

Like those in Pergamos, many have gone down under the test of chastity and have given over to moral looseness and have let a worldly spirit gain the ascendancy. The test of moral purity is on in these days. Joseph faced it in his day, overcame, and was used of God to bless his generation.

Social pressure will lead multitudes to damnation like those represented by the Church in Thyatira, a lax and spiritually corrupt church. A few stand the test of willingness to separate from a dead, apostate body, while the most follow on in conformity. It is a sad picture, but true.

In this present time, the age of Laodiceanism, the test is to keep red hot for God in the face of a spiritually lukewarm atmosphere. God's Word is true "because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Faith in God's love for us is being severely tested. Our total submission to God is being tested in this rebellious, self-willed age while so many are giving but lip service to God.

Our second observation: God's keeping power! "He who is faithful to the grace of God is often hidden from trials and difficulties which fall without mitigation on those who have been unfaithful in his covenant." (Adam Clarke) God has keeping grace. He has grace wherein we are enabled to stand. Thus, he who will appropriate to himself this sanctifying grace and will daily walk therein need never go down in defeat. The chief and foremost cause of failure among God's children is that inner "evil heart of unbelief" that causes them, under the pressure of temptation

(Peter at the trial of Christ, for example), to depart "from the living God." The failure to appropriate the sanctifying grace of God is the prime cause of spiritual failure and final apostasy among God's children.

But then we need to understand and realize that God does not preserve us in passivity. To be kept from the hour of temptation we must appropriate to ourselves God's keeping power through a daily and active trust and obedience. No doubt the Ephesians ceased in a measure to actively appropriate God's grace through daily communion, but allowed their spiritual life to become swamped with the "mechanics" of running a church program.

For those who through moment by moment obedience have kept the grace of God freely flowing through their hearts have found a sufficient supply to keep them in the hour of temptation when they have been called upon to go through the most severe testing. We need not go down in the storm.

Take a look at yourself, reader. Where does this present hour find you in regard to God's grace?

Our third observation: Concerning the temptation (or testing, if you prefer) that is inescapable, "the hour" denotes the short time of its continuance. Temptation is short at any one point. Though very sharp, it is of short duration. Even then we have the promise, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." How many, do you suppose, have gone down in defeat in the very moment of victory, had they held steady?

But also, our testing during this lifetime on earth is but for a moment compared to eternity. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

In conclusion let us note the significance of these words, "because thou hast kept the word of My patience." The Word is that which communicates patience. It is God's word of promise of those things that are invisible and yet future in Christ. By faith it is these things that are the subject of the believer's patient expectation and hope. It is for these things God has promised us keeping power as we pass through this "hour" of testing.

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August, 1977 Editorial

"...THERE I WILL MEET WITH THEE..."

God has appointed where He has promised to meet man -- what wonder of wonders that God has provided a way whereby sinful beings can come into His holy presence and there abide. Just to live with God, abide forever with Him, enjoy His presence, be free from all defilement and to be secure from all the ravages of sin and dark damnation! But this meeting place that God has appointed is not just any place -- "there will I meet with thee."

It is a chosen place. It is the place of propitiation. The word "propitiation" occurs in Romans 3:25, I John 2:2; 4:10, and is translated in Hebrews 9:5 as "mercy-seat." The mercy-seat was sprinkled with atoning blood on the great day of atonement (Lev. 16:14) in the token that the righteous sentence of the law had been (typically) carried out, so that what must else have been a judgment seat could righteously be a mercy-seat (Hebrews 9:11-15), a place of communion. In fulfillment of the type, Christ is himself "the place of propitiation" -- the mercy seat sprinkled with His own blood -- the only place where fallen, sinful mankind can meet with a holy God. We must meet God in Christ if we meet Him at all. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" but, all glory to the Lamb of God, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; . . . that he (God) might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus Therefore we conclude that man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Romans 3: 24-26, 28

This chosen place is a place of compassion. The place is Calvary and it is the place where God poured out all His love to redeem a lost race -- "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all."

This place where God meets man is a place of cooperation. The invitation to sinners is "Come unto me." The way to God is not open to all, but each must of his own free choice accept the invitation and act upon it. He must leave his sins and come to Christ. By his confession of guilt the sinner establishes the law as right and acknowledges that he is justly condemned because of his own sins to its penalty and death and his only hope is the free grace of God through Christ. It is the place of full repentance and reliance on Christ. Some never come to the appointed place of meeting, for they never leave their place of sinning. The prodigal was restored back to the favor and blessings of home because he arose and left the hog pen he had himself gotten into and made his way back to the "meeting" place.

It is a place of completeness. God, in Christ, has provided a double cure -- a cure for both actual and original sin. The promise is, "from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezekiel 36:25-27

We read in Colossians 2:10, 11, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, And ye are complete in him." This place of completeness is a place of soul rest; a place of deliverance from heart sin -- the carnal mind; a place of holiness because it is a place of wholeness. Some press quickly by faith into this land of perfect rest and purity. Others struggle, some for years before they gain this coveted place. Some struggle, struggle and never make it. They are never able to sing from the heart:

Is not this the Land of Beulah?
Blessed, Blessed land of light,
Where the flowers bloom forever,

And the sun is always bright!

It is a place of communion. "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony," Exodus 25: 22 Communion means a sharing. We note that the place of communion is above the mercy seat between the two cherubims -- there I will meet with thee and commune with thee. The mercy-seat sprinkled with blood speaks of mercy through the atoning blood of Jesus, our only means of approach to God. Cherubims were guardians of God's holiness. This all typifies the work that God designs to do within our hearts to make them His dwelling place where He can take up His abode and where we can "sup with him, and he with (us)." The song writer gave meaning to this when he wrote:

Since the wondrous grace of my loving Lord
Has redeemed and set me free,
All my heart is filled and my soul is thrilled--
He is all in all to me.

He has come to dwell in my inmost self;
He's the Bridegroom of my heart.
What communion sweet and what rest complete,
Rest that never shall depart!

It is a place of commandment. Strange as it may seem, this place where God and man meet is a place where God commands us and we command God. First and foremost we are to respect God's commandments (Psalm 119:6). In them are revealed His will for us. They are for our good and our protection. His commandments are holy, just and good. No wonder the Psalmist declared, "I delight to do thy will, O God." We prove our love to God by keeping His commandments. (John 14:15)

In Isaiah 45:11 we read, "Thus saith the Lord... concerning the works of my hands command ye me." Are we to command God? Like the widow who borrowed vessels, God miraculously filled with oil all she brought. In like manner we are to come to God bringing our largest conceptions of Him and then multiply those ten thousandfold and believe Him as we are instructed to do in His Word. We are to command God with the sublimity of our faith, and, as C. H. Spurgeon puts it, we are to be daring with our God. Thus God instructs us, "ask me of things to come concerning My sons, and concerning the work of My hands command ye Me."

It is a place of constancy. "This shall be a continual burnt-offering." Exodus 29:42. Such words as continual, continually (Lev. 24: 2-4, 8; Isa. 49:16), living sacrifice, dwelleth speak of constancy in Christian experience. God designs that we enter into such a life where we are constantly giving our all day by day in glad service to Him and at the same time where we are constantly being recipients of His all. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Psalm 91:1 Reference here is to the most holy place in the tabernacle in the wilderness where the high priest went once a year. It was that place where God met man. It typifies spiritually that place of constant, unbroken fellowship we can have with

God in our heart wherever we may be -- at home, on the job, at church, traveling across the country, whether sick or well, rich or poor. All glory be to our wonderful Saviour and Lord!

It is a place of communication. Our lives, whether by silent influence or by word of mouth, should communicate to others that we dwell with a Holy God and that He lives within our heart. Give me, Lord, the mind of Jesus; Make me holy as He is. May I prove I've been with Jesus, Who is all my righteousness.

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September, 1977 Editorial
"PROVE ME... SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS"

Experimental evidence deprives the skeptic of every rational objection to the reality of personal salvation, makes a fool of the atheist, puts to shame the unbelieving, and condemns the disobedient. The invitation has gone forth, "prove me saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing." "If any man will do his will," saith Jesus, "he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

God has given us in His Word proof after proof of His faithfulness and reliability and we, personally, only have to put it to the test through a simple trust and obedience to find that God never fails His Word to us. Joshua testified in his day that "there failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass."

We are so slow to believe God! Unbelief is the one cardinal sin of them all. Often, as I read the Bible through in my childhood years, I marvelled at the awful stupidity and slowness, and the senselessness of God's chosen people in their rebellion and failure to believe and obey God. What blessings they forfeited; what sufferings they reaped -- all because of their unbelief. What sufferings and deprivations they brought on themselves and their offspring because of their unbelief at Kadesh Barnea.

How unreasonable it was for the Syrian Captain to hesitate to "go wash in the waters of Jordan" to be healed of his leprosy. What if the blind man, whom Jesus directed to "wash in the pool of Siloam," refused to comply? He would have deserved to grope in darkness all his days had he given himself over to endless reasonings instead of willing and ready obedience. What deserved loss the Syrophenecian woman would have sustained had she given over to unbelief. By her humble, persistent faith she sealed the word of God as true for "God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."

Today the picture is the same. Humanity from the cradle to the grave -- through babyhood, childhood, youth, middle age and declining years -- is suffering agonies in body, mind, and spirit that would not be their lot but for the awful sin of unbelief.

God identifies Himself with His WORD. The Bible is full of promises waiting to be fulfilled in behalf of those who will trust and obey. Christianity has not, will not, cannot fail when the simple conditions laid down in the Word are met.

Empty are the arguments of the haughty skeptic who urges his senseless reasonings against Christianity, but will not consent to test the question by an experimental criterion. "Do my will," saith Jesus, "and you shall know of the doctrine." In simple words Jesus is saying, "Submit to the requirements of the gospel, obey my commands, and you shall have evidence to convince you, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that my religion is divine."

Unbelief grieves the heart of God more than any other sin.

Unbelief ties the hands of God -- "ye have not because ye ask not."

So little is done around us because of unbelief. It shuts the door of salvation to the sinner. It keeps the child of God from obtaining a holy heart. It robs the sanctified of many rich blessings he could be receiving.

The greatest hindrance to faith is the inward principle of unbelief. This principle in the unsanctified soul acts to produce fear, causes reasonings, defeats the purposes of God, robs one of power, causes us to depart from God and brings condemnation to the soul.

There is a mystery to faith, but it dissolves at the feet of the humble and obedient and those of pure conscience (I Timothy 3:9). To the trusting soul "the interior eye of faith is opened by the Holy Ghost" to see and appreciate spiritual realities.

Faith is a substance and a conviction. We must act out faith by taking sides with God against unbelief like the Syrophenician woman until this act of voluntary faith passes into the gracious state of believing.

In another place in the Bible we are told to "fight the fight of faith." How are we to do this? One put it this way:

Sure, I must fight if I would win;
Increase my courage, Lord.
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by Thy Word.

Abraham, the friend of God and father of those who are of faith, proved the Word of God by a naked faith and won the approbation of the Almighty. Against hope, he yet believed, and being not weak in faith, he staggered not at the promise through unbelief. Being fully persuaded, he steadied himself on the naked Word of God by nesting in the divine purpose when there was absolutely nothing in outer circumstances to warrant his belief. He proved God and found Him to be true and faithful to His Word.

The Bible is full of the promises of God and God is waiting to prove His faithfulness to His Word. We prove God by simply believing His Word! The people asked Jesus, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered..." This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

We prove God by obeying His Word in paying our tithes and giving offerings when it would appear from human reason that there is no way we could afford, to do so.

We prove God by keeping the Christian Sabbath holy and free from unnecessary labor. Some would trust to their pay check that is earned partly by working on Sundays, rather than to trust God and His Word and His faithfulness to one who will keep it without compromise. Some people at vacation time leave for their "trip" on Sunday and return home later on a Sunday, using the Lord's day for their own convenience and pleasure. Such never prosper in their souls.

We prove God by seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, putting our spiritual welfare and faithfulness to the means of grace ahead of secular interests.

We prove our faith in God by enduring trials patiently rather than complainingly and putting our trust in His Word and 'tin everything giving thanks" regardless.

To what extent, I might ask myself, am I willing to prove God, yea, even more, to what extent does God require me to go in my proof of His faithfulness to preserve me unto eternal life? The answer is found in these words: "they loved not their lives unto the death." Physical life in this world must be forfeited sooner or later along with all the living that goes with it in this "passing" mode of life. By faith in the unchanging Word of God that abides the dissolution of all things, we understand that eternal life is granted to those who have become alive spiritually by a second birth and who will, through the power of the indwelt Holy Spirit, live a life of righteousness, sealing their consecration even to death. Thus have martyrs put to proof the Word of God and in doing so have gained a place in God's eternal home.

Yes, God identifies Himself with His Word. May God grant that none of us in this generation back down from this proving ground.

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October, 1977 Editorial
"I THIRST"

John 19:28

While Jesus hung on the cross He uttered seven "Words," and not without significance. The thirst of Christ on the cross included more than the cry of the physical man. His death was provisionally redemptive for the entire race of mankind and His thirst was for the souls of men. We as Christians are sent into the world to satisfy our Lord's thirst after saved souls.

There is an old legend about the Lord. It tells how Jesus was once asked by one of His disciples about the meaning of the phrase in the book of Ecclesiastes "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." Jesus -- so the story goes -- refused to answer the question, saying that the disciple was too young to understand. The young disciple soon forgot the whole matter.

Three years passed. Then one day Jesus said to the young disciple: "Come, let us take a walk together." The disciple was delighted at the suggestion and the two walked together for many miles.

It was a hot summer day in Palestine, and after a while Jesus said to the disciple: "I am tired. I will sit down here in the shadow of this tree. You are younger -- go to the village that you can see near us, and bring me a jar of water." The disciple ran into the village, happy to be able to render his Master a service. He knocked at the first door he came to, hoping to get the jar of water, and it was opened by a girl who was unspeakably beautiful. When she opened her mouth to ask him what he wished, her voice was like the ringing of bells.

He could not tear himself away from the girl. They talked until evening and he found a place in the village to spend the night so that he could see her again the next morning. So it was for several days. He had fallen in love with her and she with him.

They married. She was of a rich family; so he received a large dowry. By hard work they made their estate even bigger. They had fields, vineyards, cattle, sheep and well-filled barns. She bore him three children.

Twelve years passed in fairy-tale happiness. Then disaster struck! A catastrophic flood swept away his house and all his belongings. His wife and three children drowned before his eyes. Only he escaped, but destitute and stripped of everything he had possessed. He wept over his lost happiness.

Suddenly he heard a voice from behind calling him. "Beloved disciple -- did you bring me the jar of water as I asked?" The young man started up to find that he had been dreaming. He was deeply troubled.

"Master!" he said. "How could I forget your commandment?"

The Master's voice quieted him. "By your time twelve years have passed. By mine, only a quarter of an hour. I wanted to explain to you the meaning of the words 'Vanity of vanities; all is vanity!'"

Years pass by so quickly and life ends so soon. For most people, I am afraid, their total years can be summed up with these words, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." Surely the oft quoted words are true, "Only one life, 'twill soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last."

What are you doing to satisfy Christ's thirst for saved souls?

(The above legend was taken from the book, *Underground Saints*, pages 34, 35, by Richard Wurmbrand. and reprinted here by permission.

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November, 1977 Editorial

NOAH DAYS

"As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." Luke 17:26. In the antediluvian world the race of Seth stood for a while apart from the godless world, openly professing the name and worship of Jehovah, recognizing their dependence upon the fellowship with a living and present God. But after a few generations they mingled with the race of Cain in defiance of the divine purpose. The sons of God were attracted by the beauty of the daughters of men, and the races united in ungodly marriages, the fruit of which soon appeared in a very high state of physical culture and strength. But the most desperate moral and spiritual corruption evolved, until the earth was filled with violence. The age closed with the catastrophe of the flood. The failure of the descendants of Seth to preserve that line of separation which God had indicated at the beginning brought on the corruption which necessitated the deluge.

Noah stood out, however, as a noteworthy exception to this universal conformity to the world, and for this cause he and his family were preserved from the common corruption and judgment.

And now today we face the same condition that Noah faced. The same thing that swept away the church of that day is sweeping away the church of this day and it will issue in, not a flood of water, but a conflagration of fire. "As it was in the days of Noah!" If the percentage of those saved in that day holds good today, then far, far fewer than any would expect will be saved in this day.

We know the modern church is apostate even though they still call themselves Christian. They have forsaken the ranks of true Christianity and have fully conformed with AntiChrist movements.

But more tragic than this is the fact that old-line holiness churches have lost the battle of separation from the world. Conformity is their practice and stated goal. Their worldly, sinful, vulgar way of dress; their worldly, modern church edifices complete with social halls, kitchens, recreation centers; their almost total acceptance and participation in worldly amusements and recreations; their "temperate" allowance of tobacco, cocktails and the like instead of total abstinence; their acceptance and participation in the heretical charismatic movement of the day, mark them as apostate to true Bible holiness. All these things serve to prove that "Noah Days" of conformity have engulfed them.

But saddest of all, liberalism and conformity have been and are making inroads into the "come-out" holiness groups of these recent years to a far greater extent than many would honestly admit. Trends have been the observable beginning of the downfall of many a movement. Churches are affected by trends. No matter how slight they may be, trends begin a move and determine a direction, and the direction a church moves in determines its final destiny. A trend is like a leak in a dam. It starts with an apparent harmless trickle and ends in a sweeping force that cannot be abated. Trends come in on us so slightly at first and appear so innocent that if one raises a voice against them he is marked as a calamity howler and a mad-man condemning people without a cause.

For an example, there is no question that we oppose the unisex emphasis of this day as being sinful and ungodly. In the face of this, however, men's "high-heel" shoes are in our midst: pastel colored shirts that could easily be accepted as a blouse for women: fuller hair cuts on men who would deny this to be a dangerous trend pointing toward the unisex of the modern day. "But." comes the objection, "we don't mean it that way." Even so, the trend is there, the move is on, the direction is set.

We oppose hard rock music and would have nothing to do with it. But the shift from the older, accepted hymns of the church to songs of this day with a swing type beat that has a sensual appeal is a trend that is headed toward that which we now oppose. Easy money and affluency open the door to a "free-spending" spirit and trends toward a self-gratification that in the end rules out Holy Ghost leadership in the handling of our means. The whole trend is toward an idolatrous way of life and thus the line of demarcation between the church and the world is obliterated and we become "as it was in the days of Noah."

Noah believed. In contrast to his day of popular conformity, Noah believed the word of God respecting the coming judgment on the old world and the price it would cost to escape this judgment. God warns us: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.,, the world passeth away." God calls us to give up this present world because it is doomed. A trend toward worldliness and worldliness itself are not far apart if any. Like Christian, we are living in the city of destruction and we must flee from its impending flames. The world of unregenerate men in and out of the churches will not believe this and so run after the things of earth, the pleasures of earth, conforming their lives to an unbounded future of earthly living. True faith will not allow itself to be sepulchered in the magnificent palaces and monuments which will one day be driven like ashes in the whirlwind of the last conflagration. Faith turns from the transient and uncertain ends and questionable trends and seeks for a city that hath foundations, built with a better, an enduring substance (I Peter 1:4, 5).

Noah looked ahead and saw a hideous wreck of perishing millions. Those of his generation laughed and scorned because they saw no sign of any such catastrophe. God help us not to be blind to danger signs. God's answer to this is the message of His Second Coming, the message of warning which proclaims the doom of all earth's pride and power. Faith ever proclaims and true Christian lives always conform to this great and portentous truth, "the world passeth away," "The Lord cometh."

Noah prepared. Noah's faith in the reliability of God's word led him to do something about it. He believed what God said about a coming catastrophe and prepared for it. He built the ark of refuge according to the divine prescription and specifications. He kept himself out of the snares of his age by occupying himself in God's preparation program. When the appointed time came he entered his refuge and thus shut the door upon all that seemed substantial and real around him. His faith was practical. He exercised it under a cloudless sky when there was absolutely no outer sign of the coming tidal wave of judgment on earth or sea. He did this all his life long. He did it up to the very end and when it seemed to others the height of folly and fanaticism.

Real faith not only separates itself from the present world, but lays hold upon the hope of the future and prepares practically, patiently, and persistently according to God's plan. Real faith

conforms daily to Christ's ways, His words, His spirit, His separateness, His unworldliness, His non-conformity to the religious status-quo, His holiness, His unselfishness, His love for the lost. Our whole Christian experience, like Noah's work, is the putting on of Christ, the building up of the house of faith and holiness of which Jesus is the substance, with the imperishable materials of His grace and by the agency and energy of His Holy Spirit, so as to stand the test of that coming day.

Noah separated himself. Noah not only prepared for the future, but he also separated himself from unholy association with the men and women of his own generation. And not only by his life did he stand thus apart, but by his testimony he bore fearless and faithful witness against their wickedness, and warned them of the coming retribution. The thing that so condemns professed holiness today is the fact that the "remnant" insist on separation and non-conformity to the things they allow --bobbed haired women and long haired, high heeled men, immodest dresses and pant-suits for women, television, church kitchens and social halls, bowling alleys and like places of entertainment. We cannot bear effectual witness against the world until we get above its life and out of its evil influence.

At last the message and the messenger were abundantly vindicated. The time came when the world would have given all it was worth for the lowest place in Noah's house of safety; but it was too late.

Noah suffered them their farms and stores, their pleasures, their sins, their rebellion for a little while, and then God gave the earth back to him. Noah became the heir of the world, simply because he had given up the world. Oh, glorious day for the saints when God shall have put down all sin and rebellion and Christ, with His saints, shall rule the earth in peace.

May God help us all not to be deceived in this late hour!

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December, 1977 Editorial
THE BIRTHDAY OF JESUS

Thank God for Christmas. Although the exact date of Christ's nativity has never been settled, we do acknowledge His birth on December 25. Certainly our Christian heritage would be impoverished without Christmas. Far too much has been added that is not scriptural or even sensible to this greatest celebration of the year. Because of this some would plead for a moratorium on the commemoration of Christmas, yet without it our Christian witness would be weakened.

The birthday of Jesus is a fact unexcelled. His is more than just an ordinary birth. Involved in this event are the mysteries of the Virgin Birth and the Incarnation of Christ the Eternal One. It is this "Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" stepping into the stream of humanity by taking upon Himself a human body and becoming man as well as God. Christmas is the one highlight of the year when attention can be focused on this glorious truth. While there is much reference to Christmas and Easter, there is far less reference to

Pentecost and seldom any to the Ascension and the Glorification of our Lord Jesus Christ. No doubt one reason could be that these latter are not commemorated as Christmas and Easter are, but more significant is the fact that the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus are the focal points of God's great redemptive program for a lost and sin-laden race. Allow these, and other events in the history of Jesus Christ fall naturally into place. The point we would call attention to at this season of the year is the fact that the annual commemoration of Christmas is the focusing of the attention on the great truth of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and can we not suffer the tinsel and wrappings of an overly commercialized season, undesirable as they are, in order to keep this great truth alive in the world, lest in throwing these out we also throw out the Babe of Bethlehem? What would happen to the great truths of the Virgin Birth and the Incarnation of the Son of God, already facing the vicious attacks of infidelity, if the birthday of Christ were not an annual celebration?

When Paul was suffering imprisonment in Rome he wrote:

"Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

"The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

"But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

"What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth Christ is preached; and I therein rejoice, yea and will rejoice."

Philippians 1:15-18 The focus of the world on the birthday of Jesus may be in pretence in order to gain wealth, or in a selfish, carnal gratification of gift getting and giving, and this along with tinsel, balls, and bells with their glitter, gleam and shine, but still it is the commemoration day of the Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour and therein we rejoice, yea, and we will rejoice. We must and we will take every opportunity at this season especially, to sound out these great truths unexcelled in the annals of human history.

But involved in this glorious, unexcelled event comes the proffer to every soul of spiritual and eternal life. The purpose of Jesus' coming was to bring life to men dead in trespasses and sin. In John 14:6 we read, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way (man is lost and needs a guide), the truth (man is in error and needs a teacher), the life (man is dead in trespasses and sins and needs a new birth): no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." There is absolutely no way to God except through Christ Jesus. What if Jesus had not come? What if there was no birthday of Jesus to celebrate? I say, thank God for Christmas!

We need to be reminded also that a message of universal significance is involved in the Christmas story. The message of the angel to the shepherds was:

"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."
Luke 2:10

It was the Incarnation of The Second Person of the Holy Trinity that made possible the gift of the Holy Spirit to man. The universal message of salvation through redeemed souls is made possible and effective by the indwelling Holy Spirit and the outreach is world wide. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Acts 1:8 Thus the Christmas message is a message that includes salvation from a life of sin, the sanctifying and indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, and the empowering of the heart with a gospel message that includes a missionary outreach to every tribe, tongue and nation on earth. We could sing very appropriately at Christmas time along with the carols, songs like the following:

Reach your arms around the world for Jesus
And win it in His name.

Tell to all how his redemption frees us;
The gospel news proclaim.
Spread abroad the story of salvation,
The whole wide world around;
To each kindred, every tribe and nation,
Wherever sin is found.
Reach your arms around the world,
All around the world,
With a strong and firm embrace.
Ev'ry nation, ev'ry kin,
For the Saviour strive to win
Through God's redeeming grace.

Can we do less than the angels when they proclaimed the good news "which shall be to all people"? If that time ever comes we will cease to be a movement blest of God and will take our place among the church organizations who have a name that they live but are dead.

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THE END