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## **PARKER MAXEY'S EDITORIALS -- (1981)**

Editorials from The Missionary Revivalist  
Compiled by Duane V. Maxey

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Digital Edition 09/04/2000  
By Holiness Data Ministry

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January, 1981 Editorial  
**EQUALLY ENDOWED**

However else mankind may differ in their endowments, as long as God may permit one to live on this earth, each has bestowed upon him an equal amount of time. Everyone has the same amount of this commodity, "time," to spend each day; the same number of days in each week; the same number of weeks in each month, etc. As each year comes to an end and a new year begins this fact of "time" is impressed upon us more than any other time of the year. How profitable, then, to take advantage of this awareness and give serious attention to it. No business can continue successfully without an "inventory time" and of like value is "inventory time" in our life.

We need to meditate on the factors of time, its swift passing; its irretrievableness; its temporality; its brevity. "Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee." Psa. 39:5. Physical life on this planet is only temporal. The material things we handle, live with, own and are so much involved with and in, are only temporal. Suffering, sorrow, poverty, heartache, hunger or whatever providences may confront one here and now are passing. Paul expresses it thus: "For our fight affliction, which is but for a moment (in comparison to the eternal and permanent), worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." II Cor. 4:17, 18

Above all, we certainly need to give attention to the functions of time. To be wise we must constantly live life with eternity's values in view. The Psalmist reminds us, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." Psa. 90:12. When people complain, "I just don't have time," as a rule it is in connection with those duties and practices that involve their immortal souls. Peter exhorts us to "pass the time of your sojourning here in fear." I Peter 1:17. Adam Clarke comments, "He who knows the value of time, and will redeem it from useless

chit-chat and trifling visits, will find enough for all the purposes of his own salvation, the cultivation of his mind and the work of the ministry. He to whom time is not precious, who lives not by rule, never finds time sufficient for anything, is always in a hurry and never capable of bringing one good purpose to proper effect." Richard Baxter exhorts us to "Spend your time in nothing which you know must be repented of. Spend it on nothing which you might not pray for the blessing of God. Spend it on nothing you could not review with a quiet conscience on your dying bed. Spend it on nothing which you might not safely and properly be doing if death should surprise you in the act."

Fruitfulness will be the result of a life where time is wisely spent in the light of the permanent and eternal. He who "lives by rule" and through a careful weighing of the temporal against the eternal, applies the proper and rigid discipline to his own life will be able to produce a fruitful life to the glory of God, the good of his fellow man and the eternal enrichment of his own soul. William A. Quayle in his book, *The Pastor Preacher*, used John Wesley as an illustration of "redeeming the time." "He knows the longevity of life is not in his own hands. He must live while he may, and die when he must. But there is a thing which can be compelled. Whether one may add years to one's life, he may, by increasing the speed of execution, add a number of lifetimes to his life. If a body increase the speed of doing things--thinking, reading, and the like--by twice, then in fifty years he will live a hundred years; if three times, then in fifty years he will have lived a hundred and fifty years; if by six times, which is quite within the possibility, then in fifty years he would live three hundred years. Here is where haste tells. This is the philosophy of John Wesley having done such a surprising amount of work. He was not in a hurry; but was always in haste; and he accomplished."

I am sure that no one would claim to be a John Wesley, but the appalling thing is the fruitfulness of our lives in comparison to what we could have been if self-discipline had been properly administered. We take our relationship and responsibility of time far too lightly. I am thinking, however, of the spending of this commodity, "time," in a way that will cause a person to lose his own soul in eternity. This life has been called the seed-time for eternity and this life is the dressing room. To fail to prepare in time to live with God in eternity is tragic beyond words. I am reminded of "snipe-hunting" excursions that were often taken while I was in college to trick unsuspecting newcomers. A newcomer would be given a large gunny sack and taken out about ten miles or so into a desert place after dark, placed in a certain strategic spot and asked to hold the large sack open and be ready while others in the party would supposedly circle way out in order to drive snipes toward the sack holder in hopes of capturing some, supposedly sort of an animal or fowl that did not really exist. While the poor victim of this prank held the sack open the others would sneak off and return to their rooms and a good night's sleep. Sometime in the wee hours of the morning this "victim" would realize he was left alone holding an empty bag and would have to trudge the ten or so miles back on foot. No one ever appreciated being left holding an empty bag. And yet many fall victim to a like trick of the devil. To live alone for the temporal things of life, to live alone for physical gratification, to weep over the sorrows of life without hope, to fail to be partakers of eternal life and to fail to keep spiritually alive by exercising the proper graces is to end life fruitless of eternal blessings and be left holding an empty bag. When a lost soul has spent all his wealth of "time" how tragic then to face an endless eternity.

There will come a day we will all face the finale of time. Someone has penned these words:

When as a child I laughed and wept, time crept.  
When as a youth I dreamed and talked, time walked.  
When I became a full-grown man, time ran.  
And later as I older grew, time flew.  
Soon I shall find while traveling on, time gone.  
Will Christ have saved my soul by then?

The only wise thing is not to let another moment pass without making full preparation of the soul for eternity and then live each moment with eternity in view, The Spirit deals with each in time to prepare them for the inevitable.

The Spirit once came to an innocent child  
With pleading and tender tone;  
"Dear little one, let me come into your heart,  
And make it forever my own."

"Oh, Spirit," he cried, "please go away;  
For childhood is only for fun and play;  
Some other day, some other day,  
When I am older I'll bid Thee stay."

The Spirit came back to the fair, stalwart youth,  
With loving and tender plea:  
"The harvest is ready, there's work to be done,  
Arise, God is calling for thee."

"Oh, Spirit," he cried, "leave me, I pray,  
The pleasures of earth hold me in sway;  
Some other day, some other day;  
Then, Holy Spirit, I'll bid Thee stay."

The Spirit plead thus with the toil weary man,  
"Make haste while God's grace shall last;  
The years are adorning with silver thy brow,  
Thy days are now slipping by fast."

"Oh, Spirit," he cried, "I should obey,  
But I am too busy and tired to pray;  
Some other day, some other day;  
When I have time I will bid Thee stay."

The aged man leans on his frail, trembling staff,  
With quivering, bitter sigh:

"I've wasted a life-time in sin," he cried,  
"And now I am going to die"

The Spirit, long slighted, has flown away;  
No hope and no God, now I cannot pray;  
No other day, no other day;  
The Holy Spirit has gone to stay."

-- Gertrude Manly Jones

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February, 1981 Editorial  
WALKING ACCURATELY

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

"Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." Ephesians 5:14-17

The word "circumspectly" in our King James Bible comes from the word meaning "accurately." Walking accurately, according to the context of this Scripture, would involve being awakened out of the sleep of sin, resurrected from a spiritually dead state and ushered into the light of Christ to live and labor. Furthermore, it would involve a redeeming of the time, i.e., a buying up and making the most of every opportunity as it comes along in its season and turning each to the best advantage, since none can be recalled if missed or misused.

One other Scripture needs to be brought into focus as we consider this subject of walking accurately. "What? know ye not that.., 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" I Cor. 6:19, 20.

There has existed among the holiness ranks of today a double standard of living and of Christian service. Consciously or unconsciously, a distinction exists between those who are putting their entire time and energies directly into the work of the Lord as pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and those who are only part time in the work of God. This concept would also include laymen who labor at secular jobs and spend only part of their time in church work.

Along with this concept of the difference between full time and part time laborers for God comes another concept to those who are only, as they claim, part time. This part time philosophy carries with it the unconscious feeling that one is "off the hook" and on his own that part of the time he is not involved in any phase of kingdom work or church work,

The natural reaction or outcome to this philosophy of the Christian life is to conclude, since I am only part time, then the rest of the time I am on my own to do as I please and spend my money as I choose--all, of course, in good, clean (but selfish) living.

As a result of this kind of thinking thousands and thousands of man hours have been siphoned off for personal pleasure and selfish living that should have and would have gone into a "walking accurately" type of devoted life if the entire life were lived under the control of the Spirit. Also, as another result of this kind of thinking, thousands and thousands of dollars are spent in self-gratification, self-entertainment, self-instigated projects that should and would have been given to carrying on the work of the Lord. All, of course, justified in that the obligation to God and the Church has been dispatched in the paying of the tithe, the giving of offerings and the joining of a "calling team" once a week.

There is no such thing as a "part time" Christian. To be part time for God and part time for self is not the way of a life of victory in the Lord. Whether layman or preacher, it is all out for God all the time. We are not our own, we have been bought with a price: It is a life in and by the Spirit, controlled, directed and inspired by the Blessed Holy Spirit. It is a life where He has control of one's money, one's time and one's talents. "Walking accurately" is to walk under the control of the Spirit. We sing it:

All for Jesus! all for Jesus!  
All my being's ransomed pow'rs;  
All my tho'ts and words and doings,  
All my days and all my hours.

But do we mean it?

Jesus is our example. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps." I Pet. 2:21. It is said of Jesus, "I do always those things that please him." John 8:29. Again we read, "Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God." Heb. 10:7. Laymen should go to their jobs under the control of The Spirit; house wives should perform their duties under the control of the Spirit; a preacher should go about his pastoral duties under the control of the Spirit. Whether at home or on the mission field, all should be under the control of the Spirit. All my time, talents, money should be under the control of the Spirit. Only then am I "walking accurately."

How about you, reader? Are you part time or full time in this business of being a Christian?

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March, 1981 Editorial  
SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." I Peter 2:5

The wholly sanctified are God's priests, set apart and purified, for the purpose of offering up spiritual sacrifices. These are to be offered under the influence of the Holy Spirit. What are these sacrifices?

First and foremost is the sacrifice of ourselves and our entire existence unto God (Romans 12:1; Proverbs 23:26). The principle of natural strength and natural ability so dominates the "natural" man that he is so certain that he can achieve God's ends by his own efforts! We are Christ's heirs by promise, but we do not obtain this through our own natural strength. Like Jacob of old, who through his "natural" strength, though able and clever, found that everything went wrong he set his hand to and was on the verge of losing everything and all he had accumulated to save his skin, when he met God. The reader will recall Jacob's experience at Peniel, when his fear of meeting Esau threatened him with the loss of all his possessions. It was at that time God lamed him--his natural strength was broken, but not until the end of a whole night's struggle when at the dawning of day "self" was yielded up to God. This breaking of the strength of "natural" ability--the sacrifice of ourselves, our plans, our ambitions, our will--is the prime spiritual sacrifice God requires before we are of any use in His kingdom. Jacob was a different man from that day forward and so will everyone be who will give over faith in his own competence and self-reliance and come to truly know God as Sovereign in his life. It is the sacrifice of self.

After this initial and primal sacrifice are the daily spiritual sacrifices that naturally follow the sacrifice of self. These will include:

1. Our thoughts. "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." There must needs be the total abandoning of every thought contrary to the principle of holiness.

God's Word exhorts us to "gird up the loins of your mind." In Proverbs 12:5 we read, "The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood." In Romans 12:3 we read, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith." Again, in Phil. 4:8 we read, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Most of the trouble people confront starts within themselves. They allow their minds to run in forbidden channels. Entire sanctification will give us the inner power to offer up to God the sacrifice of thoughts that are pleasing unto Him, but we will have to exercise that power to refuse the forbidden and cleave to the good in relationship to thoughts that present themselves to our mind. We must offer to God the sacrifice of right thinking.

2. Our words. The Psalmist prayed, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer." We read further: "How forcible are right words!" Job 6:25; "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and

health to the bones." Prov. 16:24; "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Prov. 25:11; "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself." Eccl. 12:11; "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." Is. 50:4

It was the habit of the saints to offer up the sacrifice of words that would bless and edify one another: "Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another: and the Lord hearkened; and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Mal. 3:16 "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Matt. 12:37 God help us to offer up to Him the sacrifice of acceptable words.

3. Our actions. Our actions should include (a) the act of thanksgiving. "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High." Ps. 50:14; "Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms." Ps. 95:2; "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name." Ps. 100:4; "I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord." Ps. 116:7; "Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God." Ps. 147:7; "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God." Phil. 4:6 We are exhorted in I Thess. 5:18 "In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." The lack of faith in God that would hinder a person from offering to God the sacrifice of thanksgiving would indicate a spiritual lack or need.

(b) The act of praise. Psalm 145:10 declares that "All thy works shall praise thee." Praise is the highest occupation of angels. They are constantly before the throne of heaven praising and glorifying God. If this is so, then it is the right and necessary activity of man. Continuous praise should be our way of life. The Psalmist proclaims, "I will bless (praise) the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth." Ps. 34:1 The Psalmist further declared, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise." Ps. 57:7 This surely suggests a premeditated and predetermined habit of praise.

How can we offer the sacrifice of praise? The answer is given in Hebrews 13:15: "By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise unto God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips. In the Old Testament ritual a sacrifice called for death. It was an animal that died. In the sacrifice of praise one must sacrifice to the death -- his own judgment, opinion and evaluation of what is right and praise God always and in everything, including what we evaluate as "good," "bad," or "indifferent," and by a constant faith in God be employed in a continual praise to Him for all things. The Bible talks about the "fruit of the lips," indicating that our sacrifice of praise is not complete until it is expressed.

(c) The act of prayer. We are to offer to God the sacrifice of prayer. We read in Psalm 114:2, "Let my prayer be set before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Then in Rev. 5:8 we read, "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials of

odours, which are the prayers of saints. Much emphasis has been put on prayer, but what we need is more effort put into the sacrifice of prayer.

(d) The act of mercy--the sacrifice of mercy. Man is commanded to exercise mercy: Prov. 3:3, "Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart." "The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh." Prov. 11:17; "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? .... Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." Matt. 5:7 "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." Luke 6:36

The word "mercy" in the original signifies, in general, to feel sympathy with the misery of another, and especially sympathy manifested in act. Offering the sacrifice of mercy would be exemplified by the good Samaritan who cared for the man who was beaten by robbers and left half dead by the wayside.

In conclusion listen to what God has to say: "for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Heb. 13:16 Let us therefore offer ourselves unto God, our bodies, minds and souls, to be reasonable, holy and living sacrifice unto Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

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April, 1981 Editorial  
MAINTAINING BIBLE STANDARDS

The Bible Missionary Church (Manual 1979, page 3) "came into existence through the holiness people who desired to continue in the old-fashioned lines of faith, fellowship, and personal holiness from which present day holiness churches have so largely departed."

Holy Ghost life and power in any church is evident only in proportion to the spiritual life and Holy Ghost power possessed by individuals in the church. The secret of power and manifest victory, then, would be in proportion to the number of its members who were sanctified wholly. The norm of a sanctified church in revival atmosphere producing liberty and freedom among its members and conviction upon the unsaved and unsanctified. This Holy Ghost life in a church is manifest outwardly by its spirit and by its Bible standards of holy living. These Bible based standards of holy living become the natural expression of the spiritual life within. The General and Special Rules of the Bible Missionary Church are the expressed heart convictions of people who have been sanctified wholly and who desire to please God in their appearance and walk before men as revealed to them in the Word. These are set down in our church as a minimum requirement for membership.

To the entirely sanctified, outward standards of holy living are more than just a "rule keeping" effort to incorporate into their life as an added burden, but are an expression of a sincere desire and love to please the Master and obey Him in every aspect, to the minutest detail, as He has revealed it to them in His Word. It is a glorious romance and a delightful way of life!

Holy Ghost life in an individual and in a church will produce holy standards of dress, conduct and decorum. When "little trends," as careless talk, uncharitable words, quarreling, spreading surmises injurious to the good name of others and the like begin to show up; when Sabbath observance is neglected, or we see the indulging of pride or immodesty in dress and behavior, or when songs, literature and entertainment not to the glory of God begin to appear, it is a sure sign that Holy Ghost life is waning.

Or, on the positive side--when "trends" of the lack of courteousness, and love toward one another, carelessness in paying tithes and the giving of offerings, attending faithfully all the means of grace, seeking the salvation of the lost appear --something has happened to the spiritual life within the church.

To maintain spiritual standards four things must be prevalent in any group. Bible standards must continually be:

Preached from the pulpit. It is a well known fact that where the pulpit is silent for any length of time, that doctrine or practice that is not proclaimed gradually disappears from the church. Paul testified, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Acts 20:26, 27. We are not advocating the proclamation of a "one-stringed" message, but the "whole counsel of God." In its time and place "standards" as revealed in the Word must continue to be proclaimed in clearness and certainty if they are to be maintained--not just in general terms, but in specific declarations. Is this lacking in the pulpits of our churches?

Practiced by the saints. In daily living the saints of God most gladly put into flesh and blood all the teachings of the Bible. The Bible is quite specific in its instructions about how we are to speak, how we are to dress, what we are to look at and not look at. To follow the whole counsel of God is the meat and drink of those who love the Lord. Spirit filled, Bible practicing saints are a conviction to the lost and to the disobedient professors of religion. There is a reason why God's glory accompanies His saints. It is because they wholly follow Him. They have laid aside their pride and self-will and are willing to be made a laughing stock if needs be in both their inward and outward conformity to His revealed will. Heb. 10:22

Proclaimed by word of testimony. The Spirit of God deals in a definite manner with those who seek a close walk with Him and who seek earnestly His will as revealed in the Word. He deals with them concerning modest and plain attire; concerning the wearing of jewelry, including the wedding band; concerning the extremes in dress. He deals with them about the evils of setting a TV before their eyes. When saints glorify God by testifying to His dealings with them, He is honored, the way of holiness is upheld, sinners are convicted and saints are edified and enlightened. Have we silenced our testimony on God's dealings with us in the matter of outward conformity? An anointed testimony of love and appreciation for the work of the Holy Spirit in bringing one light on outward standards of living honors God and promotes His work among men. Many sinners have been convicted and many saints enlightened by the faithful testimony of some saint along this line.

Pungent heart convictions. It has not been an uncommon thing among holy women of God to hear them testify of how God convicted them through the Word (I Cor. 11) about cutting their hair; of how they were convicted of wearing apparel that pertained to a man; of how God dealt with and convicted them of the wearing of gold and pearls and costly array. It is a very common experience that people have abandoned their TV sets under the convicting power of the Holy Ghost; they have rid themselves of objectionable reading material; have ceased Sabbath desecration; have gotten rid of worldly music out of their homes. These matters and others have become heart convictions that have held them steady in the midst of a drift that has taken multitudes into the way of apostasy. There is not a double standard among true holiness people. Some will advance in spiritual life faster than others, but God's Word is the basis of all holy living and will set the standard for all who will read and heed.

When revival spirit subsides--when Holy Ghost life goes out of a church--there comes a dividing line between those who have been living by genuine heart convictions and those who have adopted the way of holiness for convenience' sake.

Two questions remain to be considered: First, why is it a constant battle to hold the line on Bible standards of holy living? The apparent answer--they were never, with many, heart convictions. These accepted the Bible based standards of the church only as a requirement of membership. If the pressure of keeping the standards of our church were lifted we would see a flood of TV's among these people; we would see a flood of women cutting their hair; we would see modest standards go down the drain. Why? No real heart convictions. The second question, what is the answer to maintaining standards? When the Holy Ghost comes in His saving and sanctifying power; when Jesus comes to live within, standards of holy living will become inwrought convictions of the soul. A holy life inwardly and outwardly will be lived in conformity to a holy God. Love will want it so; love will see that it is so; love for God and His holiness and likeness will be the obsession of the soul. Without a Holy Ghost revival in the soul there will not be genuine desire and convictions to live like God has instructed. Without the constant presence of the fire of the Holy Ghost within there will be no maintenance of standards. He, Christ, is His own standard bearer. With Him dwelling in the heart there will be manifest His Spirit of love and an outward conformity consistent with holiness and purity.

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May, 1981 Editorial  
HAS GOD EVER "TEMPTED" YOU?

"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham." Gen. 22:1 We understand that the word "tempt" in this verse means "to prove anyone, to put him to the test."

It would appear that God does not test very many souls. In the case concerning Abraham, God put him to a supreme test concerning his son Isaac. The test certainly revealed the nature of Abraham's love and loyalty to God.

Most people are knocked out before God ever has an opportunity to test them. This was so in Lot's case. Lot was knocked out before God Himself could test him-- Sodom knocked him out.

"And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom... even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt... and Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom... and Lot dwelt in Sodom."

Most people never get past houses and lands and people and self. Abraham got out there where God alone could put him to the test. He got there through a grueling process. God required four things of him before he got right down to testing what he really was in his heart.

The first thing God required of Abraham was to "get thee out of thy country" To place intrinsic value in this life only or in the things of this world can only end in eternal loss. People who put undue emphasis on materiality and value things, an earthly home and earthly associates, above their love for God and a right relationship to Him will sell their soul for a morsel of bread. We are closer to a real showdown on this than we would like to admit. The American dollar is soon to be phased out. The Head/Hand Scan Machines are ready to place a MARK on the body without which it will be impossible to buy or sell in the market places of this world. Some sources seem to indicate that the date has already been set to make the shift over to the "666 System." Minds are being conditioned now for the "sell out." Jesus said of His followers, "they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Carnal hearts who follow the world in their style of living will not be able to withstand the pressure that will soon be on. Abraham obeyed God in his relationship to this world. He did not pattern his life after the manner of his day but became a "tent dweller," "for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Abraham also passed the "family" test. This business of going with God is an individual matter that must be settled alone with God. No one can settle it for anyone else but himself. Many times family ties influence individuals away from absolute and unreserved loyalty to God, and God alone. When light comes to an individual it is for him to walk in. This means, many times, going cross current with other members of one's immediate family. When these end-day pressures get on, more and more members of families who have not sold out to go with God will sell each other out. Jesus said, "For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Matt. 10:35, 36. In the final judgment we will stand, not as family groups, but as individuals before God, the judge of all men. Far better to bear the cross now, whatever the price, rather than the loss in that day. Another test that Abraham passed was the "relative test." One of the requirements that God put on him was that he was to "get thee out from thy kindred." Not only to leave his immediate family but all blood ties. God had given Abraham four specific directives to follow--get thee out of thy country; and from thy kindred; and from thy father's house; unto a land I will shew thee. It was not until Abraham had obeyed in these four things that God began again to give him leadership. God means for us to obey Him completely if we are going to walk with Him, enjoy His fellowship and continue to enjoy His leadership. How many start out but do not continue to walk with God? They hold on to some "link" with the past. They cannot enjoy the full blessing of God because of this tie.

The fourth thing that God required of Abraham was the test of the "unknown." He was to go "unto a land that I will shew thee." Abraham passed this test. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." So many miss it here. They fail to die out to everything but

God's will and His will alone and so they live their life out of the will of God. Self must have something to say about it. They fail to "leave the unknown future in the Master's hands," and settle it to obey God. There can never be a resurrection into the perfect liberty of the sons of God until this step is taken. There can be no security in God or perfect rest of soul without passing this test. Call it what you will, it is a "death to self" route one must take. There is that carnal mind one is born with that does not and will not take this way. Man is free in his choices and he can take a stand against his own carnal self and stand with God on His side. When he does, victory comes, freedom comes and a new life in God.

Sooner or later God will test a person's love. He did Abraham's! Would he give up the son of his love, Isaac, for God? Where a person's love is centered determines who his God is. If his love is centered in himself or someone or something other than God he will sooner or later suffer tragic loss. I knew about a farmer who committed suicide when he lost a season's crops because of storms. His farm was his god and when it failed his god was wiped out. But the infinite God is eternal, immutable and sovereign, and to love Him with all one's heart and other things and persons in relationship to Him is the only wise, safe and enduring way. There can never be complete victory or rest of soul until we are dead to all self-love and tied to God.

Abraham passed all four tests in good shape and then God tested him for what he really was in his heart. It is possible for a person to pass all four tests and still not pass the real "heart" test. By sheer will power and determination with conviction, people have made an outward shift from following the worldly way of living and have lined up to Christian principles and standards; they have gotten a good case of head religion. They have done this in spite of family and relative pressure. Numbers have gone to foreign fields in service for the Master and failed in the end to pass God's real "heart" test. The self-life and self-love they failed to get rid of asserted itself and instead of being a blessing they have been a hindrance to Kingdom work and a cause of tension among those they labor with.

God tests us to strengthen and help us and to reveal our real heart love. Many fail in this heart test. Because of this they suffer eternal loss. Can you pass God's heart tests?

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#### June, 1981 Editorial SKILLFUL MOURNERS

People tend to become adept in the things they habitually practice. In Amos 5:16 we read of those who were "skillful of lamentation." Such were professional mourners hired to wail for the dead. I have met people whom I would classify as "professional mourners." No, they have not been hired by anyone as such, but they have become skillful at making great lamentation--mourning some loss or calamity that has come to them, always blaming someone or some thing or some providence for their apparent failures and defeats --people who carry an atmosphere of defeat with them.

I read in Pulpit Helps, "The joyful people are those who are generous and kind; the miserable people are those who are selfish and unforgiving.

"The problem solvers are those whose lives are powered by faith and optimism; the problem people are those whose lives are drained by doubt and pessimism.

"The winners are those who have learned to take full responsibility for their actions; the losers are those who have a handy excuse for their failures."

There are those who habitually lament their failures because of what people, the ones they have to associate with, said or did to them--always governed by people. If it is not people it is circumstances--if the economy hadn't been so bad they would have been rich. If it is not circumstances it is because of physical problems. In their lamentations they are overcome by worry, fear, anger, selfishness, inertia, nearsightedness.

Amos was speaking to those (5:8) who saw in the stars more than material fates. His hearers believed in astrology, prevalent in all ages from the very dawn of history, and which is so much in evidence today. Astrologers have blamed their fate or fortune on the relative positions and movements of the moon, sun and stars. They miss it! Mankind is exhorted in this passage of Amos to look beyond Pleiades and Orion to the God Who created and Who governs all things.

Our fortune in life is not to be accredited to "the sweet influences of Pleiades" or the doleful effect of Orion. Circumstances are not the result of chance nor the decree of blind fate, but are to be ascribed to Him "who made the seven stars and Orion," and to the Judge of all the earth, Who will do right.

This Divine revelation in Scripture affirms of God that He appoints the lot of each, and this with a view of the training of character, which far outweighs the pleasantness or the painfulness found in mere circumstances.

Adversity, for those who in the midst of it will prove themselves faithful and trustworthy, will appear by and by to be a stepping stone to character. On the other hand, prosperity will seem in retrospect of little worth to him who, through his thanklessness and prayerlessness, has failed to "lay hold on eternal life." Heredity and environment do determine the context into which our present lives are set. These two forces can destroy life at its first spiritual budding, but they do not need to.

Whatever influences surround us, let us for our own sakes recognize the overruling providence of God and return to Him our thanksgiving in place of lamentation and mourning. If we are prosperous let us recognize it is "the Lord who gives power to get wealth;" if we are in adversity let us not blame our "luck" on people, but seek comfort and help in Him "who maketh the seven stars and Orion." Away with lamentation and mourning. May we rather exercise skill in praising and worshipping Him that doeth all things well.

Lamentation and mourning! Yes, but every coin has two sides and in one respect it is proper and of inestimable value to be skillful in lamentation and mourning. To lament is to express outwardly sorrow and grief, and to lament over the wickedness of this day and with a burden for lost souls is a ministry so needed, but so scarce. We read in Ezekiel 9:4-6, the Lord "called to the

man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side... and said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary."

When the "marking" and the "slaying" had been accomplished, Ezekiel testified by saying, "and I was left." I wonder who among us would be left today if such were to take place? There is apparently not much weeping between the porch and the altar" these days.

Where are the sighers and cryers today? These are certainly the marks of true intercession--the one thing that is so desperately needed and yet is so scarce. This is the primary element in the ministry of the saints that is responsible for keeping the fires of revival burning, and that God uses to bring pungent conviction on the lost. Where are the intercessors? Why are they so scarce? How can this be, when our condition in these last days is so desperate! The ministry of intercessory prayer is taxing, it is demanding, it is time consuming. This push button, materialistic, Laodicean age has produced an ease loving people, a people too busy, too weary, too taken up with "things" and manmade programs to know much, if anything, about true intercession --what it means to sigh and cry for the evils of this age. Multitudes are not needed here. A few, even one, who can sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done in this day could bring revival to pass.

Would you, reader, be that one in your church--a skillful lamenter and mourner over lost humanity until salvation, revival, would be outpoured on those around you?

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July, 1981 Editorial  
"IN THESE THINGS I DELIGHT"

"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

"But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 9:23, 24

In the context in which these verses are found we have a prophecy of coming destruction. The chapter begins with the prophet weeping over the sins of his people. In the verses above we have set forth the only way of escape from coming destruction. A contrast is drawn between false security and genuine safety. There is also herein set forth a contrast between the wisdom of man and the wisdom of God.

There are three things, as pointed out in verse 23, that carnal men glory in--wisdom, strength, and riches. In one respect we could classify these as culture, technical skill, and economic plenty. Man is inclined to over-value his own possessions. The man who depends upon

his own wisdom thinks this is the one source of security--by this means he can outwit the enemy; the strong man leans on his strength (we are reminded, however, of Samson, the strong one who was weak under a woman's wiles and Goliath, who fell before the sling of the stripling, David); the rich man depends on his riches, (but again, we are reminded that riches may buy much but they cannot buy off sickness, disappointment, death, the punishment of sin).

There is a natural tendency in men to rejoice unduly in the good they derive by birth, or education, or the favor of providence. To do so, however, is the height of foolishness for these things are transient and offer no solid basis for security and either in this life or in eternity. Furthermore, whatever natural gifts belong to us, our own will has had nothing to do with our possession of them. Their development may be dependent on it, but in their origin they are not so and thus they leave man with no grounds for boasting in himself.

It can be truthfully said that nothing that tends to enrich and adorn and gladden our life in this world is to be despised; but if we measure things by a true standard, and esteem them according to their real and relative value, we shall place everything else that men call good and great beneath that which connects us directly with God and heaven and immortality.

All the "springs of our being" are in God. The real basis of wisdom and happiness lies in knowing God. This comes to an individual through the exercise of his own will and by the choices he makes. While the natural man turns to human wisdom, personal might, and material wealth, to delight in the things God delights in and to follow after these things is wisdom indeed. To glory is an instinct in man and is right where the object is worthy. The true ground of glorying for man is not his own wisdom, might, or riches, but in his understanding and knowledge of Jehovah God and in those things in which he delights.

In verse 24 we have revealed to us the three basic things in which God delights and in which He would also have us delight--lovingkindness, judgment, righteousness.

Lovingkindness. "Life" stands out in our mind as that that is valuable and precious, and if we wish to express our estimate of something that is all the world to us, we say it is "as dear as life is to us. In contrast with this, however, in Psalm 63:3 we read, "Thy lovingkindness is better than life." God's lovingkindness is better than life because His lovingkindness meets all the needs of life. There is a sense in which the lovingkindness of God is better than life in that it even reconciles us to the loss of life. Lovingkindness is independent of life; it is the cause of life. Lovingkindness is the redemption of life. It is the heaven of life. We sometimes speak of water as conveying to our minds an idea of that one element; but to vary it we speak of the ocean; and for limitation we speak of the Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, etc.; to limit ourselves still more we speak of the sea and then we name seas, the Mediterranean Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Red Sea, etc. On this same principle we speak of the lovingkindness of God. When God pities the miserable, we call it compassion-when He shows favor to the unworthy, we call it grace-when He exercises it in the way of pardon, we call it mercy when He fills His promises we call it faithfulness--still it is only lovingkindness. Surely the Psalmist was right when he said "thy lovingkindness is better than life." It makes up all the deficiencies of life; it alleviates life's sorrows; it adds blessedness to the blessings of life; it is immutable, it is everlasting love.

Is it no wonder that God delights in His lovingkindness and would have us also delight in the same and reflect this in our life above human wisdom, might and riches?

Judgment. By judgment we mean equity, fairness, impartiality. Essential to faith is the belief that God, the Judge of all the earth, shall do right (Gen. 18:25). Unless we can believe that God's dealings with us in this life and in death are right and just, we can neither love nor reverence Him. It is requisite to faith. We read in Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder to them that diligently seek him."

God delights in judgment and so does every soul whose heart has been made pure by the blood of the Lamb. How consoling it is for one who is right with God to rely on the equity of God, to delight in His fairness and impartiality. We read in Hebrews 10:30, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord." How willingly should we turn vengeance over to a God of judgment and let Him fight our battles for us. On the basis of God's fairness and impartiality we are instructed to do so. On the other hand, how fearful are the judgments of God to those who are out of harmony with Him.

Righteousness. This carries with it the thought of straightness, uprightness. When Paul preached to Felix and his wife, Drusilla, of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled. He was under condemnation by the truth Paul preached. Felix had not treated God right, he had not abandoned himself to God and His will-he was living in sin; he had not treated his neighbor right; he had not dispatched his responsibility to his own soul, and for this God would call him into judgment. Oh yes, reader, God will judge us according to righteousness--how we have treated God, how we have treated our neighbor, how we have treated ourselves, and all this in the light of God's revealed truth and according to the purpose for which we were created. No wonder Felix trembled.

We read in Psalm 119:137, "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments." Again in Psalm 97:2, "Clouds and darkness are round about him: righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." In Jeremiah 23:6 He is called, "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

"In these things I delight, saith the Lord." He delights in doing them Himself and in seeing them done by others. Lovingkindness, judgment and righteousness are the great triumvirate of the Word of God. On these an individual or nation can build securely. Without them the greatest and strongest are hopelessly weak.

God help us to delight in those things that God delights in!

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August, 1981 Editorial  
"LET BOTH GROW TOGETHER"

"The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

"But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

"But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

"So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

"He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

"But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

"Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." Matthew 13:24-30

Perhaps it would have been more appropriate to have titled this article, "Tares In The Wheat-field," or "Harvesting Out Of Season." We will leave it to the reader to decide. However, there are a number of truths presented in this parable that are applicable to our day and to us individually and collectively as holiness people.

In verse twenty-five we read, "But while men slept." How applicable this is to the Laodicean age of lukewarmness in which we live. When professors of religion are lukewarm and pastors are indolent --when the fire of the Holy Ghost burns low, genuine Christianity degenerates. It is then that the righteous and the carnal (degenerate or bastard wheat) are mingled together in the visible Church. There is in every church those who have an outward resemblance of good, whose hearts are not right with God.

Woe to those pastors who are not constantly in an all out effort to keep a revival atmosphere alive in their church. We are living in that age (Matt. 25:1-13) when, as the five wise and five foolish virgins, all are slumbering and sleeping. There was a third group, however, the ones who gave the midnight cry, "Behold the bridegroom cometh." May God increase that number who are alive and alert in this midnight hour.

Furthermore, this parable teaches us, as we have already inferred, that in the kingdom of heaven on earth (the visible church) there will exist side by side, genuine, Spirit-filled professors of religion and counterfeit, carnal, false (many times deceived) professors of holiness of heart. Adam Clarke states that, "It is in the interest of Satan to introduce hypocrites and wicked persons into religious societies, in order to discredit the work of God, and to favor his own designs."

How insistent we must be to warn people to dig to the bottom and not let Satan or their own carnal heart deceive them into professing something they do not possess. If we are not careful, our church membership will be loaded with carnal, spiritually deceived people and we will have more trouble on our hands than we can handle.

In the third place, we learn from this parable that our efforts in kingdom work, especially those of the ministry, are not to be taken up with an endeavor to separate the true from the false professors of religion. True, "every minister of God should separate from the Church of Christ every incorrigible sinner, yet he should proceed no further."

The picture that Jesus draws is that of root systems of the wheat and the darnel (a plant that looks so similar to wheat that in its stages of growth, it is hard to detect from genuine wheat) become so intertwined that to uproot one would also uproot the other. Adam Clarke stated, "Men often persecute a true Christian, while they intend to prosecute an impious person--'A zeal for the extirpation of heretics and wicked men,' said pious Papist, 'not regulated by these words of our blessed Saviour, allows no time for the one to grow strong in goodness, or the other to forsake their evil courses. They are of a spirit very opposite to His, who care not if they root up the wheat, provided they can but gather up the tares.' The zeal which leads persons to persecute others for religious opinions is not less a seed of the devil than a bad opinion itself is."

In the fourth place, the dealing with a situation that Jesus presents in this parable can be approached from one of two standpoints. It can be dealt with, first, from the standpoint of accusation--a frontal, open attack in an effort to separate, from human estimation, the genuine from the counterfeit. How many, at one time or another, have waded into a situation with great zeal and well meaning and in all sincerity, but without the needed prayer and divine wisdom and without being sure the gospel sword was dipped in the oil of the Spirit, and in the end succeeded in doing more damage than good. Wheat was destroyed in an effort to eliminate the darnel.

In the second place, a mixed situation can be dealt with from the standpoint of revelation, or the proclamation of truth, "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor. 2:4). This was Paul's method. His was a ministry of compassion, a ministry that was Biblical and uncompromising with the truth. He was willing, after a faithful proclamation of truth, to leave the results in the hands of the Holy Spirit. His (God's) "skillful hands" will heal where human hands will only hurt. With patience Paul allowed himself to be "shut up" to the workings of the Holy Spirit.

Finally, in the fifth place, the parable certainly teaches that we are to leave the task of separation to the God-appointed reapers.

May we in our humanity have wisdom enough to fulfill our task under God and leave to the Blessed, Faithful Holy Spirit, the part that is His in this great work of redemption.

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September, 1981 Editorial  
TRAINING FOR THE TASK

Conservative holiness finds its real key of survival in maintaining strong, spiritual, lively local congregations. If deep spirituality is not maintained at that level, it will not long be found in that particular fellowship of churches. Bible Colleges, Campmeetings, Conventions --as wonderful

and as influential as they may be--do not in themselves hold the key to the spiritual temperature of any group of God-fearing people.

The task of a local church--its pastor and people--is tremendous when it comes to this business of creating and maintaining deep spirituality. It has often been said--and it need oft be repeated lest we forget--that pastoral ministry is the heart of all ministry. It is the heaviest in responsibility and the most rewarding in its opportunities. Too often it is reduced to a "house keeping" proposition or just "babysitting" congregations in place of entering into and developing all the facets of obligation attached thereto.

This task of the local church is at least six-fold in its varied ministries of creating and maintaining true spirituality in its members.

The task of the Church is to create atmosphere -- singing in the Spirit, testifying in the Spirit, praying in the Spirit, preaching with the anointing of the Spirit! "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17). There was a heart hunger that possessed the early church. It was caused by an atmosphere created by the presence of the Holy Spirit manifest in and through its members -- people Spirit filled, who gave outward expression of inward possession. Here is one of the main keys to maintaining Him in the heart and bringing to pass His kingdom on earth. Serving God on cold principle -- decent but dead, with no gripping power -this is exactly what the devil likes. A Spirit-filled atmosphere freighted with glowing expressions of an abiding Comforter is that for which we must contend.

The task of the Church is to promote fellowship among its members and to welcome into its midst those who hunger for righteousness. There is no room in a Spirit-filled and Spirit-led people for exclusiveness, cliquishness or slowness to accept the new-born babes in Christ. There is a helpfulness in open-hearted fellowship that uplifts and inspires to godliness. The norm of a Spirit-filled church is Christian fellowship. We read in Acts 2:41, 42, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

The task of the Church is to expound God's Word. The importance of God's Word cannot be overstressed. We read in Psalm 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Again in verse 130, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." In verse eleven of the same Psalm we read, "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." In the New Testament, we read in Matthew 4:4 in connection with the temptation of Jesus, "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Matthew 24:35 speaks of the imperishableness of God's Word, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." We read of the power of God's Word in Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Paul testified, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16). Furthermore, the Word of God claims reflecting power as a mirror (James 1:22-25). In the Bible, we see ourselves as God sees us. The Bible claims cleansing power as water (Eph.

5:26. The Word of God claims reproductive power as seed (1 Peter 1:23). We are children of God because we have been born into the family of God by the incorruptible seed of God. The Word of God claims nourishing power as food (1 Peter 2:2). The Bible is spiritual food for the soul. It is no wonder that Paul exhorted Timothy to, "Preach the word" (2 Timothy 4:3). It is no wonder that the apostles, "ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ," the living Word of God.

Right doctrine and right practice can be maintained only as the Word of God is studied and expounded under the direction and anointing of the Holy Spirit, There needs to be a concentrated study of God's Word, comparing Scripture with Scripture, until there is a thorough understanding of the inter-relatedness of Scripture. This alone is the safeguard to protect from false teaching, false cults and "isms" of this day.

The task of the Church is to maintain discipline. Negatively, this includes the responsibility of the pastor in maintaining order and reverence in the house of God. Wisdom and common sense are needed here as well as confidence and respect for the pastor.

Positively, this includes the development of discipleship. Salvation and discipleship are not one and the same thing. When Jesus spoke of discipleship, he prefaced it with an "if." "If any man come after me." Discipleship is based on devotion to Jesus Christ. The potentiality of discipleship is by grace. By grace, one is enabled to perform all the will of God. This does not mean we are doing it but God has empowered us to become disciples. The great task of the church is to turn the potential into the actual.

The task of the Church is to fulfill the Great Commission. "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. 28:18-29

Christ gave this commission first to His disciples and through them to the church. The Church's mission is to "disciple" all nations--the whole church, every member, is under obligation. With the commission came the command to tarry--tarry until they were endued with power from on high. Their example should be ours. They tarried, consecrated themselves to this work. They understood that God's sanctifying grace was not only to cleanse them from the root of sin but to empower them to fulfill the Great Commission.

The task of the Church is to provide training for those called to carry on this great program of God. Those who are called to forsake all and give themselves to the work of the ministry need to be trained to carry out the multi-faceted work of the church. New converts need to be indoctrinated. Established Christians need a leader to keep the vision before them and to instruct them and inspire them to keep in the battle for souls and to promote the cause of evangelism. To meet this need, the Bible Missionary Church has provided a Bible College. Bible Missionary Institute is endeavoring to carry out the great assignment it has been entrusted with. We must produce a Spirit-filled, Spirit-anointed, and a Spirit-directed ministry.

God is helping us to fulfill the responsibility that lies heavy at our door, and we will continue to do this by the grace of God.

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October, 1981 Editorial  
WHY SO FEW?

It is a miracle that anyone is saved--a miracle of Divine grace. This miracle, however, involves the freedom of the human will. The disciples raised the question, "Are there few that be saved?" Luke 13:23 Jesus did not answer the question directly. He stated a fact, when He said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth into life, and few there be that find it." Matt. 7:13, 14. In place of giving a direct answer to this question He exhorted the disciples to be sure they did not miss it. He exhorted them to "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke 13:24

Let me testify. I do not consider myself an exceptional person--just one among the multitude of common, ordinary people. Yet I must admit that God has been fair with me. I will have to say with the song writer, "He stood at my heart's door 'mid sunshine and rain, and patiently waited an entrance to gain. What shame that so long He entreated in vain." God was faithful to my soul. I am glad I responded one day. I did so of my own volition, and He saved me. Had I never responded I could never have charged my loss to Him, but only to myself. The responsibility for the condition and destiny of my soul was mine alone--God, had done His part and I knew it.

When the king (In the parable of the marriage supper in Matt. 22) asked the question, "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a Wedding garment? He was. speech-, less. The plain inference here is that his unpreparedness was, solely his own responsibility, A wedding garment had been provided, but he did not avail himself of it.

"God is no respecter of persons," and if! can testify of God's faithfulness to me and that because of this the responsibility for the destiny of my soul will be forever mine, then, on the authority of God's word, based on His character, so can every member of Adam's race.

But if you feel, reader, this still does not adequately answer the question of "Why so few?" then let us take a look at what the Bible records about Jabez, found in I Chronicles 4:9, 10.

In the midst of the recording of genealogies the Holy Spirit passes over great men and men of renown, but stops at the name of Jabez. In the sight of men and measured by the standards of those days Jabez was worthless, insignificant and overshadowed with sorrow and poverty, He was born into a family who had lost their inheritance and were counted unworthy of a place in Israel. Evil ways had ruined family fortune, broken the mother's heart and brought disgrace on the entire household.

We are prone to look upon many people from every standpoint they can be viewed as practically damned even before they are born--souls born into a drunkard's home or to God-hating parents, or into an infidel's home or into an environment separated from all Godly instruction or atmosphere.

It is true that heredity and environment do determine the context into which our present life is set. These two forces can and usually do destroy life at its first spiritual budding; but they do not need to. In the case at hand the Holy Spirit takes us to Jabez' prayer chamber. Jabez is one of those persons whom we would be prone to consider as born without a chance--born to be damned. But God is a God of light, "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. John 1:9 This light--dim as it may. have been--caused Jabez to Cry out. He "cried" unto God; he put his heartache into words, "Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed.,' His cry was for a true blessing--some, thing that would meet his deepest need, "And God granted him that which he requested."

Oh, if man would call on God out of all sincerity when God--and it is God who does it--puts that impulse, that longing, that deep cry for reality into their hearts. Truly He is no respecter of persons. He will hear that cry and meet and satisfy the longings of that soul with His salvation. He will deliver from sin.

Joseph Stalin's daughter, Svetlana Alliluyeva, is a living illustration of God's universal faithfulness to every soul. Born in an atheist's home, she testifies to the fact that the reality of a living God cannot be obliterated from the conscience or consciousness of one raised apart from God's word and in a home where she was taught to be an atheist and a materialist. In the book, Svetlana, the Story of Stalin's Daughter, by Martin Ebon, on page 163, he quotes Svetlana as saying, "Since my childhood I have been taught communism, and I believed in it, as we all did, my generation .... I was brought up in a family where there was never any talk about God. But when I became a grown-up person, I found that it was impossible to exist without God in one's heart. I came to that conclusion myself, without anybody's help or preaching. But that was a great change, because, since that moment, the main dogmas of communism lost their significance for me." In another statement in her book, Twenty Letters to a Friend, page 72, she states, "I, who'd been taught from earliest childhood by society and my family to be an atheist and materialist, was already one of those who cannot live without God. I am glad that it is so."

Because God is no respecter of persons, because He is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, all men who do not heed that light will stand at God's judgment bar speechless and condemned.

Oh, the faithfulness of a loving God who will not leave Himself without witness to any soul. Reader, how have you treated this true and faithful God? You cannot deny His faithfulness to you. Oh what a price He paid to justify the ungodly. The salvation of every member of Adam's race now rests completely on their own shoulders. If you have not already responded to His overtures, do so before you are forced to stand before His throne of judgment.

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November, 1981 Editorial  
"MIGHTY IN SPIRIT"

"Try the spirits whether they are of God" (1 John 4:1).

There is a difference between living a life under the direction and control of The Spirit and living a professed Christian life merely in a cold, intellectual way. To be mighty in spirit is to have the ability to comprehend both the deeper thoughts of God and the hidden motives of men. This is the reason Christ's enemies hated Him--"he knew what was in man." To be mighty in spirit is to judge truth by the combination of God's Spirit bearing witness with our spirit in harmony with Scripture.

When God created man, He gave him a wonderful intellect with one limitation--he was not to use it to learn the details of evil. "I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple (harmless) concerning evil" (Rom. 16:19). Today there are those, posing to be great intellectuals, who are trying to defend their "right" to use their mind to study all the details of evil so that "ye shall be as god, knowing evil" (Gen. 3:5). These are they who are mighty in argumentations, in humanistic reasonings, in carnal maneuverings, in self-centered schemings and outwittings, in self-defendings and self-justifyings. But we read in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh, (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every,, thought to the obedience of Christ. We are not to argue with God, but to trust His wisdom, His providences, His judgments, for "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25).

God never intended that we should learn evil by experience or by probing into it in our thought life, but rather, with our spirit to detect evil by aid of the Spirit in order to keep a safe distance from it. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). Now the question comes, how are we to be mighty in Spirit? What does this mean?

With the help of The Spirit, we are to discern impure motives and flee from them. The sanctified are thrust at by subtle suggestions of the enemy from without and the unsanctified may experience the risings of wrong motives from within. Both certainly need the aid of The Spirit in this matter of discernment. God counsels in His word, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4:23). There are times a course of action may be chosen that seems proper and even reasonable, but at the same time is prompted by Satan or by a hidden and undetected motive that is not in harmony with the will or holiness of God. At this point, one may feel an unexplainable pressure and there is a tendency to blame others or blame circumstances when the pressure may actually be coming from The Spirit. He will not allow a person to take a course that is apart from God's will and injurious to the individual's best interests, or instigated from the wrong motive or from the subtle suggestion of the enemy of the soul. To be mighty in spirit is to live close enough to the great Spirit of God to be able to discern impure or self-centered motives that militate against the spiritual life of men. To turn away from those courses of action thus instigated and follow the impulses that come from a Holy God is the secret of continued victory and power.

To be mighty in Spirit is to detect desires that war against the soul. "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul," How faithful the Spirit is! We should be quick to detect the Spirit's promptings--that tender voice of the Blessed Holy Spirit of God, and learn to heed it. Eve got her attention on the forbidden fruit. There surely must have been that tender warning of The Spirit to her heart then, but she kept looking until an inordinate desire initiated by Satan's emissary, possessed her and she followed that desire instead of His voice. Being mighty in spirit would entail the work of The Spirit in us that would give us the power to detect those things, thoughts, or actions that would create desires in us that would war against our soul. How we should covet above all else the still small voice of the faithful Holy Spirit and be quick to detect His voice from that voice that comes from some other source. To be mighty in spirit is to detect His Spirit in the midst of other voices and be quick to respond to it and obey it. To overrun that first check of the Spirit is to lay the soul open to danger. We do this when we do not take time to feed our soul on His Word and in prayer and meditation. When we fail to nurture our soul in Him, we become careless in the finer, sensitive things of the Spirit-become coarse in our thoughts and then in our actions. It is at this point that desires arise that are human, materialistic and circumstantial.

To be mighty in Spirit is to determine to walk in God's ways. "And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deut. 10:12). In the camp of Israel, every individual had a particular and a specific place to fill and he could do no better than to fill that place. To be mighty in Spirit would certainly entail being in that place where God designed we should be and serve Him there with all our heart. To be mighty in spirit would be to live in that place of His choosing and to be aware in our inner soul that we are living in that place.

To be mighty in Spirit is to disdain deception. The Bible reveals to us that deception can come from many sources. A man's own heart can deceive him (Jet. 17:9; 1 John 1:8); others may deceive him (Psa. 43:1; Eph. 5:6; Col. 2:8; 2 Thess. 2:3; 1 John 3:7; Satan comes as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14) and is called a deceiver (Rev. 12:9); false Christs and false prophets shall arise and show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect; God, Himself, may send strong delusions (2 Thess. 2:11).

To be mighty in Spirit is to be a dweller in the light, to love light. To dwell in the light is to dwell with God--in a conscious obedience to His will and His ways. It means to dwell in the center of His will. To step aside from the known will of God is to step into spiritual darkness. It is in spiritual darkness that one can become deceived. God help us to be mighty in Spirit to where deception can readily be detected.

To be mighty in Spirit is to delight in God's providences. The Psalmist said, "I delight to do thy will, O God (Psa. 40:8). The Spirit, in so many ways, leads the willing and open-hearted into paths that bless, edify and mature his own soul and at the same time uses that one to bless and edify those he comes in contact with.

The providences of God may at times be puzzling to the individual. He may not know how to fit them into a pattern that at the time is recognizable. Things may happen to us that we cannot explain and may wonder about, but the mighty in spirit can know that he is pleasing God and one day will know all the reasons why. The mighty in Spirit are those faithful ones who do not abandon their faith in God in the midst of the storm. They can await God's time and God's way.

God help us to be MIGHTY in Spirit!

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December, 1981 Editorial  
THE INCARNATE WORD

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:31)

We have in this Scripture before us a truth that reaches from eternity to eternity. It includes the covenant between God the Father and God the Son made before the foundation of the world. It reaches beyond the bounds of time and extends on into the eternities to come. These words, The Son "upholds all things by the word of his power," include in their overtones, creation, incarnation (a babe born in a manger in Bethlehem), the crucifixion, resurrection and exaltation of Christ. Here we catch a glimpse of a pure bride emerging out of a sin-corrupted age and a wedding in the sky. These words contain in them the unfolding of the drama of the ages.

The word translated "upholding" in our King James Bible is a key word. It comes from the Greek word phero and carries with it in this passage before us the thought of "sustaining, guiding, propelling" all things. The thought of "upholding" is not that of a passive supporting of a burden (sort of an Atlas sustaining the dead weight of created matter), but of maintaining a plan that is constantly moving toward a preordained goal. This activity includes preserving the coherence of the universe and carrying forward its development. Paul speaks of this in Colossians 1:17 where he says, "by him all things consist" (maintain their coherence). Christ does this "by the word of his power." The oceans are held in their beds; the rivers run down into the sea; the heavenly bodies are held in their orbits. The function of maintaining this coherence implies the guidance and propulsion of all creation to a definite, prescribed end. The universe was brought into being by the Word of God (Heb. 11:31 and is sustained by the same Word.

We marvel at all of this, but the writer moves on to reveal even a greater miracle than creation when he says, "when he had by himself purged our sins." Thus, when the Son of God made purification of sins, He did so by Himself, acting upon Himself, offering Himself as the sacrifice for sin (Heb. 10:12) and for Himself, acting in His own interest. Herein is a revelation of Christ's Deity.

In the opening statements of the Book of Hebrews, the writer speaks of the Son as the creator, sustainer, and motivater of all things from the beginning who continues this all down through the ages of time. In His covenant relationship with The Father, it was His responsibility to

see to it that all things brought into being in the plan of God be conveyed on to an ultimate and proper conclusion. SIN entered the universe through Lucifer and caused a hiatus in the ongoing of a perfect universe. Later on--we know not how much later--SIN interposed itself into the race of humanity out of which Christ was to gain a pure bride. In carrying on the eternal purposes of God The Father to the desired end, The Son had to confront and deal with sin which had thrown the world into disorder and out of God's order. Christ, as a faithful Creator, must carry out the Father's plan to a successful end. He must keep true to the Covenant made with the Father. To accomplish this end necessitated Christ's becoming incarnate. By the cross, the Incarnate Christ dealt successfully with the SIN problem in the universe. He once and for all, by the sacrifice of Himself, "purged our sins" and is now "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Oh, what a marvel! Christ has proved Himself a "faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4:19). The stage has now been set for a final and successful completion of a plan instigated in the council chambers of the past eternities. That plan was to provide a pure, chaste bride for Christ.

Evil has successfully been dealt with. The devil, Satan the deceiver, has been given a death blow. He is forever a defeated foe. Christ will have a pure bride. His priesthood is now continual, effectual, cosmic and eternal. He, Christ, is now seated "on the right hand of the Majesty on high" carrying on His mediatorial work. He is now interceding to make available all the benefits to His trusting people. He is interceding for the sanctification of His own; He is interceding to preserve His people on earth; He is interceding to save His people to the uttermost; He is interceding for the final consummation and revelation of His eternal plan. No power in heaven or on earth or under the earth can set this aside. All glory to the Lamb that was slain!

No wonder Peter wrote, "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator" (1 Peter 4:9). No wonder the song writer wrote:

The Saviour has come in His mighty pow'r  
And spoken peace to my soul;  
And all of my life from that very hour  
I've yielded to His control.

From glory to glory He leads me on,  
From grace to grace ev'ry day;  
And brighter and brighter the glory dawns,  
While pressing my homeward way.

Oh--It is wonderful, It is marvelous and wonderful,  
What Jesus has done for this soul of mine!  
The half has never been told.

Reader, where do you stand in this eternal program of the Blessed Trinity? Your place in it depends on the exercise of your own free choice. Are you a part of the Bride of Christ? His eternal program includes the purging of every trace of sin from the universe. To be a part of the Bride, you must let Him purge sin out of your heart. In writing to the Corinthians, Paul stated, "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present

you as a chaste virgin to Christ." In the finale of it all, we read, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. 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" (Rev. 22:11-14).

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THE END