

Spiritual Call

A Continuance of "Macedonian Call"

*To be carnally minded is death, but to be
SPIRITUALLY minded is life and peace.*

—Romans 8:6

*Walk worthy of the vocation (calling)
wherewith ye are CALLED.*

—Ephesians 4:1

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"YOUTH PROBLEMS" - As Seen by a Woman Editor

"The Christian Visitor" is a monthly magazine of the conservative wing of the Christian Church, and is published in Texarkana, Ark.-Tex. In the October, 1947, issue there appears an article written by Mrs. Grace Reese Adkins, an editor, from which we take the following appeal for better living among Christians, and hence for greater happiness. This paper was sent to us by Bro. F. W. Roseberry of Iowa, and we invite all our readers to send similar articles that may come to their attention, which tend to make better Christians.—Editor, Spiritual Call.

According to our correspondent, what young people need most desperately is worthy leaders who will set standards for them from God's Word, by both precept and example. She further intimates that the problem is a difficult one by reason of the fact that the schools where ministers are trained reek with tobacco smoke, and the products of those schools have no standards of clean, separated living. She says, "We have as our pastor a cigarette fiend, dancing anti-prohibitionist." And she asks very pertinently how we can justify ourselves in condemning young people and at the same time pay a fancy salary to a cigarette fiend to lead the local church.

It is worth thinking about and doing something about. The place to begin is with our own concepts and ideas. We have become sloppy thinkers, influenced more than we would be willing to admit by the unchristian systems and philosophies of the hour. We have given unconscious assent to the idea that our religion consists of a beautiful example to be followed, and that anything more than that is unsafe and unsound and dangerous.

But if we will study the Scriptures, we will find there teaching regarding what is called the New Birth. In order to be saved, we must be born again. Jesus told Nicodemus. In natural generation, we inherit the nature of one or both parents. In regeneration, we receive the beginning of a new nature from God.

This is infinitely more than striving to follow Jesus' beautiful example. It is more than lifting ourselves by our own power of will and determination. In faith, self-surrender, and the obedience of faith, we actually establish a line of communication with God, so that His victory power flows through us. We have the mind of Christ. We have the Spirit of Christ. We become temples which God inhabits. We are no longer conformists to this world, but transformed, experiencing the power of Christ's resurrection. We are separated from the vain and trivial things of the world by this tremendous, transcendent thing which is our—God in us. We are able to demon-

strate God's will in victorious living. We are heirs to glory untold, and a little of its seeps down into the earth-sphere of our lives, and worlds more of it is awaiting us. Hallelujah!

Why don't more preachers preach this kind of Christian life and experience? Paul did. Any other brand isn't real, honest-to-goodness, New Testament Christianity. Read your New Testament and see. We talk about being Bible Christians. We had better measure up or "shut up." We are not fooling the sinner. He knows Calvary bought more than we are demonstrating. He is hungry for something real that has lifting power. But before we offer him anything, we are careful to analyze it by psychological standards, and reduce it to psychological formula. As a consequence we have nothing to offer which psychiatry cannot duplicate or improve upon, and we nullify the cross. What is the difference between doing that and crucifying the Son of God afresh?

We need to forget science and psychiatry. We have at our hand something immeasurably greater and more powerful than psychiatry. It is our privilege to be hid in Christ, with the mantle of His righteousness over us, making us secure. We can interpose the cross between ourselves and the destroyer, and all the legions of sin and darkness are unable to touch us.

They have no power when confronted with the power of Calvary. For there Christ met them for us; there He grappled with them until His human life was spent and our eternal life was gained.

We do too much struggling and striving when what we need to do is to hide behind the cross and let Christ be our victory. This, in antitype, is the meaning of the Sabbath rest. "There remaineth therefore the keeping of a Sabbath unto the people of God." Christ will keep us in the secret place of the Most High, if we are willing to be kept there. This is the life of Bible holiness. This is the separated, sanctified, Canaan life, where we cease from desert wanderings and dwell safely, and eat of the new corn of the land. This is purity and peace and victory. This is the "be ye transformed" level—living above ourselves, above our human limitations and our carnal desires and earthly strivings, because we are living in Christ. This is letting the life of the Vine be our life and our strength. This is the "mystery" of godliness. It is mystic—yes; and most of us are scared to death of anything bordering remotely on mysticism. But it is genuine New Testament Christianity, and anything short of this isn't.

Can't you see in this hid-in-Christ life the "company of priests, a holy nation," which the church was to be? It was to be a glorious church, the bride of Christ. As

a girl's heart turns from all other things to her lover, longing only for him, envisioning joy and peace and security only in the home which he will make for her, so the church longs only for Christ, and finds joy and the satisfaction of desire in Him alone. This is New Testament Christianity. This is the restoration of the New Testament church.

Can you find cigarette smoking and beer guzzling in this? I can't. Can you find a craze for the pleasures and excitements of this present world?

Back in the days of Nero, the world had gone mad. It was drunk with lust, and all decency and soberness seemed to have left the earth. Into this vile inferno came the early Christians, serene and victorious even in the face of persecution and death. The pagans viewed them with amazement. How could such a thing be? How could they live thus above fear, above greed and selfishness and passion? The Stoic philosophers advocated such a life, but could not produce it. But here it was being demonstrated before their eyes. They had sought happiness frantically, but had not found it. If they could only attain to what these Christians had!

Little by little, the cross won. The Roman empire decayed by reason of its own vice and rottenness. Barbarian conquerors swept down from the north. But on the plains of Italy they found not merely the loot of graceful villas. They found heralds of eternal life, proclaiming Christ crucified and risen again. Many of them accepted Him, and their rude barbarism was replaced by the refinements of regenerated living. The Romans also, as earthly allurements proved insecure and unsatisfying, chose the better portion which the Christians so impressively demonstrated.

We are living in another age of madness. Those who say it is worse than ancient Rome either exaggerate or have not read history. But it is bad. It makes promises it does not keep—as witness the mounting divorce rate. Youth wants something. It wants satisfaction of all its yearning for color and light and the music of the spheres. It has not changed. It wants to be able to do exploits, to make life beautiful and fruitful in worthy attainment. It wants what Christ alone can give. And it will pay a heroic price if it can only be assured of the reality of spiritual victory and spiritual living. Youth is asking for bread. What are we giving them?

"The Tongue"—What Is It?

James says, "It is an unruly evil, unless bridled, Jas. 1:25—full of deadly poison, Jas. 3:8." The same writer says, "But the tongue can no man tame." That is, by man's wisdom, even tho the horse and the great ships of the sea are turned or controlled by the inventions or wisdom of man; but not so is the tongue unless brought under subjection or controlled by the wisdom that is from above. It defileth the whole body. See verses 17, also 6.

Oh, how often do we see homes and communities, even the church of our Lord, suffer on account of uncontrolled tongues.

In Prov. 18:21, Solomon says, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue. So we understand the tongue is one of the greatest powers for good, if rightly used. On the other hand, if not properly used, may be the greatest source for evil. That our religion may not be in vain, let us not fail to bridle our tongues. Jas. 1:26. Yours for a pure church.—G. R. Blankenship.

Heal Hezekiah

A great spiritual benefit would accrue to the Church today if more of its leaders possessed some of the qualities of Hezekiah, the thirteenth ruler of Judah. This great man was acclaimed by the writer of old to be outstanding among the sovereign rulers of Judah. (II Kings 18:5). The same qualities which combined to make Hezekiah outstanding as a leader in those days are applicable today, and certainly the leaders in the kingdom of Christ would do well to reflect upon and emulate his sterling example.

His **trust in God** was undoubtedly the basis for his greatness. "He trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him."

In our day a great deal of effort is expended by Church leaders to inspire implicit trust in them. It goes without saying that Hezekiah's trust in God automatically inspired the confidence of his charges. He did not resort to glowing words, subterfuge, coercion, or other base means to attain the respect and esteem of his followers; he did it by example.

Steadfastness was another noble quality of this great king. "He clave to the Lord and departed not from following Him."

On every hand today Church leaders deviate from Scriptural pattern to concoct "expedient" doctrines to perpetuate their position and power. This, in turn, causes members of the flock to stray from the fold of safety either through disgust and lack of confidence in their leaders or through indifference, being "tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine." But Hezekiah departed not! His steadfastness must have been a real encouragement to members of his kingdom. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Hezekiah was full of **courage**. This is clearly demonstrated by the stern measures he adopted to reform the religion of his people as well as by his revolt from the Assyrian king. His work in purging and reopening the temple was so thorough that he spared not even the "high places." A still more decisive act was when he flouted tradition and sentiment to destroy the "brazen serpent" which had become an object of adoration.

These acts would be out of place among many of the Church leaders today, particularly those who carefully nourish and foster pleasing things to insure their popularity. Some of the evangelists are easily coerced into "soft peddling" their admonitions, while the elders sit idly by, pleased that their flocks have not been "disrupted." This saves the elders work and saves the evangelist from having his "endorsement" withdrawn and his stipend diminished. This type of situation is a far cry from Paul's injunction to Timothy: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

Hezekiah was **penitent**. At one point he failed to render "according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up." He wasted no time in clearing himself with God. The Chronicler tells us: "There was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem." Notwithstanding this, "Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem." In other words, he wanted to be right in the sight of God.

When many present-day leaders are found to be in error, they try to gloss it over, justify themselves through

specious reasoning, or develop an "expedient" doctrine to cover up. It is exceedingly doubtful that such conduct will escape the final judgment! It would be far safer to follow Hezekiah's example of penitence. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance."

Belief in **prayer** is found in Hezekiah's earnest calling upon God during his illness, and upon the reception of Sennacherib's blasphemous letter.

The attitude of prayer is fast becoming today a cold formality for use almost entirely at gatherings of Church members. Church leaders fail to encourage prayer, the result being that members are not in contact with their "mediator", causing them to grow indifferent to duty. A cold and God-less people can be the only fruit of shirking the duty of prayer. "Pray without ceasing."

Our Saviour's rules of leadership are not followed by most Church leaders today as faithfully as Hezekiah followed God's rules under the law of Moses. This indifference has caused endless confusion and strife. Christ enjoins that every Christian, including leaders, should "take heed" unto himself **FIRST**, thereby setting an example for others. Hezekiah took heed unto himself **FIRST** and set a fine example for his followers. More of that stature is needed today. Hail Hezekiah!

—E. L. Keesling

The Final Prayer Meeting

Prayer meetings today are pretty thin and few are in attendance. We believe that it is safe to estimate that over half of the churches have no midweek prayer meeting service. A pastor in a nearby suburb has recently stated that "the age of the prayer meeting is over." This pastor states that the age of pastoral calling is also over. If we enter his church on Wednesday evening we will discover that the age of the dance has come in. Dancing is popular while prayer meetings are not. God's professing people are becoming lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Another church nearby has not had a prayer meeting in it during the six years that we have known it, yet Wednesday evenings are taken up with dances for the young people, and the preacher presides at the piano.

While the prayer meeting is taboo in many a church and the attendance is thin at the surviving prayer meetings today, there will be a great multitude at the final prayer meeting. All who have treated the Lamb of God unworthily and persisted in it, will be present. Distinguished persons will be present. Those who live in high places usually have nothing to do with prayer meetings for they are above such things. They leave such meetings for the poor and the unlearned. But they cannot stay away from the last great prayer meeting. The Scripture makes express mention of those in attendance, "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains" (Revelation 6:15). And what constitutes their prayer? "And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Revelation 6:16-17). They cannot stay away from this prayer meeting!

—Grace and Truth

NO TIME

No time for God?

What fools we are to clutter up
Our lives with common things
And leave without heart's gate
The Lord of Life, and Life itself—God.

No time for God?

As soon to say, no time
To eat or sleep or love or die.
Take time for God
Or you shall dwarf your soul,
And when the Angel Death
Comes knocking at your door,
A poor misshapen thing you'll be
To step into eternity.

No time for God?

That day when sickness comes
Or trouble finds you out
And you cry out for God
Will He have time for you?

No time for God?

Some day you'll lay aside
This mortal self and make your way
To worlds unknown,
And when you meet Him face to face
Will He—should He
Have time for you?

—Trott

in 20th Century Christian

"Strangers and Pilgrims"

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."—1 Peter 2:11

We, who have obeyed the gospel of Christ, are not living in a permanent abode but are only strangers on this earth, and seek a home in that heavenly kingdom which Christ has promised to all those who love and serve him. Our citizenship is in heaven, we should renounce the pleasures of this world and use our time talents in making that heavenly home a certainty.

The world all about us is seeking for pleasure. Picture shows, dancing, card playing, drinking, smoking, and the numerous other evils of the age, seem to occupy the people of the world. Is your life and mine such that those of the world can see but little difference between themselves and us? If they cannot, then we cannot be classed with those who are followers of Christ. Christians are a separate people.

Any of the things of this world that tend to take our minds and hearts away from Christ and his service, are to be classed as fleshly lusts that war against the soul. Yes, against your soul and my soul, if we indulge in fleshly lusts. We should endeavor to keep our minds on things above and not on things of the earth.

"Love not the world neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world, and the world passeth away and the lusts thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Let us spend more time in the study of God's word and

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then be obedient unto it. That word will judge us in the last day.

But the word of man will have no weight whatsoever, but the word of God will abide forever. Let us pray that we all may put our trust in that word and be found faithful unto the end.—C. D. McCay.

A Solemn Warning

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy, and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Col. 2:8.

In this declaration of the apostle Paul, we have one of the most striking, carefully designed and piercing statements in the New Testament. "Beware lest any man spoil you," we talk about a child being spoiled. The word means, to ruin or injure by over indulgence. Now, let us see what about the grown people, are they not also like the child, easy spoiled? The child is helpless, but we are not. "And ye fathers provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." But we are instructed to let no man ruin, or injure by over indulgence, our usefulness in the church. Christ will not spoil us and in the next verse he says, "For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in Him." It is surprising how many people in the church of Christ have been spoiled much like the child. Why is it that our work in the church must be according to the tradition of men as near as possible?

Many years ago, some cried, we don't have enough preaching and today we hear the same cry. The idea seems to be, as one expressed it, we can't do much ourselves, we need a preacher, someone that is trained and skilled and he must have a good personality, good appearance, speak well, capable of drawing a crowd, etc. Brethren are you sure you haven't been spoiled a little bit, when you demand the best to preach for you, or more preaching? Instead of less preaching, more action, less appointing of elders and more qualified ones, more discipline, less receiving as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. After all, is not Christ and Him crucified what we want, and if indeed we have not been spoiled, isn't it truth that counts? The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, Rom. 1:16 and "my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom but in demonstration of the spirit and of power." Why, Paul, "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God," I Cor. 2:4, 5; brethren, where is our faith? Does the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom.

•Beware, lest any man spoil you.—H. L. Carlton.

Great Masses of People Don't Think for Themselves

In the Reader's Digest for January is an interesting article on "The Strange Case of the Taft-Hartley Law." Soon after the bill was passed a poll was taken to see the attitude of labor toward it, and found that about 50 per cent of the workers were against it. Then the agency took the most discussed features of the law, without telling the workers where the features were found, and took a poll, and about 75 per cent of the workers were in favor of those features. The conclusion reached was that the workers were in favor of the law and did not know it. Tracing that strange circumstance back, the final conclusion to be reached must be: The workers were influenced against the law by the labor leaders who told them it was a bad law, and the workers simply did what they were told to do.

The same startling thing is true in religion—the great masses do not think for themselves but take the word of some man or men. For instance, there are some leaders who have said concerning discipline in the Church, that a man can not scripturally leave a corrupt church, or a church with a corrupt eldership, unless he brings charges against it or against that eldership. Many have taken that as gospel truth, just as if the Scriptures plainly said so. **But there is not the slightest intimation in the Book that such is the case.** If so, where is it? No one has given it.

Some have quoted I Tim. 5:19, which says, "Against an elder receive not an accusation except before two or three witnesses." But this says NOT AT ALL that one MUST bring charges against elders. Paul is talking of the NUMBER of witnesses when charges are brought against elders, and NOT about the NECESSITY of bringing charges. When a church is corrupt, or the eldership is corrupt, and one can not do anything, Paul says, "From such turn away." 2 Tim. 3:4. He says nothing about bringing charges against any one. "From such withdraw thyself." 1 Tim. 6:5. "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses **contrary to the doctrine ye have learned, and AVOID THEM.**" This doctrine that one can not withdraw from a corrupt church unless he brings charges against it, is an offense "contrary to the doctrine ye have learned." When a modern Diotrefes obtains control of a church, and has many in the church standing with him, through fear or flattery or ignorance, and you can't do anything, "from such turn away," "from such withdraw thyself," "avoid them."

Another man-made law which many accept is this: "You MUST honor the discipline of a sister church." That sounds all right, but if the elders in passion throw people out of the church, MUST you accept their decision? I know of such cases. Apostle John rejected the discipline of Diotrefes. If the elders of a church discipline a man because he opposes their introduction of instrumental music into the church, MUST you accept their decision? You must change such a law, and make it read something like this: "You must honor the discipline of a sister church UNLESS upon investigation, you find that it is not according to the Word of God." And a church should be sufficiently interested in prominent cases that it WILL investigate to learn the TRUTH.

These new laws are very much like the other new one (rather it is an old one and originated on the Tiber): "Opposition to the authority of the elders is opposition to the Lord." That puts it all in the AUTHORITY and

not the scripturalness of the work and teaching of the elders. Opposition to the authority of SCRIPTURAL elders is opposition to the Lord, is a scriptural doctrine; but the two propositions are as far apart as the North and South poles, as far apart as the Church of Rome and the Church of God of the New Testament. "We ought to obey God rather than men."

Brethren, are you dumb, driven cattle, or are you free-men in Christ Jesus who are following HIS law and NOT man's?

Loving This Present World

For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world. 2 Tim 4:10.

What sadness it must have brought to the heart of Paul, to pen the sad words, Demas hath forsaken me, especially since he had just a few months before been a close companion and co-laborer with the great Apostle. Col. 4:14.

Again he writes, That all they which are in Asia be turned away from me. 2 Tim. 1:15. Paul charged Timothy to hold the faith and a good conscience, some failing to do this had made shipwreck. 1 Tim. 1:19.

Many of Christ's Disciples turned away from him, walked no more with him, because they did not like his teaching. Jno. 6:66. Jesus said unto the twelve, Will you also go away? Peter answering the question, "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." We as disciples must follow Peter's example here, the only safe position. Jesus warns us to remember Lot's wife. Lk. 17:22. Who looked back and lost the race to safety. Jesus said, No man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God. Lk. 9:62. Paul, Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. 1 Cor. 11:1. And he said, I therefore so run, not as uncertainty; So fight I, not as one that beateth the air; But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. 1 Cor. 9:26, 27.

But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Phil 3:13, 14. Paul did not let worldly enticements, nor fleshly ties step in his way; his surrender to Christ for whom he suffered all things was unconditional. He knew whom he had believed and was persuaded that Christ was able to keep what he had committed unto him against that day. 1 Tim. 1:12.

Demas permitted the world (his love for its pleasures) to shipwreck his faith, became the enemy of God. **How Sad.** Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him. 1 John 3:15. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. James 4:4.

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They are again intangled therein, and overcome. The latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it has happened unto them according to the true proverb. The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. 11 Pet. 2:20, 22.

Demas once on the life boat sailing to eternal glory, but

forfeited his inheritance for a mass of worldly pottage. He did not only turn away from Paul one of the greatest preachers that ever trod the earth, but from the Lord Jesus Christ who loved him and gave his life for him. Heb. 2:9, 10. 11 Cor. 5:15. Heb. 5:9. How sad, how terrible the thought. Paul and Demas are not yet separated forever, they will meet once more at the judgment bar of God to hear proclaimed the final decision of their case. Each one will be consigned to the place for which he prepared himself. Demas on the left hand (wrong side) will hear that sad and final denunciation, depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angles. Mat. 25:41.

Paul, at his right hand (right side) will hear the welcome applaud, come you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Mat. 25:34. Why the contrast in the destinies of these two men? Paul's feet were planted in the mountain of the Lord, on the rock of eternal ages. His faith was unwavering. Hunger, cold, nakedness, forsaken by brethren, or even death, could not daunt or shatter his faith in the Son of God. After being made a pattern (example) of suffering for Christ through many toilsome and weary years warning people day and night with tears; laboring with his own hands to support himself and others in proclaiming Gods message to the lost, when conscious of the fact that the time of his departure (execution) was at hand, he could exclaim in the full triumph of a living faith, I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. 11 Tim. 4:6, 8. Paul was faithful unto death and won the prize. Rev. 2:10. Demas flirted with the world, lost the crown and access to the tree of life. Brethren, let us beware. In the language of J. D. Taut, "Brethren we are drifting."—J. D. Powers.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM and COMMUNISM

It is a very potent question to ask whether Rome is a factor for peace or war; whether she will stand up to Russia or work out a way of living with Russia.

When I talked with Pope Pius XII in the Vatican chambers I asked him whether Christianity and Communism are absolutely irreconcilable. "Absolutely irreconcilable," he replied.

Rome is the implacable foe of Communism, but if necessary will co-operate to gain temporary ends. In such a way the Center Party co-operated with the Nazis under Von Papen in 1933 to put Hitler in power. Now Rome is moving into the German vacuum with Catholic ideology and policies. Roman Catholic relief is administered; Roman Catholic education advanced; Roman Catholic church structures repaired.

The support of America to this program is gained through the strategy of having Myron C. Taylor at the Vatican. For example, **all American relief to Italy was marked "Vatican City," because it was shipped through Taylor, and most Italians considered that American relief came from the Catholics.**—Moody Monthly.

Church News

WHILE IN THE EAST recently, I visited Gilbert O. Nations, some miles out of Washington, D. C. Bro. Nations is about 80 years old, was a teacher in an eastern college for years, and knows the machinations of the Roman hierarchy and their history per-

haps as much as anyone in the U. S. A., and has written much against that political machine. He has been so situated that he has had nothing but the Christian Church to work with, and is tolerated in teaching a Bible class in that group, but thinks he may be cast out of that, for teaching the truth. His face is toward Jerusalem, and he is working to take as many with him as he can. I know many in Jerusalem who have their faces toward Babylon and its centralization of influence and power. It is not altogether WHERE you are which counts, but WHICH DIRECTION you are headed. In the future we may make some quotation from Bro. Nation's writing.

AN EXPLANATION—About five years ago, a young preacher from W. Va., came back home after a few weeks at a "Bible Reading" where preachers are manufactured in short order, and enthusiastically entered the work of trying to "purify" the Church by getting rid of his old uncle as elder who had been largely responsible for the establishing and maintaining of the congregation. The writer was called to hear charges, and found there was more conceit than humility in the young man, more zeal than knowledge, for the charges were flimsy. However, Bro. E. L. Keesling and Paul Mackoy were deceived by the young man, and that broke fellowship between the writer and them. But in the past year or two these two brethren have discovered that they had been deceived, and have turned against the young preacher, thus restoring the broken fellowship. One of them writes: "The H— case turned out to be a sour apple because of his lies, deception, and other devilousness which he attributes to— (naming the "Bible" Teacher's) teachings, in that— (this same teacher), urges and encourages the deception advocated by Dale Carnegie"—(who wrote the popular book, "How to Win Friends and Influence People). It was at that time that the publisher of this paper began to doubt more strongly than ever before, the scripturalness of having special Bible training for preachers. Not one word is said in the New Testament about the training of "preachers", but there is about developing "teachers". See II Tim. 2:2—"Commit to faithful men, who shall be able to TEACH others also." Is this not responsible, in part at least, for much confusion in the churches? Brethren would better wake up.

RECENTLY visited the little group of faithful disciples in New Castle, Ind. Bro. H. L. Carlton of Illinois was present and encouraged the group, along with others, to the higher and better life. They are happy in the work of the Lord, and rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer for the Word of God. Bro. Carlton tells of interest in his community in the cottage Bible studies on Lord's Day nights. We have always advocated such, for they reach people that "protracted meetings" often do not, and besides, it is hard to get people out to church houses in these days of indifference.—D. A. Sommer.

WHAT SOME PEOPLE THINK

I have enjoyed your paper very much during the past year, and feel you are doing a wonderful job. It has been a great help and strength to me, and I know to others. I would like to extend you and yours a personal invitation to visit us at any time possible, and pray that we will all be strengthened for greater work and effort in the future.—Missouri . . . We like your paper very much.—Missouri . . . I enjoy reading your paper.—Oklahoma (He sends a good sized check) . . . Enclosed find \$5 for one year's subscription. I don't wish to miss any copies.—Texas . . . Another disciple gives \$10 to put out "Bulletins", and still another sends \$25 to help in the work. . . . I received the December S. C., and I appreciate the teaching and the spirit more than ever.—Colorado . . . "The Old Paths Advocate", published in Lebanon, Mo., reprints our article in "The Signs of the Times on the Second Coming of Christ," and adds this question, "Does Bro. Sommer have something here?" . . . Enclosed is \$1.25 for my subscription to the Spiritual Call. I really enjoy reading your paper. Keep up the fight of faith once for all delivered to the saints. If God be for us who can be against us? (He belongs to a congregation whose elders told their members not to write to the editor of this paper, and it's all because we rebuke their sins.) . . . Please send the Spiritual Call to the following five names.—Penna. (He encloses five dollars.) . . . Keep up the good work. There are only a few who will not branch out into the broad way. The truth will prevail. Yours for the truth.—Missouri. I received the S. C. yesterday and will say it is the best yet—certainly made it clear that justice was not the purpose of that "swoop" meeting. And right

here I am reminded of what the last words of David were, "The rock of Israel spake to me; he that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. II Sam. 23:3.—Elder . . . Proverbs 3:27—Withhold not good from them to whom it is due when it is within the power of thy hand to do it." As long as circumstances are with me as they are, I will send a dollar a month to help the paper. I think it will do a good work. The December issue is very good."—Indiana. (We have extra copies—send for them; they are free) . . . We enjoy the S. C. very much and don't want to miss it. I know you have had a hard fight and are still having it. I know you can see some things that many others do not see because their eyes are blinded by a veil of self-exaltation, vanity, pride or some other form of deceitfulness, of which there are many different varieties. I can see several things now that I was unable to see when I first came into the church. I believe I can recognize the symptoms too, sooner than some, because I have seen about all forms of disease at work before I first came into the true church. I often read after you and note that you too believe that human nature is about the same wherever you find it, I too have come to the conclusion that too many are not born again. Maybe we do not put enough emphasis on the birth of the Spirit. Too many seem to think if they obey the gospel in baptism, that is all that is required. Paul says, obedience from the heart, is what makes us free from sin. Rom. 6:17. Begotten by the gospel. I Cor. 4:15. Without a conceiving there can be no birth—no deliverance. It wasn't my intention to preach a sermon. So I will close wishing for you and yours, every blessing in 1948.—Iowa business man. . . . I am enclosing check for \$16.25, the dollar and a quarter for my subscription, and the rest for you to use as you see fit.—Missouri. . . . We certainly are enjoying the Spiritual Call. Enclosed check for \$32 for Spiritual Call, subs new and old. Any money left above this, is for you to keep to use as needed for the good work you are doing.—Missouri (That extra amounts to about \$24. This will help us send the paper to many new subs which we are taking on. The SPIRITUAL CALL is now a real missionary paper such as you have called for, for years. Let's convert the "Christians" as well as the "sinners".) . . . Your little paper is certainly worth while. Today we are beset with looseness of character and irreverence of God's Holy Word, and the knowledge that helps is not sought. Hosea 4:6. Please look it up. So I would say, Bro. Sommer, continue in spreading the truth, God's Word. John. 17:17. And the Lord will bless you."—Illinois. (She sends a list of names.) . . . Enclosed you will find \$10. Set me up a couple of years on your list, and use the rest to carry on your work. Any information you see fit to send me will be appreciated.—Missouri. (Well, here is a man who wishes to learn the truth about those who are using their "AUTHORITY" which the Lord never gave them, to push forward their unscriptural practices and teaching. Other brethren need to help us counteract the error running rampant.) . . . May God guide you in all of your work.—Missouri . . . I enclose money order for \$10, and trust it will help some in the spread of the gospel.—Calif. . . . Enclosed find \$20 for the work of the Lord.—Missouri . . . You are quite right in thinking I wish to know the full truth. How else can one judge who are true followers of the Master. Truly men are the chosen vessels by which God has ever made known His will, but not all are content to give Him all the glory; and when that happens serious trouble enters to divide those who should be bound by the Oneness which is so necessary in the growth of the Church. When I can't find a "Thus saith the Lord," for any practice or doctrine, I know it is wrong. I turn often to Galatians 5:18-26. It is a guide to all things Christians must not do and all the things that are right. What a grand thing if all would follow this advice! We will live in the hope that Right will triumph in this great trouble which has arisen, and those in the wrong will acknowledge their fault.—Illinois. . . . 10 Simplified Testaments to Milton Malone, Ind. He has ordered them before, and knows a good thing when he sees it!!! Do you? . . . We are sending \$5 for our renewal and another Sister's. On account of poor health and high cost of everything we are not able to do more now but will try and send names later. We have been suffering as you have, for we have objected to the annual conference. (Mass meetings) we believe led up to the Missionary Society. One writer has written a lengthy article, entitled, "Drifting in America". Some have termed it a one man Missionary Society to the discredit, if not the actual division of the Church our dear Lord died to establish. We hope the scribble of said article means all he has written as an honest confession and will with others equally guilty, go all the way back to Jerusalem, leaving off all BIG annual meetings whether for old or young, for we do not read anything about them in the word of God. We believe the Lord would be pleased and a greater effort could be put forth to help all the weak places, which would be real mission work.—Oregon.

Notes For Christians

THE CRINGING COWARD

"Who sees a wrong and hesitates to speak,
Because he knows that he will be reviled,
Is either touched by greed, or coward weak,
Or aimless as an undeveloped child."

The moral and religious indifference and cowardice of this age is appalling and saddening. In civil and social affairs few are willing to stand for what they know they ought to stand for. They fear the taunts or condemnation of the people. Even evils in the Church are winked at because of a lack of faith to oppose. Right now many will privately speak about evils arising among us, yet would not bear any persecution to stand against them. But the Book teaches that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." And again, "If any man draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Many professed Christians today are evidently not going to receive the smile of God in the Last Day. How saddening!

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY ALONE WILL NOT SAVE US—But many people seem to think it will. And so they are ever busy doing something, whether it is what God has commanded or not. One brother remarked that some denominations think they are not doing anything unless they have ice cream cans in front of their meeting house. Some in the "Church of Christ" think nothing is being done unless there is some kind of a group meeting. Quiet meditation and prayer in the home gives one the fire from above and it is the kind which God approves. Noah and Enoch walked with God, and that is what is needed today.

Some "Christians" talk FOR Christ but not TO him,
Some walk FOR him, but not WITH him.

SEEKING THE TRUTH—I have been in touch with a man and his wife who are connected with a "Holiness" group. They seem interested in the truth. I have sent them Christian literature which they say has helped them, and they are now attending a "Church of Christ." I recently received the following letter from them: "We have received and read the gospel papers you were so kind to send us. We thoroughly enjoyed all of it. We have also been studying the book (Church of Christ) you sent, which seems to help so much. We have been attending the Church of Christ in —, and enjoyed it very much, but of course as you may know it is surely a contrast to the church we have been attending. We believe in the plan of salvation as the Church of Christ teaches it, as being nearer that set down in the New Testament than any other. But because of the fact that the church we have been attending has such strict teachings concerning one's dress and other things, which aren't easily gotten out of one's mind, **we are having a struggle**; but hope to learn the way most pleasing to our Lord. We are thanking you for your help and interest in our souls, and our prayer is we may learn his will. We beg an interest in your prayers always.—****"

Now concerning dress, I have always taught that we can not dress just like they did in the apostles' day, but we must take the spirit of the language just as we must

take the spirit of the command, Obey the king, which means rulers. **MODESTY** is the lesson I get from the N. T.,—modesty in the age and country we live, as that is generally considered. We can not wear veils as they did, and still do, in some countries. But—and I say it with shame,—many members of the "Church of Christ" have their faces painted till they look hideous, or at least very unnatural; have their nails painted in an outlandish way; adorn themselves with silver and gold, and (nowadays) a lot of cheap trinkets like the barbarians, contrary to plain scriptures; have hair-dos which attract attention wherever they go, because of the excessive style; wear indecently short dresses, above the knees, when it is the style, and indecently long dresses when the style changes to another extreme: etc., etc. No, dear disciples, be sure not to "struggle" against conscience or the Word of God. Yet, one must remember that some things are personal matters, and no one is perfect just as no church is perfect. However, I am ashamed that many preachers of the "Church of Christ", do not preach against such personal evils because they think it would offend, though they themselves know it is wrong. Paul says, "I am free from the blood of all men, FOR I shunned not to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." Which shows that such preachers are going to have something to explain when they come to the Judgment. Women can wear good clothes which are still modest, and be in harmony with the Word of God and all right thinking people. Oddity of dress will do harm as well as lack of modesty. I hate to see any religious group which is closer to the truth on dress or anything else, than what we call "the Church of Christ", but such is the case in some respects. If Paul had to warn the brethren at Ephesus night and day with tears, to keep them from drifting away, surely we have to do the same today. And there has surely been a neglect of this fear, for many churches of Christ have already deviated in a number of very important respects, and the end is not yet. Let us all watch and pray.

OUTWARD SHOW OF SUCCESS.—Jimmie Lovell, editor and publisher of West Coast Christian, who does much to push the Bible Colleges, writes of a visit back to his home in Tennessee, and of the great crowds which attend the churches there, etc. Then he adds a strong note of warning in Gospel Broadcast:

"As I say, I found the churches filled with people listening to the same sort of preaching and engaging in the same sort of worship, yet the sorrow which touched my heart was **the church politics which I found outcropping all too often. Men in high places scheming, planning, pulling wires for station and position.** I found one of our old familiar failures—**letter writing**—still at large and then **the betrayal of the writer by the received.** I found accusations made of men who declared their innocence. Real issues were mostly sidetracked by substituting a very familiar football which normally is all it takes to crimp the style of any brother among us today. Oh, how I longed to go back home and remain forever—my home and my people—however. I hate anything having to do with politics and pressure in the Lord's work and from that standpoint I was happy to get back in the west where our shortcomings are of a different kind." Is not this "politics" in religion largely a result of the clergy built up by the theological school, just as it was in the Second Century? Brethren, we must get back to the Humility and Life in general of the First Century, or we are doomed.

What Elders Should and Should Not Be

The independence of congregations from all outside authority in the matter of **selecting a preacher**, hour of worship, and procedure while assembled, must never be taken from them. The moment it is, an ecclesiasticism is set up, and a "diocesan" government established. Thus popery began. Thus denominationalism was established. Recognition of outside authority does away with all independence, and puts some one in a position greater than any other than the Lord has a right to occupy. The eldership in a properly functioning congregation, is the highest earthly authority in the church. Their authority is limited by specific demand of the scripture, and **they are forbidden to "lord it over God's heritage."** When an eldership becomes so autocratic that they take over and assume the right to "dictate" in all matters regardless of the wishes of the congregation over whom they have been appointed to serve, they thereby forfeit their right to claim authority at all. They have no right to demand anything of a member other than what scripture demands of that member. They should exhort and plead with those in error, and if that errorist refuse to heed the admonition, the whole church should be told of it. Then when the whole church had made an effort and failed, the whole church is required to "let him be unto thee as a heathen man, and a publican."

The authority of elders is such that one can readily see why he **MUST** be "apt to teach." The elder who doesn't know what is right, is a sorry person to send to a man in need of instruction. There are many women in most churches who are better qualified in this one respect than some of the men who have been raised up and made elders in name only. How glad I am that the men of the congregations are fast learning these important truths. Very rarely do we see in the eldership a man with a dictatorial attitude, or "bossy" disposition. **Every such one should be disposed of right away.** Such are never a help, but always a hindrance to development and growth. They are not fit examples, not capable advisors, not able to judge between brethren without prejudice when a difference arises, and their work fails to do good. The faithful and qualified elder is a "thing of beauty and a joy forever." What a joy and satisfaction it is to meet with and be advised and counseled by them. Every young preacher should count himself fortunate indeed if he is in a position to have the confidence and backing of a well known and capable eldership.—Rue Porter in Christian Worker.

Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer,
Trials bring me to His feet,
Lay me low and keep me there.

WESLEY'S COW SERMON

One day John Wesley was walking with a troubled man who expressed his doubt as to the goodness of God. He said, "I do not know what I shall do with all this worry and trouble." At that moment Wesley saw a cow looking over a stone wall. "Do you know," asked Wesley, "why that cow is looking over the wall?" "No," said the man who was worried. Wesley said, "The cow is looking over the wall because she cannot see through it. That is what you must do with your wall of trouble—look over it and above it." Faith enables us to get above circumstances and look to Christ who is over all, blessed forever.—Wonderful Word.

Convict the Sinner First

A Hoosier friend of mine and a brother in Christ once mildly criticized me about "giving the invitation." He said he thought it a good idea if I would always mention the terms of salvation in giving the invitation. I thanked him and promised to give it consideration.

I did more. I investigated the New Testament scriptures. I learned that during the personal ministry of our Lord and before the Old Testament authority was removed, two men, the rich young ruler (Matt. 19:16) and a "certain lawyer" (Luke 10:25), said, "Teacher, what shall I do to (have) inherit eternal life?" Then, in Acts, after the gospel went into effect, I found that this question was asked on three occasions, Acts 2:37, 16:30, and 22:10. But I discovered a fact that I had not seen before and a fact my critic had evidently overlooked.

Well, after some time had passed, my friend again brought up the question. He had noticed I had not adopted his suggestion. This time he was very emphatic about it and said in substance: "I think you are doing wrong in not always naming the conditions of salvation before closing your sermon." That was putting it rather strongly, so I told him what I had discovered and he had overlooked. I said, "Brother, that information was given twice during the Lord's life on the earth under the Law and three times by the apostles in the Gospel age, as recorded in Acts. But here is a fact I discovered, namely, that in no case was the information given until it was **REQUESTED by sinners.**"

The important job for the preacher to do is to get the sinner to the point where he **WANTS to know** and is **willing to do the required things**, and he will certainly ask for the information. One may tell the terms of pardon to advantage at times before closing a sermon, but to say one must always do it or be guilty of wrongdoing is something the Bible does not support.—C. A. Vincent in Christian Leader.

Thy Will Be Done

Laid on thy altar, my Lord, divine,
Accept my gift this day, for Jesus' sake.
I have no jewels to adorn thy shrine,
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make;
But here I bring within my trembling hand
This will of mine, a thing that seemeth small,
And only thou, dear Lord, canst understand
How, when I yield Thee this, I yield Thee all.

Hidden therein thy searching eye can see
Struggles of passion, visions of delight—
All that I love, or am, or fain would be,
Deep loves, fond hopes and longing infinite.
It has been wet with tears and dimmed with sighs,
Clinched in my grasp till beauty it had none;
Now from thy footstool where it vanquished lies,
The prayer ascendeth, may **thy will be done.**

Take it, O Father, e'er my courage fail,
And merge it so in thine own will that, e'en
If in some desperate hour my cries prevail
And thou give back my gift, it may have been
So changed, so purified, so fair have grown,
So one with Thee, so filled with peace divine,
I may not know nor feel it as my own,
But gaining back **my will** may find it **Thine.**

—Selected.