

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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Number 1

Tacitus, a Roman Historian, Tells of Nero's Persecutions of the Christians

Those of us who think we suffer much for Jesus' sake, should think seriously of these early Christians, and our own trials will fade into insignificance. Too, this most reliable heathen historian bears witness to the early rise and spread of the Christian religion.—Publisher S. C.

But neither these religious ceremonies, nor the liberal donations of the prince, could efface from the minds of men the prevailing opinion that Rome was set on fire by his [Nero's] orders. The infamy of that horrible transaction still adhered to them.

In order, if possible, to remove the imputation, he determined to transfer the guilt to others. For this purpose he punished, with exquisite torture, a race of men detested for their evil practices, by vulgar appellation commonly called Christians. The name was derived from Christ, who, in the reign of Tiberius, suffered under Pontius Pilate, the procurator of Judea.

By that event the sect, of which he was the founder, received a blow which for a time checked the growth of a dangerous superstition; but it revived soon after, and spread with recruited vigor, not only in Judea, the soil that gave it birth, but even in the city of Rome, the common sink into which everything infamous and abominable flows like a torrent from all quarters of the world.

Nero proceeded with his usual artifice. He found a set of profligates and abandoned wretches, who were induced to confess themselves guilty; and, on the evidence of such men, a number of Christians were convicted, not indeed upon clear evidence of their having set the city on fire, but rather on account of their sullen hatred of the whole Roman race.

They were put to death with exquisite cruelty, and to their sufferings Nero added mockery and derision. Some were covered with the skins of wild beasts and left to be devoured by dogs; others were nailed to the cross; numbers were burnt alive; and many, covered with inflammable matter, were lighted up, when the day declined, to serve as torches during the night.

For the convenience of seeing this tragic spectacle, the emperor lent his own gardens. He added the sports of the circus, and assisted in person, sometime driving a curriole and occasionally mixing with the rabble in his coachman's dress.

At length the cruelty of these proceedings filled every breast with compassion. Humanity relented in favor of the Christians. The manners of that people were, no doubt, of a pernicious tendency, and their crimes called for the hand of justice; but it was evident that they fell a sacrifice, not for the public good, but to glut the rage and cruelty of one man only.—Annals of Tacitus, XV, 44.



Little America Needs a Big Dose of Undiluted Honesty

A few weeks ago an American Rodeo Company was touring Switzerland. One of their exhibitions included, of course, an American cowboy riding a rearing, kicking bronco. He did it well, as many of them do; and at the end of the performance the manager offered a challenge that he would give \$250 (I think that was about the sum), to any one in the audience who would stay on the animal. A Swiss cowboy accepted the challenge, and stayed on the bronco as well as the American. Then the manager tried to back out of his offer, but the boy insisted that he receive the money, and the audience joined him, and soon there was a mob raised; and the Swiss authorities seemed to be disgusted with the dishonesty, and took the American Company to the border and pushed them over into another country. Maybe the Company lost much of their equipment, which would serve them right; but at any rate they lost their reputation be-

fore that audience, and brought reproach on the American nation.

One thing that makes the decent father and mother boil is the deceptive liquor advertisements in newspapers and magazines. They are put up in the most attractive way to make the reader think it is smart to drink their poisonous stuff. They picture it being drunk in homes and palaces, and at big receptions and parties, etc., etc. But they don't picture the victim in the ditch or on the sidewalk or in an automobile wreck or penitentiary or on the gallows where many of them land. A few weeks ago I sent one sentence to a great daily paper, for its "Voice of the People", reading like this: "Why will great newspapers and magazines, whose stockholders and editors profess to be religious people, print deceptive advertisements of hard liquor, and deceive the inexperienced reader into thinking it is smart to drink the destructive stuff?" IT WAS NEVER PUBLISHED. Why? They did not wish to incriminate themselves, for they are certainly partakers in the diabolical work. "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken." (Hab. 2:15.)

I never saw a grocer yet who admitted he was making money, yet many of them have enlarged their store buildings. Many merchants pretend they have marked down their goods when sometimes they have marked them UP. Many real estate men have put shoddy stuff into their buildings, yet have pretended that it was good, and others have sold properties and told so many false things regarding them that they have come to believe the false statements themselves. Some farmers will tell the elevator man that they will sell him their corn for a dollar a bushel, but if it goes up to a dollar and a quarter they back down, or sell only a part to him, and sneak the rest off to another place to get the higher price. All of these might as well stick a gun in a man's ribs and say, "Stick 'em up,"—so far as the Lord is concerned.

I don't suppose since the beginning of time that any nation has engaged in as much deception, tyranny, lying as Russia; and as Truman said Christmas Day, that it was keeping the whole world stirred up. Well, its leaders are different from those of any nation that ever existed before, for all nations have believed in some kind of a god, and system of morality, but as Truman said, Russia has no standard of morality at all. Holland was very loud in its denunciation of Germany for its treatment of them, yet itself is doing much the same to Java. Other nations are not altogether blameless at times.

In politics many a man can find nothing good in the other party or other man. Instead of simply saying that of two evils he is trying to choose the lesser, he denounces ALL the other side. This is sectarianism and dishonesty.

It is in religion too. The modernist does not believe in the cardinal doctrines of the Christian religion, yet he takes money from people who do believe in such, and he tears down their belief. He is dishonest, and worse, for he is obtaining money under false pretense. Many people in denominationalism can see only their own group, and everything else is wholly wrong and there is no good in it. Many preachers dishonestly make themselves think they are faithful when they only preach and exhort, but never reprove and rebuke. When the devil gets into some churches or preachers, instead of trying to measure it all by the word of God, they try to cover their indifference by saying, "I don't believe in fussing," and they let the devil have full reign. How many, many there are who condemn the other fellow for something, and then blindly

do practically the same thing themselves, thus condemning themselves as Paul says.

A man who does not have an open mind to receive truth on disputed and important subjects, is dishonest.

Cain was dishonest with God, but lost out; Achan unlawfully hid the Babylonian garment, wedge of gold, and two hundred shekels of silver, from man but not from God, and he paid with his life; Ananias was dishonest with God, and fell down dead. "All things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

The trouble with us is that we have our minds set too much on high things, and we are not willing to condescend to things that are lowly; we wish to be like the Joneses. This pride gets us into debt, and then we may resort to dishonest ways to keep up. How much easier and better and safer and happier it is, to be plain, humble honest Christians, with our minds set on things in heaven rather than on things on earth—than to try to make a show before men! We then have the peace of God which passes all understanding.

"They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare [dishonest ways] and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition."

You are seeking happiness? Here it is: "Blessed [happy] are the pure [sincere, honest] in heart, for they shall see God."

Rightly Dividing the Word

In our study of the New Testament we find that the early disciples continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Acts 2:42.

These four items are specifically mentioned and it is recorded that the three thousand souls who were converted and were baptized on the day of Pentecost continued steadfast in doing these.

In the previous article we studied the subjects of the apostles doctrine, and fellowship.

The breaking of bread is a subject that is worthy of much study. This is evidently not the breaking of bread as in an ordinary meal, for in the succeeding verses, 44 to 46, we read that those who believed had all things common and sold their possessions and gave to everyone as they had need, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. In this 46th verse the "breaking of bread" evidently refers to their meals as it also says that they "ate their meat".

The "breaking of bread" in the 42nd verse refers to Lord's supper or the communion. The same term is used in Acts 20:7 where it says, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them."

That this "breaking of bread" was a most important item in the apostles doctrine is shown in the eleventh chapter of first Corinthians, where Paul reproves the Corinthians for making the Lord's supper into a feast, and tells them in verse twenty-three, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take eat, this is my body, which is broken for you: also he took the cup and said, This cup is the new testament in my blood, this do in remembrance of me. Paul was not taught this by man, but he received it direct from the Lord. Jesus himself first established this me-

morial, on the night he was betrayed to be crucified, and told to do it in remembrance of him; and Paul also adds, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till he come." From this we can see how important it is that we observe the Lord's supper and by so doing keep fresh in our minds and before the world this memorial of the Lord's death till he come.

Having thus seen the importance of the Lord's Supper the question is, when shall we keep it?

When a person has been convinced that he is a sinner and is under condemnation of God to eternal damnation, and then has learned and believed that Christ died on the cross that by faith and obedience to him he might be reconciled to God and obtain eternal life, then that person's only desire will be to love and serve the one who gave his life for him, and will have a fervent desire to keep fresh in his mind the memory of the one who made that great sacrifice. That is the purpose of the Lord's Supper.

When did the early disciples keep it under the apostles teaching? In Acts 20:7 we read that they came together on the first day of the week to break bread; hence when the first day of the week comes in our earnest desire to serve God faithfully we will do as they did, meet together and break the bread.

One may say that it does not say every first day of the week; true, but it says upon the first day of the week, not upon a first day of the week; therefore since we sincerely desire to please God, we will do as they did under the direct teaching of the apostles, and meet whenever the first day of the week comes, which is once every week.

What about those who observe it on some other day of the week, or those who observe it but once a month or as some do once in three months?

Jesus commanded his apostles to teach their converts to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. Matt. 28:20 and Paul admonishes us to Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. 1 Thes. 5:21.

Therefore it is our duty to prove or test all doctrines by comparing them with what the Apostles taught and practiced, as recorded in the New Testament, and if they stand up to that test, then we are to hold fast to that or those which are good; but if they fail to meet that test, since we are to hold fast to the good, we must reject the evil.

In applying this test to this question, we find that the disciples assembled together on the first day of the week in John 20:19, and in Acts 20:7 they met together for the purpose of "breaking bread". In Heb. 10:25 we are admonished to "not forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is." In 1 Cor. 16:2 it is upon the first day of the week that we are to lay by in store for the collection for the saints. So we find that the first day of the week is the only day of the week that is mentioned in the New Testament as of any importance to the Christian, and it is the only one that is mentioned in connection with the Lord's Supper; therefore those who teach otherwise must be "teaching for doctrine the commandments of man."

There are some who by their conduct appear to think that if they attend the worship on Christmas and Easter Sunday, so called, they have honored God. That may ease their conscience, but will God be pleased with that kind of service?

Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week, so it seems as if every first day of the week should be an "Easter Sunday" and a day of rejoicing for the Christian, in that Jesus thus proved that he was conqueror over death and the grave. —(Fred D. Weed)

Comfort One Another

Comfort one another;

For the way is growing dreary,
The feet are often weary,
And the heart is very sad.
There is heavy burden-bearing,
When it seems that none are caring,
And we half forget that ever we were glad.

Comfort one another;

With the hand-clasp close and tender,
With the sweetness love can render,
And the looks of friendly eyes.
Do not wait with grace unspoken,
While life's daily bread is broken,
Gentle speech is oft like manna from the
skies.

Comfort one another;

There are words of music ringing
Down the ages, sweet as singing
Of the happy choirs above.
Ransomed saint and mighty angel,
Lift the grand, deep-voiced evangel,
Where forever they are praising the eternal
Love,

Comfort one another;

By the hope of him who sought us
In our peril—him who bought us,
Paying with his precious blood;
By the faith that will not alter,
Trusting strength that will not falter,
Leaning on the One divinely good.

Comfort one another;

Let the grave-gloom lie behind you
While the Spirit's word reminds you
Of the Home beyond the tomb.
Where no more is pain or parting,
Fever's flush or tear-drop starting,
But the presence of the Lord, and for all
his people room.

—Margaret E. Sangster.

Reality

It was past midnight when, suddenly, awakened by no voice or hand, I stared wide-eyed into the darkness of the night. Silence was everywhere. Touched by an invisible hand? For that one moment all the events of the day faded into insignificant proportions, and I could feel only the vastness of eternity.

Worries and cares seemed far removed. The concern for souls, the pleading to accept the Saviour seemed so incredible, so unnecessary, so unreal. God would not send my friends to hell. It was only a dream, this business of salvation, of standing almost alone for God as the world rushed by. They were right, not I. It is a mirage, I said, a childhood fantasy, a terrible nightmare from which I will soon waken to find that all my friends will at last be saved.

And then, yet more eternity pressed upon the soul. No dream, not a nightmare, but true, forever true. These friends of mine are lost. For one bare moment the stark reality of eternity without God turned my heart sick within—alone, and lost forever. That friend I lunched with. That man who had been hurt. And then, again, sleep.

When morning came reality was gone and I could laugh once more, chatting gayly with unsaved friends.

—Moody Monthly.

SPIRITUAL CALL

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Disintegration of Family Life

The greatest danger to this country is not the armed forces of other nations, but it is the rapid disintegration of family life. No nation can long exist and be free without well regulated families. Statistics reveal that two out of every five marriages end in a divorce. With two fifths of our families being thus broken up we are, as a nation, growing less stable and secure. Thinking people realize this danger to both church and state and have had much to say about it, but have not named the cause to say nothing of the remedy. Today our young people are not being taught the real purpose of marriage. They grow up and marry without one thought of the duty the husband owes to the wife or her duty to him or the real purpose of marriage. They do not understand that marriage and family life is God's plan to keep the earth replenished with people, and that it is the duty of parents to rear and educate their children in the matters that will be to the best interest of all concerned.

Marriage was instituted in the Garden of Eden according to divine plan. When God created the woman and brought her to the man, Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." God said unto the woman: "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." And God told the man and the woman "To be fruitful, multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it." Thus was family government set up with the basic law by which it is to be governed. This law of marriage has never been repealed by our Creator and it is his law today. It is the duty of the man to govern, protect and provide for the family. The woman's duty is to bear the children, guide the house and submit to the government of her husband. God placed man at the head of the family, made him its ruler and will hold him responsible for its proper government.

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians he says: "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is head of the church; and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." Paul also commanded: "Husbands love your wives even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself."

The aged women are commanded to be teachers of good things; "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their

own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Titus 2).

Thus we have God's law of domestic relations, and where it is strictly observed by the man and the woman, you will find but little discord and the children will be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, but mankind has never been satisfied with God's laws and has undertaken to change his law of family relations by passing a law giving the woman equal authority in the government of the family thus displacing the man as the head of the family and thereby dividing the governing power of every home in the land. Our Lord warned that: "Every house divided against itself shall not stand." We divide the home against itself and complain of the results, which are homes broken by divorces, abandoned children, juvenile delinquency and a host of other evils, all because we refuse to obey God's laws.

Many women need a restraining hand. The first woman, Eve, proved that this is so. She listened to the voice of Satan and wanted to be as gods knowing good and evil and she, therefore, lost Eden and God gave her a ruler, her husband. I can remember when men had placed a woman on a pedestal and worshipped her as the mother of the race; one to be loved, protected and provided for, but like Eve she listened to the voice of the politician and wanted to be as men; not knowing that when she got her "rights" she would lose her privileges, that to be the equal of man was to have a lower moral standard, and that she would not have the respect of men that she is entitled to. May the day soon come when women's eyes will be opened and they will be content to reign as the queen of the home for there is no position in life that offers greater rewards.—(F. E. Bowers in Gospel Proclaimer)

What About Baptism?

Not over one percent of the world has been baptized. Less than one-thirtieth of nominal Christians has been baptized into Christ. Can they be saved without meeting the conditions of salvation prescribed by our Lord and His Apostles?

In His final great commission as reported by Mark, Jesus said: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be condemned."

No salvation is here promised to those who believe but are not baptized. None seems to be implied. What God will do with the hundreds of millions in that condition is not revealed. To this writer the facts appear inexpressably appalling. This is one of the frightful tragedies of the long reign of the clergy.

The hundreds of millions are not baptized because their clergy belittle baptism as of no importance and do not administer it. Responsibility therefore lies at the door of the clergy. What will God do with them when He calls them to account for their stewardship?

Aside from God's word, the purpose and importance of baptism seem none too obvious. If trying to write the New Testament, this writer might have left it out. But Jesus knows so much more and is to be our final Judge. He put baptism into His plan of salvation. The only safe course is to do what He said.

As reported by Matthew, Jesus said in the final commission, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." It seems that baptism is the step that brings them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. It is therefore vital.

Peter tells us (Acts 4:12) Jesus is the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Jesus Himself tells us we come into His name by baptism.

When convinced by Peter on the Day of Pentecost that they had forced the crucifixion of the Messiah, the Jews cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter answered, "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you into the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." It was by baptism that they came into the saving name of Jesus Christ and had their sins remitted.

When Ananias came into the presence of the blinded and penitent and praying Saul of Tarsus, he said (Acts 22:16): "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

The foregoing Scriptures show the essential importance of baptism. But in early centuries, clergy began to ignore the divine plan and substitute a few drops of water for the burial with Christ in baptism. Popes later asserted the right to change the ordinances of God. Nearly all Protestant sects continue the practice of the Popes.

Only the Baptists and our own brethren administer baptism as Jesus commanded and the Apostles practiced. Years ago our brethren stressed this vital issue. Great scholars and polemics discussed it in many historic debates. But our clergy now assume a compromising attitude. No longer have they faith and courage to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Reign of the clergy brings little but apostasy, divisions, failure and ruin.—(Gilbert O. Nations)

76% of Americans Think They Are All Right Religiously

THE LADIES HOME JOURNAL has made a nationwide survey through personal interviews, on the subject of religion, which is discouraging. They presented a series of complex questions to be answered. Only two points shall we mention of their findings. 95 per cent of Americans think they believe in God, of some kind at least. Of course many have wild ideas. And 76 per cent regard themselves as church members. The appraisers of the poll say that the ideas presented are contrary to the practice of Americans. An account of this poll is given in the January Readers Digest under the title, "God and The American People".

Three "divines", one a Protestant preacher, one a Catholic priest, and another a Jewish rabbi, were appointed to appraise the answers. And the conclusion these men reached was that the people regard themselves as being as good as the ideals which they endorse. If they endorse the Ten Commandments, or Sermon on the Mount, they seem to think they are participants in the defense of those great teachings, when they are practically doing nothing to uphold them in their lives. My ideas agree with these appraisers. Millions of people think that because they are mere church members and pay their dues, they are Christians. Many men seem to think because they endorse their wives' religion and help pay the dues, they are all right. And so, on and on. With most professed Christians the false idea predominates that because they have their names on a church record, they are all right. They have mere churchanity but not the pure Christianity of the New Testament. They have a form but not the spirit—a form of goldliness but denying by their lives the power thereof—(of godliness).—they profess that they know God but by their works they deny Him.

In all this the individual responsibility is thrown into the background, though the Book reveals that we are not saved as nations nor as churches nor as families, but as individuals. "So then every one of us must give account of himself to God." "For we must ALL appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that very one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done." "We ought to obey God rather than men."

And the discouraging thing is that this spirit of self-satisfaction which more than half the American people have, has entered the professed true Church of Christ. One man has recently written a book on "A Clean Church", which contains much good, and yet the author of that book has in very many ways the past few years violated the very teachings he presents. He seems to think because he endorses such teachings and even writes them in a book that therefore he is all right. He deceives himself just as 76 per cent of the Americans are doing, and he tries to deceive others. It seems he is influenced by this spirit in the people in general. This is all saddening. It shows that disciples of Jesus should be warned and read God's Word as never before, and not be influenced by "good words and fair speeches", which as Christ says would deceive if possible the very elect.

Why God Purifies His Children

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.—1 Peter 1:7; also Hebrews 12:5-11.

He sat by a furnace of seven-fold heat
As He watched by the precious ore,
And closer He bent with a searching gaze
As He heated it more and more.

He knew He had ore that could stand the test
And He wanted the finest gold,
To mold as a crown for the King to wear,
Set with gems of price untold.

So He laid our gold in the burning fire,
Tho' we fain would say Him, "Nay";
And watched the dross that we had not seen
As it melted and passed away.

And the gold grew brighter and yet more bright,
But our eyes were dim with tears
We saw but the fire—not the Master's hand,
And questioned with anxious fears.

Yet our gold shone out with a richer glow
As it mirrored a Form above,
That bent o'er the fire, tho' unseen by us,
With a look of ineffable love.

Can we think it pleases His loving heart
To cause us a moment's pain?
Ah no! but He sees thro' the present cross
The bliss of eternal gain.

So He waited there with a watchful eye,
With a love that is strong and sure,
And His gold did not suffer a bit more heat
Than was needed to make it pure.

(Anon.)

OFFICE NOTES

WE SAID that in view of the exceedingly high cost of publishing the Spiritual Call in these times, and that we do not wish to raise the price of the paper; and in view of the great opposition to us in our fight for the simplicity in Christ; there were two ways of escape—to publish the paper every other month till times become normal, or for brethren to donate to keep it going. But now we add a third—that brethren send enough NEW names to make the paper pay for itself. So let us eliminate the first one about every other month, and confine ourselves to DONATIONS and NEW NAMES. Some are sending in on the offer of TEN NEW NAMES for only five dollars. (Please classify those of each state together.) If you can not think of that many new names, send the money and we will send to others; and if you CAN send the names but have not the money, send the names anyway. Let us be "workers together with God."

I DO ENJOY the Spiritual Call, and Sister ——— says she files them away for future reference—Colo. (How about circulating your copy, and sending to us for other copies to circulate or file?) . . . Things that are happening bring me to realize that there are more and more that stand with the truth—Iowa. . . I want others to read the Spiritual Call—Mo. . . Keep up the good fight, and I hope you will live some years yet to fight for the right—El Paso, Texas. . . Best wishes for the holiday season to the Sommer family—Okla. (He sends 5 names.) . . . Five new subs from Pa., and 9 more from another point in Pa. . . A sister donated the Spiritual Call to some denominational friends, and some are telling her that the paper expresses what they have believed against evils. God has a people in Babylon, and it is the purpose of this paper to help bring them to the full truth. Will you help? . . . I hope, Bro. Sommer, that you and your family are enjoying good health, and will have a prosperous New Year, and can CONTINUE to do much good for the cause of the Lord.—Michigan. (Sends 10 new names.) . . . I certainly do enjoy the Spiritual Call and would hate to fail getting it each month. May God bless your every effort to continue the good work, and hope you have a good and prosperous New Year.—Missouri. . . Please renew my subscription. I do want you to keep up the good work you are doing in fighting for the right. Enclosed are five dollars for my renewal, and use the rest in the good work.—Missouri. . . There were some other lists of names we failed to note. Will you send a list for next month?

OUR FIRST NEW YEAR'S MAIL—Herewith draft is in your favor in the amount of \$6.25. Please send the SPIRITUAL CALL to —————, for one year, and the remaining \$5 is yours to assist you in your endeavors.—Illinois. (How many of our readers will "Go thou and do likewise" to some of their friends they wish to read the truth?) . . . I am sending two dollars to start the new year, and the Lord willing I will send two dollars each month to help a little in the fight for the truth.—Indiana. (And this disciple has very little of this world's goods. Remember the widow's mites. This is NOT for the publisher, except to send out the Gospel news. Thank God the spirit of Christ is not all dead. I know this disciple and I also know many "disciples" who cast into the treasury hundreds of dollars each year, who will not do as much as this woman is doing.) . . . I am still here and so very thankful to the good Lord that I have use of mind and limbs so I can come and go at will and take care of myself. I have a loving daughter whom I can depend on to look after my every need. I'll soon be 88. Have been reading the last Spiritual Call, and think it is splendid, every word good. What remarks and praise that come from the brotherhood in various states is stimulating I think to the faithful, and shows how fast and strong the faithful sentiment is growing. May the good Lord keep and protect you in your work is my prayer.—(a one-time elder. What a picture, too, of "Honor thy father and mother") . . . We suggest that you keep putting in what people say. I intend to send you at least \$5 a month, and sometimes \$10 or more if I can. I wish the paper came every week.—California. . . I enclose \$2 as fellowship in the Spiritual Call, I have just finished reading it, and it's one of the best. The front page was an inspiration to me and I am sure it was to many others.—(An elder. He has had this \$2 fellowship for several years, in his effort to advance the truth. That article was on "What is the Church?—Answer, the Called-out." Send for copies to hand out.) . . . Just received Spiritual Call for December, 1948. I am enclosing money order for ten dollars, and say: Take out the price of one year to Spiritual Call, and use the rest for whatever you see fit toward keeping the paper going O.K. May God bless you in your effort for good.—Iowa. . . Find subscription for Spiritual Call which we enjoy very much. Missouri. . . Just finished reading

the Spiritual Call. It's fine. Sorry your printer's bill is going to be raised. I am one who would enjoy the S. C. every two weeks. I am promising you, the Lord willing, as much as \$10 a month beginning Jan. 1, 1949. Will try to encourage others to the good work.—Preacher. . . Enclosed is my donation in advance for a year.—Colorado. (Sends \$10.) . . . Once a month is not too often for us to be reminded of the spiritual life we should be living and which we MUST live if we would gain a home in heaven, so let us ALL sacrifice some of our earthly pleasure if necessary and keep the Spiritual Call coming EACH MONTH. It is encouraging to us to know that there are others who are satisfied with the simplicity that is in Christ; and I think it will be beneficial to continue "What Some are Thinking", at least every other month. Let us ALL be aroused to the needs of the hour.—West. (This disciple means business by the size of the check sent.) . . . (These came in one mail.)

SOWING THE SEED—Please accept the enclosed small gift. I will try and get a few more names for your splendid articles in the Spiritual Call. I was in to see ————— a week or so ago. She says to me, "You are still sending the little paper?" I said, "Yes, are you still interested?" She told me that she not only read it, but that her husband quoted from your paper to his Sunday School class. (There are thousands upon thousands of honest people in confusion in denominationalism, and we must try to help them as well as ourselves, which we are trying to do through the Spiritual Call. How many of YOUR friends are you sending the paper to? And those of you who have donated to friends for months, why not ask them if they are receiving the paper and if they are interested in it? Your conversation may do both of you good. Let's talk to people about something besides politics, money, weather, clothes, etc.

GOD'S "CLEAN CHURCH", (with Justice, Mercy and Faith)—This is the title of a booklet which we hope soon to put out, which is in part a review of another book, "A Clean Church". That book contains much good matter on Christian living; but some of the teaching on church government, discipline, trials, etc., contradict the writer's own practice, and some of the teaching will destroy the apostolic church discipline. He unjustly applies writings of Campbell, largely on living, to matters pertaining solely to church government; and leaves out parts of Campbell which condemn his own practices. For instance, he omits this, on page 92 of Campbell's Christian System, though he quotes part of the very same page: "When they (elders) have fully examined and decided the case, they lay it before the congregation. If they acquiesce (agree) the matter ends, and the accused is retained or excluded as the case may be. If they do not acquiesce, OR if the ACCUSED appeals to the congregation, the case MUST be RECONSIDERED; and if on further examination, both the elders, the congregation and the accused retain the same views and the same position, help must be called either from the congregation or some other."—he must mean some other congregation. . . Why did not the author of that "Clean Church" quote that? We let the reader answer that. . . All preachers, elders and other Christians who are seeking truth on these important matters will be interested in this booklet and will keep open minds till they study the question thoroughly. We have some questions we wish to ask you.

It Is a Struggle to Keep Afloat on The Sea of Life

BIOGRAPHY is life and life is interesting. The great biographies of mankind are not those written of men and women who lived before the public eye, but the individual stories of personalities who met the storms and calms of life in ordinary circumstances.

It is a struggle merely to keep afloat on the sea of life, in any day; and that is life. Most of us have read many biographies written by men, but God is the only Perfect Biographer.

In the World of God I see a portrait of every character I have met and a biography of every representative man who has ever lived.

THE PARABLE for all time and for all people is the story of the lost son. This story came from the lips of Christ who spake as never mere man spake.

This young man was an unripe soul who thought he would be better off without God and away from Divine restraint.

His attitude might be made vocal in the following vociferations so oft repeated as to be dully trite: "No strait-laced Christianity for me." "Let us eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die." "I am the Master of my fate, I am the Captain of my soul, so I'll do as I please." "No church or Bible school for me and my family. We'll live our own life."

Such folk want God's gifts; but not His company. Everything they have comes from God; but they want to live as though there were no God.

THE YOUNG man of the parable left his father's house and "went into a far country." He sought the color of adventure and the spice of melodrama.

He went out into the world as a bird to the snare, and as an ox to destruction, and as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a fool to his folly.

God always lifts the curtain of the future in the Word of God so that any sinner without God may see what tomorrow holds for a disobedient soul.

Men away from God do not pray. They are not found in the House of God on the Lord's day. They have no reverence for things holy. They walk wholly by sight, for faith is absent.

IT IS SAFER to play with a rattlesnake or a live wire, or forked lightning, than with the sin of disobedience to God, or neglect of God.

"The far country" is soon reached by the wilful sinner, for it is really close at hand. It is not a local place, nor a remote corner of the world; but is a soul attitude. It is true that the world lies in the hand of the evil one. The world knew not Christ and so is far away from God. Although the world may be part of the "far country," it actually exists in every soul where God is neither believed nor recognized.

The young man wanted to be free from God's presence and prohibitions and what did he get in the far country? Desolation, slavery to sin and Satan, the company of swine; but unable even to get enough hog food to keep alive.

"AND NO MAN gave unto him." The world gives, only to receive more in return. When a man has nothing to give, he receives as much from the Godless. So why stay in the far country?

Those in the far country are invited to return to God. No one can come to Christ except God the Father draw him; but it is also written that whosoever will may come to God through faith in Christ shall be eternally saved. So why not come to Christ, soul without God? And why wait? Today is the accepted time. Now is the time to be eternally saved. There is danger and death in delay. There is life and joy in definite resolution and action Godward.

—Tacoma, Wash. Times

"They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word." (Acts 8:4.)

"And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4.)

"When for (by reason of) the time ye (brethren in general) ought to be teachers ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God." (Heb. 5:12.)

"The aged women likewise . . . that they may teach the young women." (Titus 2:3, 4.)

"Be ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you, a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (1 Peter 3:15.)

"The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." (2 Tim. 2:2.)

"Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way, and he that hateth reproof shall die." (Prov. 15:10.)

"He that spareth his rod hateth his son, but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." (Prov. 13:24.)

Spiritual Gifts

There is much confusion and misunderstanding in the world today concerning the spiritual gifts that were in the church in apostolic days. Many people do not understand the purpose of these gifts, and many seem to think they are in the church today. They fail to realize that the early christians did not have the New Testament and that the gifts were to guide and help the church until The New Testament was given. Paul could not pick up a New Testament and read the law of Christ as we can today to convince the unbeliever, hence the necessity of miracles. John, 20:30, 31.

That being true the logical conclusion would be that when God's law was fully given we would no longer need the miracles. And that is just what Paul says, "But when that which is perfect is come (God's law is perfect, Psa. 19:7, Jas. 1:25.) then that which is in part shall be done away." 1 Cor. 13:10. Those who claim these gifts today stress the gifts of healing and tongues. Sometimes someone will pretend to talk in an unknown tongue. But since no one can interpret what has been said the speaker will do his own interpreting. This is not the Bible way. These gifts were distributed as follows: "To another divers kinds of tongues; to ANOTHER the interpretation of tongues." 1 Cor. 12:10. "But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church." 1 Cor. 14:28.

So far as healing, we never see that done. We sometimes see it tried; but it always results in failure. Then they say that person did not have faith to be healed. They get the order reversed. With them faith produced healing. With the apostles the healing produced faith. Jno. 20:30-31. This shows they do not understand the purpose of the gifts. Christ never performed a miracle unless there was some purpose to be served other than merely performing a miracle. He never healed anyone merely for the physical benefit of the one healed. These things were done for the benefit of others, i.e. to make believers.

Let us, instead of putting the emphasis on the healing of the body, put it on the healing of the soul. That is what the world needs more than anything else. If people would put forth their efforts to convert men and women to Christ instead of trying to advance some pet hobby or theory they would accomplish a great deal more good in the world. And if they would efface themselves and hold only Christ before a dying world, instead of trying to hold themselves before the world and efface every one else they would be a whole lot surer of gaining a crown of life which fadeth not away. —(J. A. Collins)

NO USE converting and baptizing people, if afterwards they don't "follow holiness without which no man shall see the Lord," which the Spiritual Call is trying to help its readers do.

IS IT POSSIBLE that you do not have ten friends, near you or at a distance, who would not be benefitted by reading the Spiritual Call? You can send to ten such people for a year, for only five dollars.

JESUS came to seek and save that which is lost. Is

it not OUR business to help? You can help in this work by sending to ten people for only five dollars.

WHEN YOU GO FISHING, you can't always catch a fish, but you get some good outdoor exercise. Not every attempt to save a man by talking to him or sending literature, catches him, but you get spiritual exercise which does you much good.

Apostasies at First Seem to be Great Successes but—Watch for the Fruits

"Whatsoever a man soweth
That shall he also reap."

This is a fixed principle of God in both the physical and moral world. Adherence strictly to the Word of God will produce good fruit in the course of time, but adherence to deviation or error will bring corruption.

When in the second century men began to centralize and make a distinction between elder and bishop, making the bishop chief speaker and ruler, they laid the foundation for the Roman Catholic Church.

The mad cry now in Protestantism is for Unity, and the Federal Council of Churches has formed that somewhat. But inspiration says, "The wisdom that is from above is FIRST pure, THEN peaceable." They had a form of Unity in the Middle Ages, and they also had The Dark Ages of superstition and ignorance. Malicious and unscrupulous men love to get a hold of big organizations. Their humanly-wise Unity seemed to bring success, but it at length brought great disaster to true Christianity.

Among us the introduction of the Missionary Society seemed to be just the thing, but in the course of years it tried, and is still trying, to bring every church in submission to their ecclesiasticism.

When they first left the simple singing in worship of the New Testament, they thought they were taking the world for Christ. I remember well how the young people would gather around the organ and seem to be greatly interested. But as the old apostolic brethren said, "When you open the flood gate, where will you stop?" And they did not stop till all manner of innovations were introduced, and now the Christian Church is a mass of worldliness.

The human organizations of Bible Colleges established by Christians to teach the Bible, part of the work of the Church, seemed to have accomplished great things; but now they are assuming more and more authority and developing a clergy which goes out and takes control of churches, pushing God-given elders into the background.

Protracted Bible Readings in one place to develop young men to preach has seemed to help, but many of those in past decades have settled down and are now pastors. Strange as it may seem, there is not one word in the New Testament about developing preachers, but there is about developing "teachers". The writer of the e lines has for several decades seen this tendency and contended that such Readings be held with EVERY church so that prospective elders will have a chance to be developed. The church needs SCRIPTURAL elders. Mark well that we use the word "SCRIPTURAL", for some elders are not scriptural, and they are not authorized by God and should have authority over no one.

It seems to work fine for elders to turn the selecting of preachers and singers and developers and teachers, over to some one man, in a "three year plan", but that is the

essence of popery and will sooner or later lead to that if it has not already. Don't think, "It can't happen with US."

It is pleasing always to listen to "talented" preachers, but not all talented men are sincere Christians. We must have preachers who LIVE the Christ life whether they are very talented or not. Character comes before fluency of tongue.

Parents and elders may neglect young people, and churches may establish "Young People's Mass Meetings," and much good may seem to result; but it is an innovation and contrary to the principles of the Bible that experienced men shall guide the Church and its work, and will in a little while bear its withered and corrupt fruit.

We may neglect the admonishing to INDIVIDUAL Bible study and prayer and individual spreading of the gospel and helping the poor and teaching of the children in our homes, and do almost everything by GROUPS where ambitious men can sway the masses, and may seem to be booming for a while; but soon it may be busting. It always has wound up that way and we believe that it always will, for it is not God's way but man's and belongs to the flesh, and "he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption."

And so, dear reader, let us not be caught by an apparent show of success, for not all is gold that glitters. In Pilgrim's Progress, you remember, that many started out in short cuts to heaven, but old Christian plodded along and got there when the others failed. Be sure with God.

The Hypocrisy of Many Modern Professed Christians

Harold Bell Wright saw the faithlessness and hypocrisy of so many professed Christians in his day (and they are worse now), that he has "the shepherd of the hills" who turned away from the shallowness of preaching in a city pulpit to mingling with nature in the Ozark Mountains, write to a friend and say—

"Here and there among men, there are those who pause in the hurried rush to listen to the call of a life that is more real. How often have we seen them, David, jostled and ridiculed by their fellows, pushed aside and forgotten, as incompetent and unworthy. He who sees and hears too much is cursed for a dreamer, a fanatic, or a fool, by the mad mob, who, having eyes, see not, ears and hear not, and refuse to understand.

"We build temples and churches, but will not worship in them; we hire spiritual advisers, but refuse to heed them; we buy bibles, but will not read them; believing in God, we do not fear Him; acknowledging Christ, we neither follow nor obey Him. Only when we can no longer strive in the battle for earthly honors or material wealth, do we turn to the unseen but more enduring things of life; and, with the ears deafened by the din of selfish war and cruel violence, and eyes blinded by the glare of passing pomp and folly, we strive to hear and see the things we have so long refused to consider."

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." (Prov. 22:15.)

"Chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries." (2 Peter 2:10.) "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion [government] and speak evil of dignities." (Jude 8.)