

Spiritual 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*

A NON-SECTARIAN CHRISTIAN MONTHLY

Volume 26

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA, JULY, 1952

Number 7



DANIEL AUSTEN SOMMER

BORN MARCH 28, 1878

DIED JULY 8, 1952

D. Austen Sommer, one of six children, was born to Daniel and Katharine Way Sommer in Keltou, Pennsylvania. The family later lived in Ohio for a few years, and then moved in 1894 to Indianapolis.

His father, an evangelist, was one of the leaders in the Church of Christ in its separation, as the conservative element, from the "digressives" of the Disciples of Christ, and from later digressions. His mother was a close associate in this work as publisher and co-editor of the *Apostolic Review*.

Austen, or "D. A.", as he was known to many throughout the brotherhood, began his ministry as an evangelist at the age of nineteen. As part of his preparation for this work, in 1903 he traveled to the "old world" and especially the Holy Land of which he later wrote his "Meditations in Bible Land".

In 1907 he was married to Pearl Grider of the Sand Creek Church of Christ near Windsor, Illinois; and to this union six children were born.

For more than fifty years his evangelism took him from coast to coast in establishing and strengthening Churches of Christ. At the same time, the ministry of his pen was likewise

received from coast to coast in the regular periodicals, scores of tracts, and the books he published. Almost twenty-five years ago he began publication of the *Macedonian Call*, later the *Spiritual Call*, as the means for a more effective call to Mission and to Spirituality.

Funeral services at 3 P.M., Thursday, July 10, 1952 in Flanner & Buchanan Mortuary were conducted by George Anderson of Charleston, Ill., assisted by Harold Ottwell of E. Alton, Ill. Burial was in Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis.

Survivors are the widow, Mrs. Pearl M. Sommer; a son, D. Paul Sommer, Indianapolis; five daughters, Mrs. Helen Achter, New Castle, Ind.; Mrs. Hilda Arden, Plainfield, Ind.; twins, Miss Mary Sommer, U. S. Embassy, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Mrs. Mildred George, Indianapolis; and Mrs. Alice R. Hart, New York City; a sister, Miss Bessie K. Sommer, and a brother, Allen R. Sommer, Indianapolis; and nine grandchildren.

* * *

In answer to enquiries of the many friends who wished to know somewhat in detail of the passing of D. Austen

Sommer, and to those of his friends who may not have yet heard of his passing, we submit the following.

Accompanied by his wife, he had spent the previous week, including two Lord's Days, in a meeting at Vienna, Ill. He had experienced some heart difficulty there the last two or three nights, probably augmented by the intense heat, but was able to return home Monday and seemed to enjoy the trip. Though he had slept in a chair Monday night and had indicated that he did not feel well, he had intended to finish preparation of this issue of the Spiritual Call which he had proof read and corrected the evening before. He lingered at the breakfast table listening to his favorite daily radio program, "The Nation's Family Prayer Period," broadcast from the Cadle Tabernacle in Indianapolis over WLW at 6:30 A.M. C.S.T. The program apparently had finished and he had turned off the radio when his wife, who had gone outside, heard him call. When she found him unconscious on the living room floor, the only signs of life were the last reflex reactions of one dying; so though he had suffered mildly with the minor attack a little over two years ago and had some feeling of illness lately, he died with no apparent prolonged suffering; and his passing was a shock to the family which had considered such as only a possibility and not a probability.

His own family, which had no occasion to lose confidence in his sincerity and motives, had earnestly hoped and prayed that he could live long enough to see his grief turned to joy at a visible change in the recent drift from the Apostolic paths of "Truth and Righteousness"; but alas, this "watchman", who without regard of self could not refrain from warning of evils within the Church and without the Church, could no longer endure, physically.

His personal resolve must have been portrayed, however, in the following which appeared in the proofs as he had selected for publication in this issue of his Call to Spirituality.

* * *

A God-Directed Life

There is no such thing as "blind chance" in the life of God's surrendered children. If there was ever a man who seemed "a victim of circumstances," that man was Joseph. Betrayed of his brothers, sold into slavery, unjustly imprisoned, he had from the standpoint of the world every reason to complain of "hard luck" and "tough breaks." Yet nowhere in the record of his life does the Bible mention any feeling of discouragement or dissatisfaction. Always he was upheld by the assurance that God directed his life and led his steps.

Finally, when the hour came that as the prime minister of Egypt he revealed his identity to the brothers who had sold him into slavery, he said to them, "So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God" (Genesis 45:8). Joseph looked upon the unkindness and hostility of his brothers not as misfortune and hardship that came into his life, but rather as God's means of bringing him to Egypt, that there as God's instrument he might preserve many lives through his administration and wisdom in the day of famine. With this point of view there was no place for bitterness toward his brethren, no desire to "get even," only kindness of heart and forgiveness of spirit.

Such faith in the leadership and direction of a sovereign God in our lives should characterize all of us today who love the Lord and believe His Word, and with such faith in God's wisdom, love, and guidance there is no place for worry or unhappiness when the circumstances are not those which we would have chosen, and no place for bitterness against those who wrong or abuse us.

All the apparent hardships in Joseph's life worked together for God's purpose and Joseph's good. Joseph committed his

way unto the Lord and trusted in Him, and God directed his path. We have the promise that He will do the same for us (Psalm 37:5). The hatred of Joseph's brethren started him on the path to a throne. God turned the evil which they did Joseph into a blessing for him. A sovereign Lord still makes "all things work together for good to them that love God" (Romans 8:28). In our lives He can make the wrath of men to praise Him (Psalm 76:10) just as surely as He made the wrath of Joseph's brethren abound to His own glory in the life and testimony of that remarkable man.

—Cadle Call

* * *

Whether or not D. Austen Sommer found consolation in some working of Divine Providence to overshadow this latest appearance of apostasy, he earnestly looked forward to something better and of even more personal concern to him, as he was often heard to read or quote:

"Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." "I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

"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." "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

For "as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be . . . the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

For "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Where "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

"And, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them."

And so shall they ever be with the Lord.

Reck. 3:17-19; Acts 20:26, 27; 2 Tim. 4:7, 8; 1 Cor. 13:31-33; Matt. 24:27-31; 1 Thes. 4:16, 17; Matt. 25:34; Rev. 22:14; Rev. 21:3; Rev. 7:9-15; 1 Thes. 4:17.

* * *

Although other writers have been contributing articles and notes as appearing in the Spiritual Call, it was largely the personal ministry of D. A. Sommer; particularly in the fact that the time spent in preparation thereof was largely devotional, and the expense thereof was dependent in great measure upon donations in support of such work. Since his ministry of pen closes with this issue of the Spiritual Call which he himself had largely prepared, any unexpired subscriptions will be refunded to those requesting such, giving name, address, date renewed, expiration date, and value of unexpired subscription.

* * *

There are on hand a number of copies of papers, tracts, and books published by D. A. Sommer.

The following are available in limited quantities for cost of postage and mailing: The Drama of World Empires, A Poem that Helped Make Lincoln Great, poem Mr. World & Miss Church Member, Make the Home Front Strong, 1000 Nuggets of Gold, Christian Liberty, Why Protestantism is Failing, Can We Be Saved By Faith Alone, The Greatest Questions In Christendom (Protestantism, Catholicism, & Church of Christ), Christian Liberty, How The Thief Was Saved Without Baptism (Three Dispensations, etc.), Self Government and Church Government, Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Luther, Calvin, Wesley, etc.), The Pastor and the Bible College, The Kingdom of The Clergy, Preparing for Public Work for Christ, Some Questions on the Bible Colleges, How the Pope Got Started (Mutual Ministry, etc.), The Church of Christ and Babylon, Religious Dope, and A 20th Century Attempt to Establish a 13th Century Papacy.

A few of the following are available as single copies only for cost of mailing and postage: 1007 Protestants, Preaching & Teaching of Alexander Campbell, Obituary of Daniel Sommer, Science and Supposition in Evolution Geology and Astronomy, and various numbers of the Spiritual Call for the last couple of years.

How To Read The Bible or Guide Through Bible History will be available indefinitely at \$.35 or 3 for \$1.00.

The Church of Christ will be available indefinitely at \$1.00.

The Simplified New Testament will also be available indefinitely at \$3.50 each or \$3.00 each in quantities of five or more.

* * *

A few copies of the following other publications are also on hand:

Foster's Story of the Bible, \$2.75.

Foster's First Steps For Little Feet, \$1.60.

Foster's Bible Pictures, \$2.00

> Great Songs Of The Church, \$1.10.

* * *

Since it is almost impossible to answer individually all the letters of sympathy received from the many friends, we trust this public expression of our appreciation will suffice.

The D. A. Sommer Family

"Tithing" May Be Too Much, or Too Little

TITHING WAS TAUGHT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, but not in the Church in the New. In the Old, part of the tithe went to the priests who served the tabernacle, part to the poor, and the giver himself ate part of it when he went up to worship.

Many professed Christians today, consider they are doing well by giving a tenth of their income and most leaders in churches preach it and insist on it, for it brings them in much money. But it is not God's system under the New Law; and it is unfair sometimes, and often even dangerous. Let us see.

Here is a man who makes \$10 a week, and he has a wife and 6 children; yes, there are some who make no more than that. If he should give a tenth of that, he would probably give too much, for he could hardly make a go of it in these inflationary times, and feed and clothe 6 growing, hungry children. On the other hand, here is a man and wife with no children, who make \$80 or \$100 a week; even if he gave half of that, he would not sacrifice as much as the man with the 6 children, and his tithe would be too little.

People like to have something definite to give, of money, time, or talent, and then they can feel free to do as they please with the rest. This is where the danger lies, and where the devil sneaks in.

In 1 Cor. 16:1, 2, Paul says, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you, lay by him in store, *as God hath prospered him.*" God leaves it to us, with the thought that we are stewards and must answer to God. Sickness and other adversities regulate this principle of giving as prospered.

"Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in *your body, and in your spirit which are God's.*" (1 Cor. 6:20). Again, "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again." (2 Cor. 5:15).

Our time is the Lord's, our talent is the Lord's, our money is the Lord's; and we can not do as we please, but must do as God pleases—live to his glory, not ours. These thoughts take away that satisfaction, that smugness, we like to have that we have done our duty, done all that God requires of us. But there is none perfect; no, not one. The Christian life is an ideal toward which we must always be working. The Christian life does not consist in being perfect, but in always striving to be perfect, always struggling to do more; and *when we cease to struggle, we cease to be Christians.* That is where the tithing comes short and becomes even deceptive, for if we can tithe of money, why can we not tithe of time and talent? And then drift with the current nintenths of the times. No, beloved we are bought with a price, and it *all* belongs to God.

If a man made \$20,000 a year, he might give *nine tenths* of it to the Lord, and yet would not probably sacrifice as

SPIRITUAL CALL

Published Monthly by

D. A. SOMMER

918 Congress Avenue
INDIANAPOLIS, IND.

Entered as second class matter May 1, 1936, at the post office at Indianapolis, Indiana, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

much as the man mentioned above with 6 children who gives one-tenth. Many people reason that a man with talent to preach, must use it to be saved; but the man with talent to make money, can use nine-tenths for himself and as *he* pleases. Many professed Christians who have made much money, give a tenth, and then look with pity on a preacher who has given his *life* to preach the gospel, and has suffered because this wealthy brother has not done the same with his money.

Even if we could give *all* our time, talent and money, still—we are saved by grace; for all *that* is not to be compared with the salvation which comes to us through the blood of Jesus Christ. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the *gift* of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." "The *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." As thoughts like these drift into our minds, we cry with the psalmist of old, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

No, brethren and sisters, it is not one-tenth which belongs to the Lord, but ten-tenths. It is all His above our humble living, and we are only stewards and must render an account for the way we have used it. Now let us all sing together—

All to Jesus I surrender
All to Him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust Him,
In His presence daily live,
All to Jesus I surrender,
Humbly at His feet I bow;
Wordly pleasures all forsaken,
Take me, Jesus, take me now,
All to Jesus I surrender,
Lord, I give myself to Thee;
Fill me with thy love and power,
Let Thy blessing fall on me,
*I surrender all, I surrender all,
All to Thee, my blessed Savior
I surrender all.*

Did Christ Make Peter The Foundation
of His Church? —III

WAS PETER THE FOUNDER AND BISHOP
OF THE CHURCH IN ROME?

Dear Mrs. Blank:

You know that your "faith" claims that Peter established the church in Rome, preached there 25 years, was bishop there and handed his authority down to "successors" to have rule over the whole Church of Christ in the world, so long as time endures.

Eusebius, a church historian in the 4th Century, said: "Peter and Paul were preaching and *founding* the church in Rome," etc. (Church History Book V, Chapter 8.)

And, "Very Rev. Bruno, D.D.," concerning his and your "belief," (375,000 copies, Benziger Brothers, publishers), says, "St. Peter was Bishop of Rome *25 years*. Eusebius says that St. Peter, having preached the gospel in Rome, persevered 25 years Bishop of Rome. (Chronicon 54.)"

But one can see that Eusebius is somewhat unreliable, for Paul shows in Rom. 1:8-15, that he wrote the epistle to the Romans *before* he had ever been there, and that its "faith" is spoken of *throughout the whole world*;—hence, Paul could not have "founded" it, as Eusebius says. Eusebius lived 300 years *after* Paul and Peter, and *after* many unreliable traditions, and many fables, had sprung up.

Let us now see what Clement says in his "First Epistle to the Corinthians." He is *supposed* to be the Clement mentioned by Paul in the New Testament; yet there is considerable doubt about that. The letter was possibly written the extreme last of the 1st Century, or in the 2nd. He says: "Let us set before your eyes the illustrious apostles, *Peter*, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labors; and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory, due to him. Owing to envy, *Paul* also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. *After preaching BOTH in the east and west*, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the *whole world*, and *come to the extreme limit of the west*, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects." (Scribner's Edition, Ch. 5.)

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary, as good as there is, refers to this quotation from Clement, in its comments on 1 Peter 5:13, (concerning Peter writing from Babylon) saying: "The earliest distinct authority for Peter's martyrdom at Rome is Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, in the *latter half of the 2nd Century*. The *desirableness* of representing Peter and Paul, the two leading apostles, as together founding the church of the metropolis, seems to have *originated* the tradition. Clement of Rome (I. Epistola ad Corinthios, sec. 4, 5), often quoted *for*, is really *against* it. He mentions Paul and Peter together, but makes it as a *distinguishing* circumstance of Paul, that he preached *both in the East and West, implying that Peter never was in the West*, [Rome]. In 2 Peter 1:11, he says, 'I must *shortly* put off this tabernacle,' implying his martyrdom was near, *yet he makes no allusion to Rome, or any intention of visiting it.*"

Surely this Clement had a far better chance to know the facts than Eusebius, and his statement harmonizes better with the New Testament, while Eusebius' does not. Clement was probably 50 or 75 years after Peter, while Eusebius was about 300 years after him, when many traditions and fables had drifted in. But the inspired writings of the New Testament are the measuring reed; and if Peter had founded the Roman church, which was to be over all the churches, surely, the New Testament would have said something about it.

1. IN HIS LETTER TO THE ROMANS, PAUL SALUTES 26 DISCIPLES THERE BY NAME, IN THE 16TH CHAPTER; BUT DOES NOT MENTION PETER. WHY?

Paul writes these brethren that their "faith is spoken of throughout the whole world," showing that it must have been in existence many years. When Paul longed to "have some fruit among you *also*," (Rom. 1:8-15), he shows he had not been there at that time.

In all these salutations and greetings to brethren and sisters in Rome (mentioned in Romans, 16th Ch.), Peter is not mentioned. Why did not Paul Write! "Salute Peter, your Bishop; and render complete obedience to him?" "Greet Peter the Prince of the apostles?" "Rejoice that Peter, your

Bishop is the foundation of the whole Church"? "Honor Peter who has the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven, and submit yourselves to his successors to this authority when Peter is dead"? The only answer that harmonizes with the New Testament is: *Peter was not in Rome and never had been at that time.*

II. PAUL WROTE 4 LETTERS FROM ROME IN HIS 1ST IMPRISONMENT; BUT HE DOES NOT MENTION PETER.

If Peter was "Bishop of Rome," and preached there "25 years", why did he not come down to Puteoli (Naples), and escort his "beloved Brother Paul" to Rome, as others did. Read Acts 28. Paul dwelt *two whole years* in his own hired house, and taught all that came to him. But where was Peter, founder and Bishop of the Roman church? Answer—He was not there, and never had been.

Paul Wrote the Ephesian Letter from His 1st Imprisonment in Rome, but is Silent Regarding Peter.

Paul had said to the Ephesian elders *there* on the beach at Miletus: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which The Holy Ghost hath made you overseers [*bishops*], to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28.) Notice that that church had a plurality of bishops who are also called elders, presbyters. This was God's system of simplicity. (See Phil. 1:1; Acts 14:23.) And these bishops were married men with children. (Titus 1; 1 Tim. 3.) They had a plurality of bishops for each local church, now your "faith" has a plurality of churches for each bishop! Have you not turned the Divine system upside down? God, in his wisdom, gave as little power as possible to frail, ambitious man; so that each bishop (elder, presbyter), must share his authority, *with one or more bishops*. But man in his ambition has changed that, and messed up the whole Christian world. There is no distinction of clergy and laity in the New Testament, but God has made *all* Christians "Kings and priests unto God." (Rev. 1:6.)

Though Paul wrote to the Ephesians *from Rome*, he said nothing about Peter's throne there. Why? It wasn't there.

Paul Wrote the Philippian Letter from his 1st Imprisonment in Rome, but did not Mention Peter.

Paul wrote "to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons," (Phil. 1:1). Notice, incidentally, as we said before, that each church had a plurality of bishops. Notice, also, that the whole church is called "saints," not simply some specially religious ones, or "canonized" ones. And also notice that Paul says not one word about Peter being there in Rome, though he mentions Timothy and Epaphroditus as being with him.

Paul Wrote to Philemon from His 1st Imprisonment in Rome, but says nothing about Peter.

Paul does mention Philemon's run-away slave Onesimus, who had come to Rome and Paul had converted him, and was sending him back to his master. He mentions Epaphras, Marcus (Mark), Aristarchus, Demas, and Lucius, as being with him; but no Peter, even though your "faith", Mrs. Blank, says he established the church there and was Bishop of it. Why? Peter was not there, and never had been!

Paul Wrote to the Colossians from His 1st Imprisonment at Rome, but Fails again to Mention Peter.

In Col. 4, Paul sends from Rome the greetings of eight brethren, among whom were Luke and Mark; and yet he never intimates that Peter is in charge of the Roman Church, or even that he was there or ever had been. Mrs. Blank, can you still believe with all the New Testament against you that Peter established the Church at Rome, and is the foundation of the whole church? With an honest, unprejudiced mind, you are to decide.

III. ALSO, PAUL WROTE 2ND TIMOTHY FROM ROME, IN HIS 2ND IMPRISONMENT; BUT HE STILL DOES NOT MENTION PETER.

Paul mentions by name nine brethren in this, his last epistle, who had been with him in this 2nd and last imprisonment; and—no Peter! Yes, he even says "*all* the brethren" greet Timothy, but still no Peter by name in the "*all*!" Think of it, Mrs. Blank, Paul has been in two imprisonments in Rome, mentioned many of his close companions, and is now ready to be offered, and the time of his departure is at hand, yet *Peter has not shown up*, who, your "faith" says established the church there and was Bishop there, and preached there 25 years, and was the foundation of the whole Church of Christ, with authority to hand his power down to so-called "successors" through 2000 years!

Remember, Mrs. Blank, the whole fabric of your "belief" comes tumbling down, if you can not prove that Peter was Bishop of Rome, was over all the apostles, was the Head of the whole Church, and that he had successors, to carry out this absolute power till the close of time. So far, have not the writers of your "faith" utterly failed both from the New Testament, and from reliable history, to prove these most important claims.

IF NEITHER PETER NOR PAUL ESTABLISHED THE CHURCH IN ROME, WHO DID?

This question is not really involved in our subject, and yet it is a most interesting and profitable discussion. We don't *know* who established the church in Rome, but there are some possibilities.

On the day of Pentecost, when the Church was established, there were Jews and proselytes from many nations, who had come there to worship. Among them were "strangers of Rome," (Acts 2:10); and it is possible that these took the gospel back to Rome, as the other visiting worshipers probably did to their native lands. Paul said before he went to Rome, "Your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world," (Rom. 1:8), showing that the gospel must have been working there many years.

Also, there were worshipers at Jerusalem on Pentecost, who came from Pontus, (Acts 2:9). And when Paul went to Corinth to preach, he "found a certain Jew named Aquila, *born in Pontus*, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, (because that Claudius had commanded *all Jews* to depart from Rome). And because he was of the same craft, *he abode with him*, and wrought; for by their occupation, they were tent makers," (Acts 18:1-3). The record does not say that Paul baptized them though it does say that "many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized." The inference here is that this prominent man and wife had already been baptized. Was it at Jerusalem on Pentecost, and is it not possible that this couple could have established, or helped establish, the church in Rome?

After a year and six months, Paul left Corinth, and "with him Priscilla and Aquila . . . And he came to Ephesus and left them there," (Acts 18:18, 19). While Aquila and Priscilla were at Ephesus, Apollos, an eloquent preacher, came to Ephesus; preaching only the baptism of John, "whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of the Lord more perfectly," (Acts 18). Here is an illustration of their knowledge, ability and zeal.

Later, in his 3rd "Missionary Journey", Paul came to Ephesus, and there wrote his 1st Letter to the Corinthians, with these statements, "The churches of Asia salute you, Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord with *the church that is in their house*," (1 Cor. 16:19). So here this

man and wife must have had much to do with establishing this church at Ephesus, for it was meeting in their house.

Leaving Ephesus, Paul went into Macedonia and then into Greece, to the port, Cenchrea, from which he intended to sail into Syria, but at this place and time, he wrote his letter to the Romans, and sent it by Phoebe, using these enlightening words: "I commend unto you Phoebe, our sister, which is a servant of the church which is in Cenchrea . . . *greet Priscilla and Aquila*, my helpers in Christ Jesus; who for my life laid down their own necks [probably there at Ephesus on the occasion of the mob of Diogenes—Acts 19:23-41]; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also *ALL the churches of the Gentiles*. Likewise, *greet the church that is in their house*," (Rom. 16:1-5).

Here Priscilla and Aquila are back in Rome whence they started, in our history, and where they possibly worked for Christ before Paul met them at Corinth. They had much to do with the first work at Corinth; at Ephesus, the church met in their house; and now here in Rome the church meets in their house. Yes, this noble couple may have been largely the ones who helped in the establishment of the church in Rome. Anyway, it is certain that neither Paul nor Peter established it, as we have seen.

No wonder "all the churches of the Gentiles" praised this zealous, pious and intelligent couple! God give us more Priscillas and Aquilas, and more like the early Christians at Jerusalem, who when persecution scattered them, "went everywhere preaching the word," (Acts 8:1).

The great advancement of the early Church was not done by ORGANIZED missionary work, but by the INDIVIDUAL CONVERTED SOUL; and the Church can never again have such fruits till it goes back to the divine method.

Eating God's Word

To speak of eating God's words may sound strange to us, but it is a Biblical expression. Jeremiah bemoaned the spiritual condition of Judah: "We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness and the iniquity of our fathers; for we have sinned against Thee." He pleads for God's mercy: "Do not abhor us, for Thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory; remember, break not Thy covenant with us" (Ch. 11:20-24).

Moreover, because he courageously announced the wrath of God upon priests and people, the Prophet was rejected and persecuted. He pours out his heart to the Lord: "O Lord, remember me. . . . Know thou for Thy sake I have suffered rebuke" (Ch. 15). Then, when the Lord had comforted His faithful servant, Jeremiah exclaims: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them." As a famished man pounces upon morsels of food that he has found, so the Prophet "ate up" God's words of comfort! and he tells the Lord: "Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

Martin Luther went through similar experiences. He was frequently in distress of soul. But in "eating God's words" he found joy and strength and peace. And so shall we. The days are evil. The world is full of trouble. "Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity" (Luke 21:25). If we are true to our Christian profession, we, too, shall be hated of men. What then? Let us search the Scriptures. There we shall find God's Words. And in eating God's Words we shall find joy and rejoicing of heart.—*Martin Walker.*

Looking Ahead

For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day, 2 Tim. 1:12.

Thus wrote Paul to his son in the faith, Timothy.

Many people today lay aside part of their earnings against

the time of old age or sickness when they will not be able to work and earn their support. They do this as a matter of thrift, being concerned as to what the future may bring forth.

Having made this saving, they then invest it or place it in some institution in which they have full confidence that it will be in safe keeping and available when the time comes that they will need it; it may be in government bonds or a savings bank.

Some take out life insurance in order that their loved ones will have some means of support in case that they are taken away.

But, oh, how few there are, of all those who are so concerned over the affairs of this world, and who take all possible precaution in providing for the possibilities of this life, that make any provision for the spiritual life!

While it is commendable to make some provision for old age or sickness, we have no assurance that we will ever need it, for we may be called by the angel of death at any time; of how much greater importance is it, that we should make some provision for the spiritual life, for there is no escaping the fact that eternity lies before us, with the prospect of spending that eternity, either in heaven with all of its glory, or in hell with all of its misery and torment.

Jesus said, Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also, Matt. 6:19-21. Is our heart set wholly on this life, or are we looking to the time when Jesus is coming again? He also tells us as for food and raiment not to take thought for the morrow, for our Heavenly Father knows all of our needs, and will see that we are taken care of, if we will only trust him; for proof of his assertion he refers to how the birds of the air are cared for and says that we are of much more value than the birds.

Paul says, *I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded* that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. There was no doubt lingering in the mind of Paul, for he says "*I know*," Paul had made provision for "that day" and had given it into the keeping of that One in whom he had the utmost confidence, and he was *sure* that it would be ready for him in that day when he would need it most, the day when Jesus is coming again; the day that Paul wrote of in 2 Thess. 1:7, 8, wherein he says, that the Lord Jesus shall be revealed in flaming fire.

Can you and I feel the same confidence that Paul did? Can we say, *I know whom I have believed?* Have we made our spiritual investment and placed our life in the hands of Him who is able to keep it against that day?

Or have we, like some in the affairs of this world, started a small bank account, and then, because of their interest in other matters, neglected to keep up with their savings deposits, and hence do not have sufficient funds for old age needs. The same holds true in spiritual matters, one may make the faithful start by obeying the gospel, and then neglect to live as God requires, allowing the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches to choke the word, and become unfaithful and thus have no treasure laid up in heaven against that day.

Let me urge everyone of you who have not obeyed the gospel, to accept God's terms of salvation and avail yourselves of God's promise to save.

To those who have slipped and become cold and indifferent, repent and return to your first love before it is everlastingly too late, for we know not the day or the hour that the Son of man cometh.

To all others, Hold fast that thou hast and remain faithful until death, for it is to him that overcometh and remains faithful who will receive a crown of righteousness.

Oh, that we all might be able to say with Paul, 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. 2 Tim. 4:7, 8.—Fred D. Wood.

2 Timothy 2:15

When Paul told Timothy to study to shew himself approved unto God, he did not expect him to study so he could go around telling his life's story, for Paul knew Timothy didn't have to study to know his past life, nor could he study enough to know one minute in the future. So many are wasting valuable time while poor souls are wasting away to get up and tell their past life, and try to ease people's minds as to the future. But Paul wanted Timothy to study so he could tell of the Christ Child, how he left his home in glory, and came to this old cruel, unfriendly world to walk among men, to be tempted and tried, of the cruel mockings of the crown of thorns that pierced his tender brow, of the nails as they bit deep in the tender flesh of his hands and feet, and of the old rugged cross as it slipped into the hole with a thud on Calvary's rugged brow; of the darkness that prevailed as this old earth rocked to and fro, and the bursting open of the graves, and that imploring cry of our Lord and Savior (my God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me), and the Roman soldier as he steps forward and pierces the side of Jesus, and his Precious Blood that ran down that rugged cross for the sins of the whole world. How he was laid in the new tomb and how His faithful brothers and sisters stood helpless, watching and praying until an angel proclaimed, "He has risen," and they saw the stone had been rolled away, when it had been sealed by man and a strong watch had been set up. How Christ had burst the bars of death and came forth, a mighty conqueror over death, Hell and the grave, and is now seated at God's right hand; of the Church that he purchased with his own Blood, the Church of Christ.

Paul wanted Timothy to study so he would know how to live in the church, for in 1 Tim. 3:15 Paul says "But if I tarry long, that Thou mayest know how Thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God which is the Church of the Living, God the Pillar and ground of the Truth." For it is through the Church that God is Glorified, for in Eph. 3:21 Paul has said, "Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all Ages, world with end."

Too many today are like the 10 lepers recorded in Luke 17:11-19—only one out of 10 turned back and glorified God. They forget the Church is the place to glorify our God not only on Sunday morning, but every time the congregation comes together to worship and build itself up in the most Holy Faith.

Are we studying our Bibles enough today, so we can be always ready to give an answer to every man that asketh us, a reason of the hope that is in us with meekness and fear, as in 1 Pet. 3:15? Are we studying so we will know all about the foundation we are building upon, so that if a false teacher should come in our midst we could apply 2 Tim. 3:10, 11? If you are not studying as you should, brothers and sisters in Christ, get down that old sword of the spirit, for Paul says in Eph. 6:12, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

If Paul deemed it necessary for Timothy who sat at his feet as a student to study, to show himself approved unto God, how much more would he admonish you and me who are living in the last of the last age, with all the false teaching,

heresies, and apostasies that are staring us in the face on every hand—to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life.—Harold L. Ottwell.

Just Outside the Promised Land

As the Israelites neared the land of Canaan, being led by Moses, Reuben and Gad beholding the land on the east side of the Jordan River that it was good for cattle, they requested Moses that they might have this land for their inheritance. It seems they preferred their homes near by, but outside of the promised land which is said to be a type of Heaven.

Oh how many of us professed Christians seem to be satisfied near the Kingdom—Church of the living God but not really in it! Many I know that confess there is nothing in denominational Churches, but refuse to walk out and take a stand wholly for the Church of Christ that he purchased with his own precious blood.

Moses granted their request on conditions: that if you will go over Jordan help fight the battles and drive the enemies out of the land. But if you will not do so, behold you have sinned against the Lord; And be sure your Sin will find you out. Num. 32, 23.

Adam sinned, tried to hide from God but got caught. Cain sinned, tried to hide from God, when asked, Where is Abel thy brother? We might say he answered God roughly saying, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? But God said, The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

Joseph's brethren sold him for a slave; they lied to their father and made him believe Joseph was dead. This lie and act burned their conscience for several years. When circumstances forced them to go to Egypt they met face to face the beloved brother they had so evilly mistreated, but they not knowing him, he brought things to their minds that forced them to remember the awful deed they did to Joseph, and exclaimed, God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants, meaning the selling of their brother to the slave traders, Gen. 45:16. Yes let's be sure our sins will find us out.

King Saul, God's select to the throne of Israel, turned against God, and died a wicked man. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God, Psa. 9:17.

Ananias and wife lied to God, and suddenly fell down dead. They died in the very act of lying, and all liars shall have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone which is the second death. Rev. 21:8. A certain man living near me, murdered a man, kept it hid until on his death bed, then confessed he was the murderer of the innocent man. Let us all remember that nothing can be done in Secret (sneakingly) but it will some sad day be revealed. I am sure my sins will find me out either here or at the Judgment. Let us watch and Pray.—Your brother in Christ, J. D. Powers.

Quit Lying!

A teacher who believed in cooperating with the parents of her pupils, called at the home of a small boy whom she had caught in a number of falsehoods, in order to take counsel with his mother. "I can't see how you can say that," the boy's mother objected, "John never tells me lies, I'm mighty particular about it myself. He's out in the yard now, Annie," she said to his small sister, "you go out and tell him to come in this minute." Annie went, but in a few minutes she returned without the small perpetrator. "He won't come," she announced proudly. "He says he won't." "Did you tell him who was here?" inquired his mother. Annie shook her head. "All right," said the truthful (?) parent. "Go back and tell him his grandmother's here and has some candy for him. That'll bring him!"—*Cyclopedia of Religious Anecdotes*.

God's Way Will Work

It is interesting to note that in the early Church the pioneer work of missions and evangelism was done by so-called laymen. The apostles stayed in Jerusalem until churches had been established in Samaria, Antioch, and other cities, and then they sent out ministers such as Barnabas (Acts 11:22) to help the new churches.

Here again we have a parallel in the modern situation. When I first went to Japan in 1949-1 found literally dozens of Bible classes being taught by American soldiers. Many of them later developed into indigenous churches.

Christian civilians working with the occupation were equally active. One American nurse, who later was made the head of all public health nursing in Japan, was teaching three Bible classes a week. I attended one of her classes and found more than fifty Japanese student nurses present, plus about a dozen doctors. As I left the classroom, I could not help but feel sorry for all the other nurses in Japan who might also be in a Bible class if only more Christian nurses from America were there to teach them.

So often these days young people are deceived by a popular misconception about only a select group being in full-time Christian service. There is no basis whatever in the New Testament for such an idea. *The biblical pattern is for every Christian to be a missionary. The pioneer work in the first century was done more by laymen than by apostles.* Even the apostle Paul often operated as a layman. In Corinth he worked as a tentmaker and won to the Lord his business associates, Aquila and Priscilla. Within eighteen months they had established a church.

When Paul left Corinth, he took Aquila and Priscilla with him as far as Ephesus, then moved on leaving them there to open a new tent shop and start a church.

We could operate the same way today if we only would.

As I write this, I have just been talking with a Christian businessman whose firm is building a huge dam and power plant in an Asian country that has never admitted Christian missionaries. They are sending out hundreds of American draftsmen, engineers, electricians, carpenters, plumbers, painters, and others to work on the project. What an opportunity for Christian men and women to be witnesses for Christ in a land where no missionary has ever gone!

As a matter of fact, there are many places where laymen can witness more effectively than ordained missionaries. In such countries, the professional missionary must spend many years trying to overcome religious prejudice before he can obtain a hearing.

Take South America for example. Four missionary families went to a certain city and established a mission compound and Protestant school. But the people would not come near it. They avoided the Protestants as they would lepers. To be seen near the compound was a social disgrace. Thus the four missionary families were able to win only eight converts in ten years, mostly from among those who were already social outcasts.

Then a Christian woman from the United States went to that city to teach English in the university. She lived in the university community and gained immediate respect because of the dignity of her profession. The South American intelligentsia, disgusted with the corruption and superstition they saw in the established church, flocked to this woman to learn of her personal faith in the living Christ. She started a Bible study group for these inquirers and soon had two dozen in attendance, including two priests. *During her first year in South America, this woman won eleven persons to Christ, more than four missionary families had won in ten*

Just because God has not gifted you to be a preacher is no excuse for saying that you cannot be a missionary. You can go abroad in some other capacity, and there you can be a witness for Christ with whatever gifts God has given you.
—Moody Monthly.

Any Weeds in the Garden of Your Soul?

This is a time of the year when weeds grow without the least provocation! And we would better watch lest our field or garden is overwhelmed. Besides, the neighbors might pass by and say in contempt, "Well, that man is not much of a farmer."

It must have been early in the spring, that our Savior looked on the fields, and gave us the parable of the sower. The seed that fell among thorns, and was choked, represents the word that falls into our hearts yet is stifled by the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, the pleasures of this life, and the lust of other things coming in and crowding out the word in our hearts.

"The cares of this world." The burden of raising a family, the hours of hard toil, the anxiety in times of darkness, the meeting of all the bills, the annoyance of bad neighbors,—all tend to keep us from reading the Bible and praying to God, so that we become unfruitful.

"Deceitfulness of riches" pulls the wool over our eyes so that we can not see that riches will not bring us the happiness we thought they would. Happy is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night. But this love of money chokes the word.

"The pleasures of this life" send their sapling root down into the soil of our hearts and draw the strength from the roots of the word there, so that it withers and dies.

Brethren, if we are going to have a good crop in our souls, we must get after those thorns, those weeds, right now,—soon it will be too late.

"O what will the harvest be?"

Good News

Of course I want to keep informed,

And so I read the daily press

To learn what hill our troops have stormed,

Opinions those in power express,

The latest perfidly exposed

Or breach of trust that is disclosed.

To Reds and rascals, taxes, tanks

And atoms, rockets, jets and guns

To death, destruction, crooks and cranks

Much of the daily news gist runs;

And were this all my reading fare

I know my heart would soon despair.

But I've a Book of better news—

My Bible—and I keep it near,

For it has surer, sounder views,

Assurance in this time of fear;

And although written long ago

Its words are fresh, its pages glow.

It, too, has told of wars and blood

And evil that must be put down,

Of fire and earthquake, famine, flood—

But also of the cross and crown,

Unlike glib news through which we grope,

It tells of Christ, who is our hope!

—Don Moon.