

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38).

The Advocate of Truth

Four Roads

The Body

Plagues

Christmas



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About the cover: This photograph was taken at Seward, Alaska near a roadway just out of town.



FOUR ROADS WE MUST TRAVEL

By Bond Tennant

The Damascus Road is the road of change.

"And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do" (Acts 9:1-6).

Paul was changed from persecutor to apostle, from despiser of the church to defender of the faith. Paul wrote, "Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me" (Galatians 1:21-24). Yes, Paul was changed on the Damascus road. Therefore Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

The Emmaus Road is the road of fellowship.

"And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these

things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he

sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread" (Luke 24:13-35).

After the change, there was fellowship. "...Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (verse 32). "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). I John 1:3 declares, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (I Corinthians 1:9). Paul and Barnabas received the right hands of fellowship. "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision" (Galatians 2:9).

The Jericho Road is the road of service.

"And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more,

when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10:30-37).

Yes, the Samaritan showed mercy to the half dead man. Serving God is different from worshiping Him. We do service by witnessing, visiting the sick, helping financially when we can and it is necessary. We serve God by serving each other. "...,Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

The Jerusalem Road is the road of suffering.

"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matthew 16:21).

The sufferings of Christ were many. All children of God will suffer as they travel on the Jerusalem Road! "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:12). Suffering helps us to mature. "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day" (I Corinthians 4:11-13). The life of a child of God is not all roses. But there is great joy in serving Jesus! There are many heartaches, but there is also happiness. The Apostle Paul said, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ" (Philippians 3:8). "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us" (II Timothy 2:12). "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (I Peter 5:10).

To become a child of God, one must first travel the road of change. The road of change will point one to the road of fellowship. The road of fellowship guides one to the road of service which leads to the road of suffering.

The Body

by Carol Buecher



God has given you something precious and it is your body. When you think about it, the body is a miracle. It came from the union of one sperm and one egg that were extremely small and not even noticed at first. It was planted in your mother's body and began to grow. From this union came a body of bones, muscles, skin, heart, stomach and so much more. You are unique and there is no other person just like you. All of this is God's handiwork and is truly a miracle. It is up to you to care for this body and do all you can to keep it functioning at a healthy level. What you eat and drink is vital. What you do with your body in the form of exercising, keeping clean, caring for injuries, sheltering it and so much more is extremely important. Neglect toward your body in any form can lead to disastrous consequences. If you become ill and ignore it, this can lead to more illnesses that can cause malfunctions in the body, causing serious debilitations in the ability of your body to function. If you have a pain in your hand, it affects the activities you are able to do. Turning a door-knob becomes difficult, as does brushing your hair and teeth, picking up things, typing on the computer and so much more. A little pain in the hand can lead to pain and sickness in other parts of the body caused from compensating and overuse of other body parts. When you think of this precious gift that God has given you, perhaps you will want to do all you can to keep your body physically strong and active. It is important that you keep the mind, soul and spirit healthy, too. All of these things function together to keep you enjoying life and living the way God desires for you to live.

STOP right now and contemplate seriously another

body that is even more precious than your own body! Scripture will describe it quite well. Ephesians 1:22-23 speaks of Jesus Christ in this manner: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Turning to Colossians chapter one, more information is given concerning this body: "And he (Christ) is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence...I Paul am made a minister; Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God" (verses 18, 23-25). These Scriptures are backed up in Romans 12:4-5: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." The Scriptures are clear about this precious body. It is talking about the body of Christ and that body is the church! This is not the physical aspect such as the church building in which you meet, but it is the spiritual body that is being presented. Paul informed those under his care that those persons on earth made up this body. He had become a minister in this church body and spent the rest of his life building up the church body.

Now it is important to find out just who are members of this precious spiritual body of Christ, the church on earth. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are

one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many" (I Corinthians 12:12-14). This passage states that a person is baptized into the body. If you have accepted Jesus as your Saviour, repented of your sins, been baptized by immersion in the name Lord Jesus Christ by a minister of the church, and had the laying on of hands to receive the Holy Spirit; and if you follow the footsteps of Jesus by keeping the Commandments of God, and His testimony, you are a member of the spiritual body of Christ, the church. You at this point would join the scores of others who have followed the same procedure and make up the membership of the church. This includes everyone in the world who has done this. It is not just those that worship with you in the physical building but is everyone that has joined the spiritual body of the church. It does not matter where you live because the body of Christ is not limited to any boundaries. Sometimes a person's thinking limits them to think only of those they personally know and worship with in a physical church building. Are you a member of the body of Christ? If so, you may need to take special notice of how the body is to function and consider your part in the overall operation.

God does not leave us without guidance concerning how the precious body of Christ, His church on earth, is to function. The Apostle Paul, the authority on building spiritual churches, gives definite instructions. Take time to very carefully consider what needs to be done to have a strong, effective and thriving body of Christ. Meditate on all the Scriptures and ask God to enlighten you to become a more effective member of Christ's precious body. Start this examination in the Scriptures by studying I Corinthians 12:14-21: "For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no

need of you." This passage clearly states in verse eighteen that GOD establishes every member in the body as it pleases Him. He knows that every member of the body must be represented and ALL members must work together. If someone is not performing his particular function, all the members are affected. No one should be turned away from his proper functioning of a healthy body of Christ, the church.

There are more instructions from Paul for the functioning of the body in I Corinthians 12:22-27: "Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body: but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." This passage states that one member cannot say to another member of the body that he or she is not needed. Not even the member that seems unimportant or not necessary can be removed. It may be the "cog that keeps the wheels turning." Remember, God has put this body together, not man. This passage instructs that there be NO divisions in the body of Christ and that all members must be aware of the needs of others and be ready to minister to them. There should be comfort and joy because all are members of the precious body of Christ.

Paul gives more information to be studied from I Corinthians 12 concerning the structure of the body of Christ, the church. This is found in verses 1, 4-11 and 28-30: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant...Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of

spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will...And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?" The healthy body of Christ must be operated efficiently with many different people. It takes those that are talented in administration, those that understand the overall operation, and those that have special gifts and talents. Notice that God is setting the positions and He has given the Holy Spirit to guide each one in his or her particular role or roles. The structure of the church begins with the apostles who are chosen to oversee the entire body of Christ throughout the world. They have an extremely difficult and vital job of keeping the truth first and foremost and seeing that the worldwide body is functioning at a level that is conducive to the growth of every facet of the church workings. This is not a one-man operation.

Paul has many more instructions for the operation of the body of Christ. Carefully consider what he adds in Romans 12:3-16: "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep

with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits." This passage again discusses gifts, abilities and skills and their important use in the body of Christ. Each gift is necessary, but the person with the gift MUST use it for the benefit of the whole church group because "all members have not the same office". If that gift is not functioning, it impedes everyone because we all are "members one of another." Then Paul discusses how members should interact. There must be love without pretense or deception among the brothers and sisters. When evil is present, get away from it and embrace good. Preference needs to be given for keeping company with those of the faith rather than those of the world. It is necessary to rejoice in the hope of the Lord, always walking in the Spirit. Prayer must be a priority. Be hospitable and bless others with your words. You cannot ever forget what is so important--the body of Christ. The body must be healthy and functioning in harmony.

Hopefully, your mind is still sharp and concentrating on vital words from the Bible concerning the body of Christ. Paul again provides further instructions for the proper functioning of the body of Christ, the church. They are found in Colossians 3:1-15: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving

one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." This passage reminds you that you have sacrificed your worldly living and it is time to concentrate on living like Christ every second of your life. You do this by focusing on heavenly things, not earthly things. This may be difficult to do because the world is upon you, but the world is not what is important. There is quite a list of things that you must "mortify" or kill because they cause you to disobey God. Do not skip over them lightly because even just one area of disobedience in your life can break your communion with God and His precious Son. Yes, a little "white" lie counts, as do angry words without a just cause. If you "have put off the old man" and "have put on the new man," you will be following ALL the instructions listed in verses twelve through fifteen. It is quite a list and nothing can be left out if you are to walk in peace with God and your fellowman.

Examination of one more of Paul's writings will bring about a clearer understanding of how this all works together. This passage is from Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16: "I THEREFORE, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ...And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and com-

pacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." There are some key words that need to be highlighted to aid you in your pursuit of helping to maintain a healthy body of Christ. They are: worthy, vocation, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing, love, endeavouring, unity, bond, peace...These all work together to strengthen you to carry on the work that is necessary for the body. Again Paul mentions the apostles, prophets, etc. But of great importance is the reason for such workers. They are to perfect the saints, be involved in the ministry, and to edify the whole body of Christ. Edification means to instruct or teach in such a way as to bring about improvement, to bring enlightenment and to uplift spiritually. This can be such an important aspect of keeping the members of the church working to their fullest capacity. It brings encouragement that results in harder workers. It cannot be overlooked why all of this is so important. Verse thirteen says it is all for bringing about unity of everyone's faith, to increase in the knowledge of Jesus and to strive for perfection through the fullness of Jesus our Savior! Verse thirteen relates that the whole body then can be joined and compacted together because all that is needed is supplied. Every part of the body is working in harmony and there will be a healthy, thriving body. It takes effective working of everyone as a whole. The outcome will be a wonderful relationship among the brothers and sisters, which opens the door for the growth of the church body, resulting in bringing glory to God.

In this article much has been quoted from the epistles of the Apostle Paul. It would be of benefit to pause and think about him and the work he did, while alive, so long ago. There is no doubt that he was zealous (devoted and enthusiastic) about what he was doing. Jesus had given the command to "...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). This was to bring thousands to salvation. Paul took this command seriously and was going to bring as many to salvation as he possibly could. It was so important to him to not leave those brought to salvation on their own. Paul was going to support them to grow in the faith. He organized and supervised the growth of the church groups, the body of Christ, in many different places. He knew the saints involved quite intimately, doing his best to keep in contact with them at all times. Paul knew from this contact what

correction they needed, and he rebuked them as needed. Not only that, but he was one to praise and exhort the members of the body of Christ and encourage them to carry on the work. If Paul saw things that were not right, he informed and corrected those involved.

Paul had to spend most of his time keeping in contact with the different church groups, and this kept him traveling much of the time. He knew he could not build strong churches without strong involvement. The traveling Paul did was very difficult. It wasn't like today where you can ride in comfort and arrive in a few hours. No, it was walking in all kinds of weather, riding donkeys, going by boat on dangerous seas and having uncomfortable accommodations. It was being shipwrecked, bitten by a very poisonous snake and being imprisoned for his passion for Christ. When Paul was unable to visit the different bodies of Christ, he did not "drop the ball" and leave them unattended. Paul hand-wrote letters to them to keep in contact because he did not have the convenience of e-mail or a cell phone. Even from dark, stinky and miserable prison cells, he wrote letters of instruction and exhortation. Paul often lived a miserable physical life, but he never backed down on working to establish healthy bodies of Christ. Paul kept the groups running by exhortation, praise, warnings and rebuke.

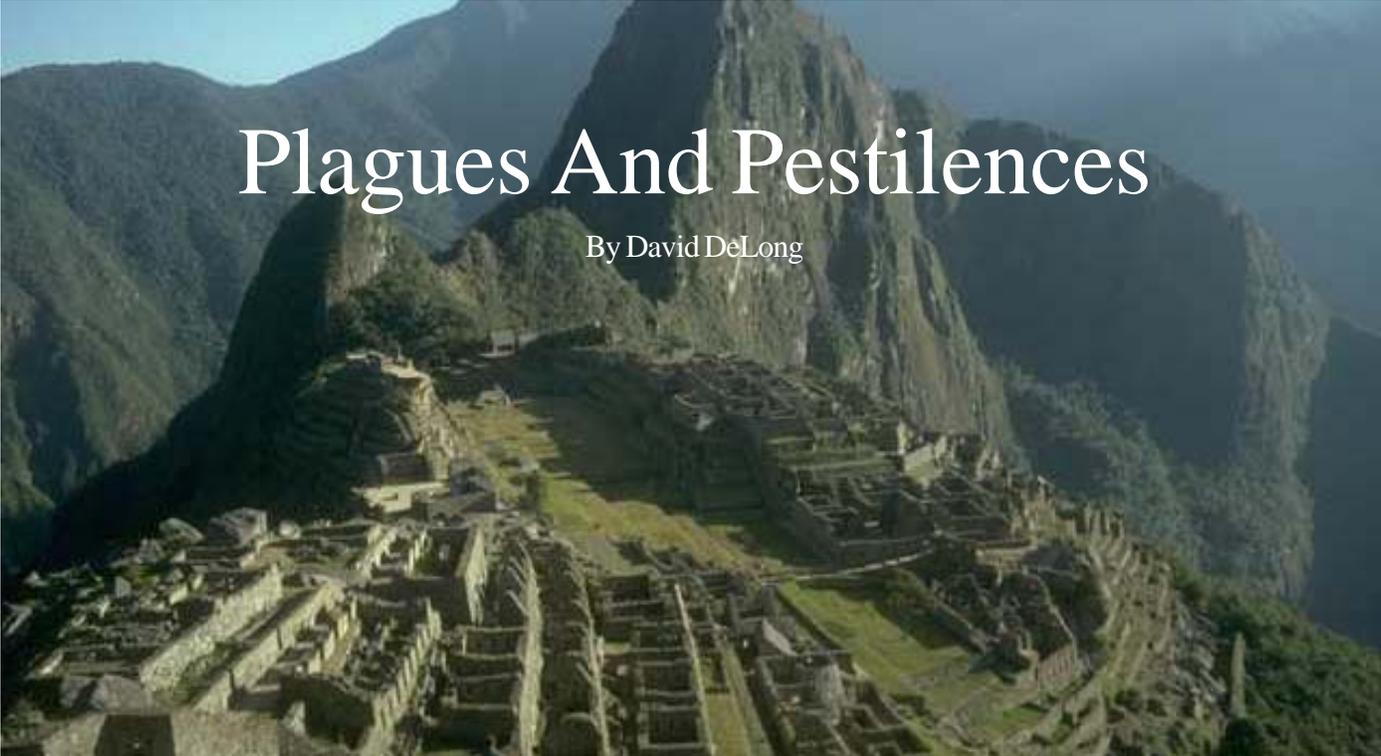
Paul should be an example for all followers of Christ today. The need to bring others to salvation should be a burning goal in every member of the body of Christ. As Paul gave care and supervision, so should the members of the body do today. ALL should be concerned about the welfare of the other members and be ready to minister and give to them as needed at all times even when circumstances are inconvenient or difficult. There should be strong communication among members, not for gossip sake, so that everyone is aware of what needs to be done and so prayer can be offered for all. Goals to bring people to salvation and nurturing the existing members could be easily completed. Just think what could be done for the body of Christ today if the members were filled with passion, as was Paul!

One other characteristic of Paul that must not be ignored was that he prayed and prayed and prayed. He prayed for the saints and asked them to pray for him that he could continue his work. His prayers are inspiring because he asked for spiritual blessings in specific ways. Wouldn't it be nice to know that someone is praying for

you that you would "...be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man"? (Ephesians 3:16) How about a prayer being given for you that you would "...be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God"? (Colossians 1:9-10). On numerous occasions throughout Paul's epistles, he offered prayers for the saints, and many times he asked to be supported by the saints in their prayers. How often and with what expectations do you enthusiastically pray for other saints to prosper spiritually? Are they sincerely prayed for the benefit of others or is it to bring an outcome that you want? Paul knew that prayers of the right kind were a necessity for all involved.

There are so many more Scriptures that tell about the healthy functioning of the body of Christ, the church. Search them out and live by them. Do not forget that you are a part of the body of Christ, and it is your responsibility to uphold your part so the body can be healthy and strong, working in unity and harmony. Realize and remember that being a member of the body of Christ is not a Sabbath-only activity. It is twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, three hundred sixty-five days a year. Just as you care for your physical body, you must care for your spiritual body and the spiritual welfare of all the members of the church. It is of utmost importance because your salvation can be affected as well as the salvation of other members.

In closing, please read with all your heart Paul's prayer in Ephesians 1:15-20. Pray it often for other saints in the body of Christ. "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in heavenly places."



Plagues And Pestilences

By David DeLong

In Matthew chapter 24 we read of a situation in which Jesus' disciples asked Him questions about His return and the end of the world. He replied to them in verses 5-8: "For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."

One of the conditions that Jesus mentioned as being "the beginning of sorrows" is that of pestilences. This word, in the Greek, is "loimos" and it refers to a plague or disease. Interestingly, we have been hearing a lot recently about the H1N1 virus, or "Swine Flu" as it is called. Could this world-wide epidemic be a part of the pestilences that Jesus warned His disciples about? In any event, I believe that the Swine Flu is partly meant as a wake-up call to the world.

Historically, the Lord has used plagues and pestilences in at least a two-fold way: to punish people for their sins, and to show forth His glory to the world. For instance, when a famine hit the land of Canaan, Abram took Sarai

his wife and went into Egypt. There Pharaoh, not knowing that Sarai was Abram's wife, wanted to take her for his wife. In Genesis 12:17 we read, "And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife."

To another Pharaoh (and his people) years later, the Lord sent plagues upon Egypt to show them His might. Regarding this series of events, Exodus 7:5 informs us, "And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them." The Lord then sent ten great judgments upon the land of Egypt. These were: the waters turned to blood; the multitudes of frogs; the infestation of lice; the swarms of flies; the murrain (pestilence) upon the livestock; the affliction of boils; the hail; the locusts; the thick darkness; and the death of the first-born (chapters 7:17-12:30).

A distinction needs to be made between a plague and a pestilence. A plague can involve many different types of afflictions upon man and beast, including illnesses. A pestilence, however, appears to involve only illnesses upon them. The Lord uses both types of afflictions to render His judgments upon a sinful world. We will now reflect upon some other instances, given in the Bible, in which

the Lord used plagues or pestilences as punishments.

After the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, Moses went up into Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments from God. While he was gone, Aaron made a golden calf for the people. In His intended judgment upon the people, the Lord would have completely destroyed them, and made a great nation of Moses. However, after Moses' intercession for the Israelites, we read, "And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people" (Exodus 32:14). Nevertheless, God still inflicted a partial judgment upon the evildoers as we read in verse 35: "And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made."

In warning the children of Israel of what He would do to them if they continued in future disobedience, the Lord solemnly declared to them in Leviticus 26: 21-25: "And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins. I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate. And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins. And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy."

While wandering in the wilderness, the children of Israel murmured against the Lord because they had manna to eat, but not the foods they had eaten in the land of Egypt. Because of this, the Lord commanded Moses: "And say thou unto the people, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow, and ye shall eat flesh: for ye have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for it was well with us in Egypt: therefore the LORD will give you flesh, and ye shall eat. Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; But even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised the LORD which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?...And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled

against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague" (Numbers 11:18-20,33).

Not long thereafter, The Lord told Moses to send twelve spies to search out the land of Canaan. When they came back to make a report about what they had seen, ten of the spies gave an evil report of the land, thus discouraging the people. Only Caleb and Joshua brought back a good and encouraging report of the land. Relating to those ten men which brought back the evil report, we read, "And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land, Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the LORD" (Numbers 14:36,37).

Some time later, in Numbers 16, we find still another disturbing situation among God's people in the wilderness. This time we read about a rebellion that was staged against Moses, Aaron, and, of course, the Lord. Korah was the apparent ringleader of the rebellion and was accompanied by others, including 250 "princes of the assembly". The Lord punished these rebels by allowing the earth to swallow them up, or by sending a fire to consume them.

The next day, surprisingly, the people blamed God's two leaders for the incident. We find in verse 41, "But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the LORD." In response to this we are informed: "And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the LORD; the plague is begun. And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed. Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah" (vss. 46-49).

In still another episode of iniquity and punishment, the Bible records: "And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods:

and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel. And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel. And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor. And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand; And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel” (Numbers 25:1-8). Verse 9 informs us that 24,000 people died from this plague. (Please see also Psalm 106:28-31).

When the ark of the Lord was captured by the Philistines, it was brought “into the house of Dagon”. I Samuel 5:6 records, “But the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with emerods (“tumors”, NASB), even Ashdod and the coasts thereof.” This may have been a case of bubonic plague that the Lord sent among the Philistines. Later, the ark was sent to the cities of Gath and Ekron where a similar judgment was given to the inhabitants (see vs. 8-12).

King David sinned a great sin by numbering the children of Israel. The Lord apparently “...moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah” (II Samuel 24:1), by allowing Satan to be the one who “stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel” (I Chronicles 21:1). After Joab, who was the census taker, had given his report to the king, David recognized his iniquity. The Lord then gave him a choice of one of three punishments. David decided to “...fall now into the hand of the LORD”... We read in II Samuel 24:15, “So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men.”

The Lord’s use of plagues and pestilences, as judg-

ments upon sinners, will continue into the future. We read in Zechariah 14:12,15, concerning the battle of Armageddon, “And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth...And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.”

The two witnesses of Revelation 11, who stand “before the God of the earth”, will be given supernatural powers during the time of God’s great wrath which will be poured out upon His enemies. The Scriptures proclaim, “These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will” (vs. 6).

And speaking of God’s great wrath--“the seven last plagues”--which is described in Revelation chapters 8-11 and 16, we find that it (God’s wrath) will be “poured out without mixture” upon the earth for those who “worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark...” (see chapter 14, verses 9 and 10.) These plagues will involve: a “grievous sore”; the sea becoming “as the blood of a dead man”; the rivers and fountains becoming “blood”; men being “scorched with great heat”; those in the beast’s kingdom gnawing “their tongues for pain”; the world being gathered “together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon”; and “a great earthquake” and “great hail out of heaven”.

The Lord assures His people, concerning this time, however, that “Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence...Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday...There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling” (Psalm 91:3,5-6,10).

We must still look to the Lord as our Protector and Healer today. When a “great multitude” followed Jesus and “came unto him”, we are told, “And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch

him, as many as had plagues” (Mark 3:9,10).

In conclusion, let us remember two very solemn warnings that are issued in the book of Revelation. The first one concerns those who continue to cling to the evil practices of Babylon. This warning proclaims, “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Revelation 18:4).

The second warning concerns those who would tamper with the Word of God. It declares: “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the

book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Revelation 22:18,19).

Plagues and pestilences have historically been used by the Lord as a wake-up call to those who lived unrepentant lives. That purpose is still seen today and will be in the future as well. However, when people look to the Lord in faith, He becomes their Protector, Healer, and Supporter through every circumstance, including times of plagues and pestilences. The final result is that the Lord’s great glory will be known in the earth.



CHRISTMAS FALLACIES... BUT THE TRUTH IS...

BY BOND TENNANT

The Scriptures indicate that December 25 is not the birthday of Christ. In December, it is the winter season, rainy and cold. The shepherds do not keep their flocks out at night grazing in the winter. "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" (Luke 2:8). The custom was for the shepherds to herd their flocks and take them in after the middle of October and release them in the early spring. Therefore, the Luke 2 account of the birth of Jesus could not have been in December.

There is no command in the Bible to observe Christ's birthday or to worship Him because of His birth. When we read Luke 2:13-20, we find that when the angels announced this to the shepherds, they (the angels) glorified "GOD IN THE HIGHEST" in other words, THE HEAVENLY FATHER. When the shepherds went to Bethlehem the Bible says that they returned "GLORIFYING AND PRAISING GOD", for what they had seen. Never in His earthly ministry did Jesus ever glorify Himself!

We are told in Matthew 2:1-2 that there came wise men from the east to worship not a child but the King of the Jews. We are told in verse 11 that they presented unto Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Because only three gifts are mentioned, it is believed that there were three wise men, but the Bible does not record the number.

The wise men did not bring their gifts to a manger. We read in Matthew 2:11, "And when they were come INTO THE HOUSE, they saw the YOUNG CHILD with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." This was sometime after the actual birth of Christ.

Again let us remember that they worshipped Him because He was born KING OF THE JEWS! Satan wants our eyes on a little child, but God wants our eyes on the resurrected Christ.



FREE-STYLE WORSHIP

Payne Cathedral A.M.E. attracting young church goers with a Saturday night Main Event

By Salatheia Bryant

For The Chronicle

It's Saturday night and Joshua Newman is hanging out with his friends. The lights are low, the disco ball is spinning and the music is thumping. Sounds like a party? It's church.

"It's like a different experience. It's more laid back," the 17-year-old Newman said of the Main Event, held one Saturday a month at Payne Cathedral of Faith African Methodist Episcopal Church. "I like coming to the Main Event more than the Sunday service."

Payne Cathedral, like many denominational churches, has retooled its youth program in an effort to keep its young people from drifting away or being attracted by more contemporary nondenominational churches.

"We're out of date. We're still doing church in the 20th century," said the church's pastor, the Rev. Brenda Payne. "Our impetus for this was that our youth were bored in church. Although we have a vibrant worship service, it just didn't meet their needs."

Payne--it's just coincidence the pastor and the 121-year-old church have the same name--said the Main Event is about addressing the needs of younger worshippers and creating another generation of church leaders.

Amy Jacober, associate professor of practical theology and youth ministry at George W. Truett Theological Seminary, said churches have learned that refocusing their efforts doesn't mean giving younger worshippers hype over substance.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

"Churches are saying, 'How do we live in both worlds; sharing Christ without losing them?' It's not unusual to go to church and have it be a casual service. It can feel paradoxical," Jacober said. "A lot of churches are still trying to figure out what that means... There's no cookie-cutter approach. A lot of churches are saying, 'How do we not throw the baby out with the bath water?'"

The Crossing Community Church, formerly known as St. Luke First Missionary Baptist Church, started a teen church last year. The church had offered a children's church service for about 15 years, but youth advisor Luetta Walker said they got older, they participated less.

The teen church--at 11 a.m. on the third and fourth Sundays has made a difference, Walker said. The service is interactive, allowing for discussion, role playing and questions and answers. And it has attracted neighborhood teens with no previous church experience to the southwest Houston campus.

Payne Cathedral has more than 300 members, including about 60 between the ages of 13 and 25.

Pastor Payne said the Main Event isn't just about having a contemporary service. It's also for strengthening young members' faith for the long haul.

"We want to be able to give to them the Word of God in an innovative way. This is crucial in terms of keeping them in church," she said. "It gives the kids something to do to have fun. Praising God comes in various ways."

The service resonated with visitor Tierra Blount.

The 17-year-old clapped her hands to the gospel music. She vigorously applauded the praise dance routine by an all-male group from New Light Baptist Church. "I thought it was wonderful," she said. "I enjoyed seeing the boys dancing for the Lord. You don't see that every day."

Excerpted from the *Houston Chronicle*

COMMENT

The Main Event and those services similar to it simply please the emotions of young people and those who participate in them. There is no church value in them!

Without a doubt, the youth and all others who participate in these services will continue in the same church because the services make them feel good which makes true repentance and conversion virtually impossible.

It is good to show one's emotion from time to time, but calling it church is wrong. Certain emotions can best be shown outside the church. Such programs or events do not strengthen faith. Romans 10:17 tells us how faith comes. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." After hearing the Word of God, studying the Word of God itself is required of the sincere individual. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

Knowing the Scriptures will strengthen the faith of the young person. The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (II Timothy 3:14-15).

PERSONAL FROM MY DESK

I am really not an ardent fan of Dear Abby, but many times she gives thought provoking advice to those who write to her. In my opinion, the following, which appeared in the *Houston Chronicle*, is a good example.

The following is the letter and the reply. The heading was **Teen girl jealous of classmates.**

Here is the letter:

Dear Abby: I am a 14-year-old girl in high school. My family does not have a lot of money, but a lot of my friends do. When my friends come to school with new clothes or concert tickets, I feel resentful because I can't afford them. I constantly compare myself to other girls and feel jealous of everyone. Is there anything I can do?

**-jealous of everyone
in upstate New York**

She replied:

Dear Jealous: I can think of few things so self-defeating as constantly comparing oneself to other people. No matter what income bracket a person is in, there always will be individuals who have more. Your worth has nothing to do with what's in your closet, what's on your back or whether you can afford concert tickets.

One way to feel better about yourself would be to make a list of qualities that make you special. You are obviously intelligent. Are you also a loyal friend? Are you sensitive to the feelings of others? These important qualities will outlast any fashion fad. The more time you spend dwelling on the important qualities you have, the less time you'll waste being preoccupied with the material things you don't. (End of Reply)

Possessing the fruit of the Spirit which is listed in Galatians 5:22-23 is far more important than obtaining earthly goods. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Being jealous is just the opposite of having the fruit of the Spirit. Jealousy can be classified as one of the works of the flesh which are listed in Galatians 5:19-21. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Jealousy is a form of ENVYING!

The young girl who is jealous of everyone in upstate New York needs to read God's Word and consider the words of the Apostle Paul when he wrote to Timothy, "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (I Timothy 6:6-8). It makes no difference what others possess.

Our present life is too short to be jealous of other people because of what they possess. Jealousy is one of the many things that will cause one to be lost.

Jesus said, "...Take heed, and beware of covetousness (wanting the same things that others have): for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).

B.T.



Questions and Answers

QUESTION: What is meant by the term "barbarous people" mentioned in Acts 28:2?

ANSWER: "And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold" (Acts 28:2).

The reference to the "barbarous people" of Melita does not suggest savagery. After the Apostle Paul and his companions were shipwrecked on their way to Rome, they came safely to the shore on the island of Melita.

The word "barbarous" used to describe the islanders, both in the New Testament Greek and in King James English does not imply that these people were uncouth or uncivilized people. Rather it means "foreigners, non-Greeks."

Because the word "barbarous" now carries strong connotations of cruelty or savagery, some modern translations of this passage use neutral words like *inhabitants* or *natives* to describe these islanders.

QUESTION: What is the meaning of Jude 23?

ANSWER: Jude 23 reads, "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spot-

ted by the flesh."

This verse seems to be telling us to be careful in soulwinning. We must not become influenced by the worldly and fleshly deeds of the one whom we are trying to win.

QUESTION: What do the words *Anathema Maranatha* mean in I Corinthians 16:22?

ANSWER: The verse reads, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha."

"Anathema" is "accursed," and "Maranatha" is a word meaning "Our Lord cometh." The sentence is a malediction pronounced upon our Lord's enemies.

QUESTION: Who were Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah?

ANSWER: They were the Hebrew names of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego before they became captives in Babylon and were given Babyloian names.

QUESTION: What are saints in the New Testament?

ANSWER: In the New Testament, the word *saints* ap-

plies to all believers, not just to those who are exceptionally holy or those canonized by the church. Saints in the New Testament are those who are sanctified, or consecrated by their faith in Christ's redemption, not by singular or miraculous works of piety.

"Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them" (Romans 16:15).

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia" (II Corinthians 1:1).

"Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you" (Philippians 4:21).

QUESTION: Do we need other people?

ANSWER: Young people often say impatiently to parents, "Don't worry about me. I can take care of myself." Older people often say it to their families and friends. They want to be "utterly free," to come and go as they please. But mark it down in your little black book: No one is ever entirely able to take care of himself under all circumstances. And it isn't good for one to be too long alone and not be responsible to someone.

Of course there are times when we want to be alone for a time. Almost everyone enjoys some solitude with time to think, relax, and ponder one's problems. One time to seek solitude is prayer. Matthew 6:6 says, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

No matter how self-sufficient a person is, he should feel responsible to someone for his actions and attitudes, and activities for his own good, if not for the good of someone else.

There is a practical aspect of the question--the side that is concerned with safety. Persons who say they are able to take care of themselves don't know whether they can or not. If all goes well, they may be, but the unexpected often happens. Anyone can become ill, meet misfortune, or foul play, or be involved in an accident. If no one is expecting him or is responsible for him, his adversities, illness or complete disappearance might go un-

noticed until he was well beyond help.

Young people often resent their parents asking them where they are going, whom they are going with, and when they will be back. Parents aren't prying when they ask for this information. It is simply that unlooked-for things can happen, and parents have a right and a duty to know these things. Common sense demands it if love and duty didn't.

Besides the matter of safety, a person simply doesn't do his best if he doesn't have the interest of others to keep him at his best. Young people, old people, all people need the comparisons, competition, and appreciation to keep their standards up. They need to know people are depending upon them, waiting for them, pulling with them. They need folks who believe in them, trust them, and expect much of them. This will keep them looking, thinking, and doing their best.

Anyone will be better when he knows that there are others who expect him to do better. A person needs to be somewhat responsible to someone else all the time to keep him at his best, and in the interest of his own safety.

QUESTION: Where can we find the words of Jesus "It is more blessed to give than to receive" in the Bible, and does it only pertain to monetary giving?

ANSWER: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" is indeed one of the sayings of Jesus. However, it is not found in the Beatitudes or in the Sermon on the Mount. It does not appear anywhere in the Gospels, but rather in the Book of Acts.

In the Apostle Paul's farewell address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, he said: "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:33-35).

Note that Paul seems to be referring to the giving of one's toil here, not just money. The kind of blessed giving Paul had in mind seems to involve more labor than just giving from one's wallet.



Bohol, Philippines





LESSON I**THE LAW OF THE CLEAN AND UNCLEAN**

Scripture Reading: Deuteronomy 14:2-20.

Golden Text: Leviticus 20:26.

"And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine."

1. Who made the law of the clean and unclean? Leviticus 11:45-47.
2. When Israel kept the clean and unclean law, were they separated from other people? Leviticus 20:25-27.
3. What do we find about the clean and unclean in Deuteronomy 14:3-20?
4. Do we provoke God to anger if we know about the clean and unclean but do not follow it? Isaiah 65:1-16.
5. What did the Lord say through the Apostle Paul about the clean and unclean? II Corinthians 6:17-18.

NOTE: An idol is unclean unto God. So are the animals that God said not to eat. "Touching," in reference to the unclean animal means, "Not to eat it."

6. Did Paul write to Timothy and say it is alright to eat the unclean in I Timothy 4:1-6?
7. People who eat the unclean are an abomination to God. Can they have eternal life if they eat unclean meats? Revelation 21:8.

NOTE: If we eat the unclean animal, we defile our bodies. The body is the temple of God and His Holy Spirit. If we defile it, we cannot enter the New Jerusalem.

8. What will happen to these people who follow false teachings and eat unclean meats when Jesus comes again? Isaiah 66:17-18.

LESSON II**PAYING TITHE**

Scripture Reading: Genesis 14:17-24.

Golden Text: Malachi 3:8.

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings."

1. Who did the "priest of the most high God" bless, and what did he give? Genesis 14:18-20.
2. What is the king of Salem also called? Hebrews 7:1-2.
3. Who is higher than the priest Melchisedec? Hebrews 6:20.
4. How does someone rob God? Malachi 3:8-9.
5. What will be poured out upon those who pay their tithe? Malachi 3:10-12.
6. How are God's ministers to be paid? I Corinthians 9:13-14.

NOTE: We should look after the needs of our ministers. A minister in distress cannot be as fruitful.

7. What are we required to do in addition to paying tithe? Matthew 23:23.
8. What part of our increase is to be used for the tithe? Numbers 18:21-26.

LESSON III**THE LORD'S SUPPER**

Scripture Reading: I Corinthians 11:23-29.

Golden Text: I Corinthians 5:7 (last part).

"For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."

1. When was Israel to observe the Passover, and what was the reason for the institution of it? Exodus 12:2, 17-18, 27.
2. What month did the children of Israel come out of Egypt? Exodus 13:4.
3. For how long was this memorial to be kept? Exodus 12:14.
4. Who is our Passover? I Corinthians 5:7.
5. Who did Jesus send to prepare the Passover, and what did He tell them? Luke 22:8-12.
6. Did this all happen as Jesus said? Luke 22:13.
7. What did Jesus do to the disciples that was done as an example for us today? John 13:12-17.
8. What is the symbol of Jesus' body? I Corinthians 11:23.
9. What does I Corinthians 11:26 mean to you?

NOTE: Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper so that we can remember Him. Once we are baptized and have received the Holy Spirit, we also should wash one another's feet and partake of the emblems of Christ. We do this once a year, at the time appointed, as Jesus did.

LESSON IV

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DIE?

Scripture Reading: Job 14:1-22.

Golden Text: Job 14:12.

"So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."

1. What happens when we die? Psalm 146:3-4.
2. What does Isaiah say about the people of God that die? Isaiah 26:19.
3. When a person dies, does he go to heaven? Job 14:12-14.
4. Did David ascend into the heavens? Acts 2:34.
5. When God's people die, what does the Bible say has happened to them? I Thessalonians 4:13-14.
6. Do the dead praise the Lord? Psalm 115:17.
7. In death, is there any remembrance? Psalm 6:5.
8. What will happen at the last trump? I Corinthians 15:51-56.
9. Do any of God's people have the promise yet? Hebrews 11:13-16, 39-40.

Write the letters A,E,I,O,U in the proper places to find something Paul did.

P _ _ L W _ S _ M _ S S _ _ N _ R Y.
 H _ W R _ T _ L _ T T _ R S.
 T H _ Y _ R _ _ N T H _ B _ B L _ .

Paul had to suffer many things for the sake of Jesus.

Do you remember what some of them were? We have mixed up some of them. See if you can straighten them out.

- bndli _____
- inscha _____
- ipsheckwr _____
- laj _____
- teaben _____
- slei _____



THE TEASER

"Yeoooww!" squealed the cat. Mother ran to the door and looked out into the yard.

"Roger, stop teasing the cat," she called. "It hurts him when you pull his tail."

Roger grinned and ran off to play with his tricycle. But soon Mother had to run to the door again when she heard baby Patti crying.

"Don't tease her!" scolded Mother. "It isn't kind to tease." Mother came out into the yard.

"May I go and play with the older boys down the block for a little while?" asked Roger.

Mother said he might for a little while, so Roger climbed on his tricycle and rode off down the sidewalk. He found his friends playing with Allen, the new boy who had moved into the neighborhood.

"There's what I want to do," said Allen, rushing toward Roger. "I want to ride his tricycle."

"I want to ride awhile first," said Roger. "Then you can."

"Get off," yelled Allen, yanking the tricycle.

Roger started to back up and go around Allen. But

Allen jumped into his path and would not let him pass.

"Give it here!" demanded Allen.

"I won't!" cried Roger. "It's mine, and you have no right!"

Allen grabbed Roger's ear and twisted it. Roger yelled from pain, but held on to his tricycle. Allen jerked him back by the hair. How it hurt! Then Roger's two friends came to his rescue. They pulled Allen away and held him so he couldn't hurt Roger any more.

"I wanted us to take turns," Roger said to Allen. "But since you won't play fair, and tease so much, I'll go home and play with my little sister!" Roger whirled around and pedaled back home as fast as he could. He found Patti playing in the sand pile. When she saw Roger, she grabbed her sand pail and shovel and held them close to her and began to whimper.

"Don't worry, Patti," said Roger. "I'm not ever going to tease you again. I know it isn't any fun." Roger had learned to be kind. Now he was happy, Mother was happy, kitty was happy, and Jesus was happy.

-Irene Lefler

"YES, I CAN" or "NO, I CAN'T"

By Maryan B. Wilkinson

Answer each of these questions about big helpers and little helpers. They will give you something to think about. Answer "Yes, I Can", or "No, I Can't".

1. Can you clean your whole house all by yourself? Can you help mother by keeping your own room neat?
2. Can you wash all the clothes and towels and sheets, and hang them out to dry? Can you help a little by carrying the soap or the clothespins?
3. Can you go all by yourself on a big ship to tell the people in Africa about Jesus? Can you tell your friends that Jesus loves them?
4. Can you talk on television about God's love? Can you let your light shine by being a little helper every day?

NAMES FOR CHRISTIANS

In the New Testament, Christians are given a variety of names. Twenty-three of these are hidden. The first letter is given. Can you find the name in the Bible?

- S (II Timothy 2:5) _____
- B (Acts 5:14) _____
- B (Acts 6:3) _____
- C (Romans 8:16) _____
- C (II Peter 4:16) _____
- D (Acts 9:36) _____
- E (I Peter 2:21) _____
- F (John 15:15) _____
- H (Titus 3:7) _____
- H (II Timothy 2:6) _____
- K (Revelation 1:6) _____
- P (I Peter 2:11) _____
- P (Revelation 1:6) _____
- S (Acts 9:13) _____
- S (Colossians 3:24) _____
- S (II Timothy 2:3) _____
- S (John 1:12) _____
- S (I Timothy 1:15) _____
- S (I Peter 1:17) _____
- S (I Peter 2:11) _____
- V (II Timothy 2:21) _____
- W (Acts 1:8) _____
- W (II Timothy 2:15) _____

Write the letters A, E, I, O, U in the proper places to find something Paul did.

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*"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye
should be ignorant, how that all our fathers
were under the cloud, and all passed
through the sea;*

*And were all baptized unto Moses in the
cloud and in the sea;*

And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

*And did all drink the same spiritual drink:
for they drank of that spiritual Rock
that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."
(I Corinthians 10:1-4)*

