

The Herald Of Christ's Kingdom

September/October 2000

The Church

Editor's Journal

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.—Colossians 1:24

Footstep followers of Jesus are variously called "the church," "the body of Christ," and "the bride of Christ." One author has traced over 100 titles of Christ and his church. Each of these titles emphasizes a different feature of the close and intimate relationship that exists between Jesus and his followers.

In the symbol of "the body of Christ" we see the close intertwined relationship between the two. As the "head," Jesus does the planning and the church fulfills his desires. The "body" relationship also shows the variety of functions which are delegated to different followers.

The picture of the Bride lays stress on still another aspect of the spiritual bond between Jesus and his followers. Here the aspect of love and the anticipation of a bride for her beloved come to the fore. This illustration also highlights the unity of Christ and his church, for this spiritual marriage is based on the same matrimonial law given to Adam and Eve: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).

But it is as the "church" that we note the religious connection between the two. The followers form the congregation with their Master as their teacher. The Greek word translated "church" in the New Testament is ecclesia. This word has the significance of "to call out," denoting a class that is especially selected to do a certain work. Paul puts it simply in Hebrews 5:4, "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."

The Bible clearly teaches that the present age is the time for the selection and testing of this church. This training is preparatory for a future work of assisting Christ in the uplifting of the human race to perfection and eternal life.

The articles in this journal relate specifically to God's dealing with this special class.

We open with a treatise entitled *God's Purpose for the Church*, showing how its selection is for God's ultimate purpose of bringing together in him all things, both of which are in heaven and on earth (Ephesians 1:10).

The formal opening of the Christian walk begins with an outward confession of faith and commitment to Christ. As with Jesus and his disciples the commitment to do God's will and offer oneself as a living sacrifice is expressed through the symbol of baptism. The origin and use of this symbol form the subject matter of the second article, *Buried in Water*.

The third subject to be treated, under the title *Declaring the End from the Beginning*, examines the biblical concepts of God's foreknowledge and predestination.

The next article, *Making the Church Righteous*, looks at the process by and through which God can deal with imperfect beings as though they were actually perfect creatures.

Sanctification, the setting apart for a holy work, is the next topic. In *Duties of a Holy Priesthood*, the author shows how God's dealings with the priesthood of ancient Israel form a picture of his dealings with the church, the bride of Christ.

Though appreciative of all the grace of God extended to the church during the present lifetime, the real expectation of Christians is to be glorified with their Lord and live with him forever in the heavens. It is this resurrection that is the topic of *The Deliverance of the Church*.

The final article is our usual monthly verse-by-verse Bible study feature. Entitled *Unity with Diversity*, this month's study looks at the fourth chapter of Ephesians, sometimes called the Constitution of the Church.

We trust that this series of articles will be edifying to all true Christians who are called to be a part of this elect class and that, through faithfulness in well-doing, they may make their "calling and election" sure (2 Peter 1:10).

Unifying All in Christ

God's Purpose for the Church

He has made known to us his hidden purpose—such was his will and pleasure determined beforehand in Christ—to be put into effect when the time was ripe: namely, that the universe, all in heaven and on earth, might be brought into unity in Christ.—Ephesians 1:9,10 (New English Bible)

Richard Doctor

Today nearly all mankind wander without purpose on the parched ground of alienation from holy things. What peace the most troubled souls will know when through our assistance they willingly come back to be held in God's embrace! (Psalm 91:4) While changing sinful habits is never a simple or painless process, part of our purpose as members of Christ's body is to reconcile those lost through sin to God, seeing them return to him with songs of joy. Beyond this, as living stones in God's temple, we shall enjoy an unspeakable closeness with our bridegroom and Jehovah for eternity (1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:22). Then all shall appreciate our Savior's sacrifice in pouring his soul out unto death that "all in heaven and on earth, might be brought into unity." It is only then that Christ Jesus "shall see the travail of his soul and be satisfied" (Isaiah 53:11).

God's purpose for the church once was hidden. Developing a church—the body of Christ—is far from the most straightforward method to bring all things on earth back into unity with God. Certainly "the church" was an unfamiliar concept to the Jewish nation in Jesus' day. It was hidden wisdom. Yet if the church's purpose is so that "all in heaven and on earth, might be brought into unity in Christ," a new question appears. After all, except for Jesus, which of us directly knows anything about heaven? Are we to think that heaven needs the healing ministry of Christ?

Keenly aware of our perplexity, Paul describes God's purpose as a mystery: "[He] made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself" (Ephesians 1:9).

We need to remember that a mystery is something revealed to those initiated in the secret wisdom of Christ; a mystery is not something confusing. The church is here to develop clear thinking and witness to God's love through Jesus. Its members are to be a blessing to each other even now and so fulfil the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2). Amazingly they are here to labor as "workers with him" to see God's will fully accomplished (2 Corinthians 6:1).

"Unity" Means Putting on Christ

Many Christians and heathen are willing to suffer, die, or endure whatever sacrifice is required for their clan, religion, nation, and their concept of "unity." Even more are

willing to inflict suffering and death on others with whom they are in conflict regarding any of these, again in the name of "unity."

Unity in Christ, the purpose of the church —God's "mystery"—stands apart and reproveth these works of darkness. Christ's spirit of sober mature judgment has no part in our fallen religious passions. The rebuke of Jesus to James and John when the Samaritans slighted them on their journey to Jerusalem is just as forceful today: "When his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village" (Luke 9:54-56).

How quickly we take offense at the real and imagined insults of life! How challenging and narrow this way is when our purpose as unifiers grasps our lives. What need to develop character-likeness to Christ, that we might shine forth the spirit's graces (Matthew 13:43). On one side we need to have our doctrinal swords sharpened against the whetstone of continued study in eager preparation to defend truth: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

Yet when these erring ones are turned from their blindness, they will need the healing of Christ and the church. Christ and the church are partners in providing the needful healing love. From this perspective we can see the profound depths of wisdom in the words of Jesus: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:44,45).

Paul showed the practical balancing of the narrow way in his ministry. When informed of the open sin in Corinth, he unhesitatingly passed judgment: "For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed" (1 Corinthians 5:3).

Later reports on the effect of this rebuke reached Paul, and he just as swiftly applied healing balm: "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him" (2 Corinthians 2:6-8).

A narrow way indeed is the course of wisdom Paul walks in this matter. But his purpose is always clear: "[that] all in heaven and on earth, might be brought into unity in Christ."

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). God's wisdom purposes that the church

be molded by struggles with sin so that the life experiences of the members of this body might be used for the "healing of the nations." These are both the bold threads of the church's heroic experiences as well as those foundation threads of day-by-day living from which God weaves the tapestry of the church's collective experience and communion. Jesus endured all the injustices of life while radiating God's love because of his clear focus on his purpose. Paul tells us that the prospect of future joy set before Jesus enabled him to endure the cross and to despise the shame: "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2).

What is this joy if not the "blessing of all the families of the earth"? The Lord has given us the word of reconciliation that we serve as ambassadors of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

Fore-Knowledge Is Not "Fore-Experience"

As ambassadors, what is the church's purpose regarding all things in heaven? Jehovah has all foreknowledge. He foreknew the character of and need for the church before the foundations of the world (Ephesians 1:4). Yet our loving heavenly Father's heart aches for the creation's fallen state. Scripture forcibly shows that possessing foreknowledge is not to be confused with "fore-experience." Foreknowledge does not lead to emotional distance and detachment: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart" (Genesis 6:5,6).

The depths of man's imbalance and depravity, particularly in the service of false religion, is capable of even going beyond what God wishes to consider in his heart: "For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart" (Jeremiah 7:30,31).

If even the heavenly Father with all fore-knowledge finds the actual experience with sin painful, what of the angels? Clearly they are longing to understand the things revealed to the church—"which things the angels desire to look into" (1 Peter 1:12). Lucifer was a glorious being and a leader in heaven with whom the angels worked during the great ages needed n shattered many long-term relationships. Lucifer's fall from heaven left a wake of grief and pain. While God's will has always been done in heaven, even in heaven the healing of wounded hearts is needed.

Purposed for God's Praise

"That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ" (Ephesians 1:12).

Though the hymn of Paul and Silas in prison (Acts 16:25) has been lost, throughout the gospel age this final element of a "purpose for praise" repeatedly has strengthened the church. One stirring example is the reformation hymn "Now Thank We All Our God" by Martin Rinkart. This hymn was a product of the pain and suffering from the brutal Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). At the age of thirty-one Rinkart arrived as the pastor in his native town of Eilenberg as the dreadful carnage was starting. Because Eilenberg was a walled city, it became a refuge for the desperate from far and near. Throughout these war years several waves of deadly pestilence and famine swept the city as the various armies marched through the town, leaving behind death and destruction. The Rinkart home served as a refuge for the afflicted, even though it is said that Martin Rinkart often had difficulty providing food and clothing for his own family.

At the height of the plague of 1637 Rinkart was the only remaining minister, often conducting as many as forty to fifty funeral services daily. Yet, amazingly he composed sixty-six hymns and wrote religious plays. During the closing years of the war Eilenberg was overrun by invading armies on three different occasions. With these occupations came the demand for a large tribute payment from the already impoverished people. During the third occupation, it is said that the commander refused even to consider Rinkart's request for a lowering of the levy. The pastor turned to his humble parishioners and said, "Come, my children, we can find no mercy with man; let us take refuge with God." On his knees Rinkart led his parishioners in prayer and in the singing of this familiar hymn. Like the jailer for Paul and Silas, this demonstration of spiritual fervency so moved the commander that he reconsidered and lowered the demands.*

What a purpose! Through us the word of reconciliation is witnessed. Anticipating setbacks and contradictions, our ministry of unifying—that ultimate blessing—must be kept in view. Let us sanctify our trials that they might prepare us for God's purpose in this ministry of unification to the praise of our Father's manifold wisdom in the ages of ages.

* Adapted from Kenneth Osbeck, 101 Hymn Stories, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, 1982

Now Thank We All Our God

Now thank we all our God, with heart and hands and voices,
Who wondrous things has done, in Whom this world rejoices;
Who from our mothers' arms has blessed us on our way
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;
And keep still in grace, and guide us when perplexed;
And free us from all ills, in this world and the next.

—Martin Rinkart

Baptism

Buried in Water

*Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.—Romans 6:3,4**

Len Griehs

Baptism in the Bible is likened to burial in water. As suggested by our theme text, it is an external rite symbolizing burial and resurrection to a new life in Christ. It is one of six things mentioned in Hebrews 6:1-3 as "first principles" or more literally, "elementary rudiments." The removal of bodily defilement by water served to illustrate the cleansing from ritual and spiritual uncleanness. While baptism itself is not mentioned in the Old Testament, water as a symbol played a key part in God's lessons for his covenant people.

There are many spiritual applications to this biblical symbol. In some instances, water is a picture of the holy spirit of God that brings refreshment and enlightenment; sometimes it is used as a barrier or test that one must pass through to receive God's blessing, as when the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea.

It is no surprise that biblical cities were always located near a water source. Many important cities of the Bible were even named for their water source: Beersheva, Beeroth, Beerelim (Beer meaning "well") or Ein Gedi, Ein Gannim, Ein Rogel (Ein meaning "spring"). Additionally major biblical events took place at the water source of important cities: the pool of Gibeon (2 Samuel 2:13); the pool of Hebron (2 Samuel 4:12); the pool of Samaria (1 Kings 22:38).

One of the most satisfying sources of water was a spring, also called a "fountain" in the Bible. It breaks forth to the surface from underneath the ground, so it provides a cool, refreshing drink. Even today, spring water is one of the main sources of delight to anyone who is thirsty. In the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-26), Jesus contrasts the water of the well with his message which he likens to spring water: "But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

Water Connected with the Messiah

Jesus used the comparative image of water and salvation to make a profound statement about his ministry. The occasion was on the last day of the Feast of the Tabernacles recorded in John 7. As part of the feast, there was a daily drawing of water from the Pool of Siloam by the priests. They carried the pitcher from the pool to the Temple Mount while the people cheered, played music, and blew trumpets. It was taken to the west side

of the altar and poured into a silver basin which had holes in the bottom. The water poured out around the altar. According to Jewish tradition, this was to represent three things: 1) a memorial of the water provided for their ancestors during the wilderness wanderings; 2) the forthcoming rains that provided refreshment after the long, dry season in Israel; 3) the outpouring of the holy spirit at the coming of Messiah.

John records in chapter 7 that Jesus stood up in the temple at the end of this week of celebration and said: "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.' But this he spoke of the spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive; for the spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified." Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, "This certainly is the Prophet." Others were saying, "This is the Christ." The outpouring of water was thus a symbol Jesus used in connection with himself.

Water as a Cleansing Agent

Arguably the picture of water that ties it most closely with our subject of baptism is that of cleansing. The priests and people were instructed to wash their clothes, wash their hands, and immerse themselves in a *mikve*, a kind of ceremonial bathing, to purify themselves. This was true for daily living as well as for service to the Lord in the tabernacle and the temple. Washing with water thus became symbolic of the removal of sin. Psalm 51:7 says, "Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow." This is a reference to Numbers 19:18, where hyssop was dipped (or baptized) in water before it was used. It is this Jewish ritual practice of *mikve* that helps us understand why baptism was used as part of John's and Jesus' ministry.

The laver which stood in the court of the tabernacle in the wilderness was used for ceremonial washing by both the priests and those who came in contact with unclean things (Exodus 30:17-21) Its purpose is described in Exodus 40:30. "He placed the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it for washing." Paul likens Christ's separation and cleansing of the church to the ceremonial cleansing of the laver: "so that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word" (Ephesians 5:26).

During the consecration of the Jewish priesthood detailed in Leviticus 8, the priests were first washed, then anointed, and then atoned for and separated by animal sacrifices. Following the sacrifice, a burnt offering was made and Moses filled the hands of priests with the sacrifice. The cleansing, though outward and upon the flesh, did not actually remove their defilement. But the ideas associated with the cleansing of the flesh were detailed in order to teach the lesson of defilement due to sin. Access into the tabernacle was conditional upon the ceremonial baptism or cleansing of the flesh at the laver (Leviticus 8:6; Exodus 30:20; 29:4).

In 1 Corinthians 10:2, Paul says that the children of Israel "all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea." Following their separation from Egypt, the Israelites passed

through the Red Sea with the cloud of Jehovah's presence above them. This was a fitting illustration of the concept of baptism and shows the difference between a mere ceremonial cleansing and the broader application of baptism. Following this experience, the children of Israel were separated from the world and were dedicated to God through his servant Moses. They became identified with him.

Peter speaks of those "who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:20,21). Just as Noah and his family were separated from the world when the ark was submerged in water, so those who are baptized are symbolically cleansed from sin and brought into a new life in Christ.

The children of Israel and Noah's family were separated from their former lives and raised to a new life. The water was a symbol of this separation that occurred because of their association with the one providing the way of salvation (Moses and Noah).

John's Baptism

The children of Israel gained freedom through baptism in the sea and cloud. They baptized themselves to Moses and severed their ties to Egypt. John was the first to introduce baptism by another: "John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people were coming and were being baptized" (John 3:23).

Why did John baptize? First, it was for the purpose of confession of sins under the law: Israelites needed to be washed, or ceremonially cleansed. "They confessed their sins and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins" (Matthew 3:6). Second, it was unto repentance, the prime requisite for Israel's blessing. Since the days when water was used as part of the consecration ceremony for Aaron and his sons (Exodus 29:4), washing had been performed by the person. The priest washed himself at the laver. The defiled clothes were to be washed by the man himself (Leviticus 11:40). Naaman dipped himself in the Jordan (2 Kings 5:14). That practice changed with John; he did the baptizing.

Our theme text says "we have been buried with him." To bury anything, or plant anything, it is necessary for the body or seed to be covered by dirt. To be baptized, it is necessary to be covered by water. The word baptism is not a translation from the Greek, it is a transliteration of the Greek word *baptizo*, which means to dip, to immerse, to sink. The word occurs in various forms, but all come from the root *bapto* which primarily means "to dip." In the Greek Old Testament, known as the Septuagint, the rendering of Leviticus 11:25 reads, "Whoever carrieth any of their carcasses shall wash [baptize] his clothes, and be unclean until evening." Here we see that clothes, submerged under the

water to be cleaned, are "baptized." In the Greek language, the language of the New Testament, baptism means immersion.

Of course the water did not wash away their sins nor could it secure forgiveness for them. That could only come by the absolution from sin through the death of Jesus. The marginal rendering of Mark 1:4 reads, "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins." John's work was thus a preparatory work unto the true deliverance that would come from baptism into Christ.

Baptism into Christ

Water baptism would likely have fallen out of use were it not for Jesus being immersed at the beginning of his ministry. Had Jesus not been immersed, the ritual might have seemed nothing more than an extension of the Jewish faith. Jesus said, "I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!" (Luke 12:50). Shortly after this Jesus asked two of his disciples, "Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" (Mark 10:38). Jesus was plainly indicating his real baptism was not the one that he had received at the beginning of his ministry but was really his immersion into the will of God and ultimately submission unto death. From this we see that water baptism was merely the outward sign of the beginning of his mission to the cross. The disciples may not have understood Jesus' words at the time, but later they would follow him into death as witnesses to his power and resurrection. John's words verify this broader application of the concept of baptism: "This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is the truth" (1 John 5:6).

Linked together with Jesus through a baptism into his death, a believer is anointed with the spirit which provides a new life in Christ. This baptism into Christ's death means a close association with him, putting on his characteristics. Just as Jesus elected to do God's will, so those who are baptized into Christ walk in the same path by accepting him as a personal redeemer and transforming their lives through consecration and dedication to his cause.

Christian Baptism

Jesus' water baptism marked a turning point in his life. The Wilson Diaglott rendering of Matthew 3:15 reads, "it is becoming us to establish every ordinance." This expresses the true meaning of Jesus' water baptism, and consequently of his followers. In coming to Jordan and going underneath the water, then rising again, Jesus was doing something that was more than just a cleansing. His submission to baptism by John was so his followers could understand the relationship of this simple act to their own lives and their standing before God. When they in turn came to be baptized, they would understand it was a symbol of their life of consecration unto death.

In our theme text Paul tells us that baptism has nothing to do with cleansing and everything to do with death. However, he assures us that out of that death comes eternal life. The one going into death, symbolized by immersion in water, is received into life by the one who is baptizing. Just as the Israelites and the family of Noah were forever separated from their old life, those who follow Christ into baptism are separated forever from the interests of the world and its interests. Just as Christ was raised from the dead, so those baptized into Christ also rise in newness of life. Although the new life is lived in the world, those raised are no longer part of it. They have become citizens of the future world in which sin and sickness are no more. This is what Paul means when he says, "For by one spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13).

* In this article all texts are from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise indicated.

Predestination

Declaring the End from the Beginning

Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.—Isaiah 46:9,10

Carl Hagensick

Entrepreneurs often seek venture capital to begin a new enterprise. To obtain funding from potential investors, they must submit a detailed business plan. This plan demonstrates how clearly they have thought through their proposals. It details their potential product or service, includes a market survey to show the demand for what they have to sell, names their management team, and outlines their initial start-up costs plus the ongoing costs of operation. An important part of this plan itemizes how many people they need in each department—manufacturing, shipping, sales, accounting, etc.

God also has such a plan. It is contained in the Bible and shows the forethought he has given to "Project Earth." He predicts the end product: a perfect human race, with billions of diverse individuals endowed with their own free will, choosing to voluntarily live in compliance with his laws and in harmony with each other.

He has predetermined a location for this race and shows the progressive stages necessary to prepare this locale for human habitation (Genesis 1). He foretells the costs of achieving his ends, both in terms of the suffering consequential to sin and the ultimate cost to himself of the life of his only son. He determines the time necessary to reach his objective: 7,000 years. He developed contingency plans allowing for the conquest of challenges to reaching his objectives. All in all, the Bible is a marvelous example of a thoroughly well-thought-out plan for not just the creation of the human race with provisions for its sustenance, but for the recovery of man from the introduction of sin and evil. God's plan even uses this experience with sin and its consequences for the ultimate good of his creation.

Jesus Christ Is the Center of This Plan

The cross of Calvary stands at the crossroads of history. The entire plan of God for the salvation and development of the human race centers around this one moment. The death of Jesus and its effect on man is well stated by the apostle Paul: "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:21,22). The equation of salvation is clear: as one man, Adam, earned the penalty of death because of his disobedience, so the obedience of one man, Jesus, reverses that penalty so all might live. Adam's disobedience

necessitated the death of Jesus to offset the penalty. That is what the Greek word translated "ransom" in the Bible means: a price to correspond; an exact equivalent.

God, however, had already covered the eventuality of human sin even before the first sinful act was committed. God had already appointed a redeemer even before sin and death struck down the human race. The apostle Peter speaks of the effectiveness of Jesus' blood, stating that the giving of this blood "was foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter 1:20).

The apostle Paul, moreover, asserts that it was not only Jesus, but a spiritual class called "the church" who were selected "before the foundation of the world." Note his words: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Ephesians 1:4). It is this pre-selection process which the Bible calls . . .

Predestination

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Romans 8:29). The subject of predestination has been debated among sincere Christians of all faiths. The debate centers around three areas: 1) to what extent God chooses to exercise his powers of foreknowledge of the future; 2) whether he exercised predestination in the cases of individuals or only of classes of people; and 3) how predestination interacts with man's free moral agency or free will.

There are two Greek words in the Bible concerning this subject: *proginosko* and *proorizo*. The former means to have knowledge beforehand, the latter deals with an action based on that knowledge.

W. E. Vine in Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words writes of *proorizo*, translated predestinated: "This verb is to be distinguished from *proginosko*, 'to foreknow'; the latter has special reference to the persons foreknown by God; *proorizo* has special reference to that to which the subjects of his foreknowledge are 'predestinated.'"

Professor Vincent in his New Testament Word Studies, speaking of *proginosko*, says: "It does not mean 'foreordain.' It signifies 'prescience,' not 'pre-election.'" Vincent then appends this footnote: "This is the simple, common-sense meaning. The attempt to attach to it the sense of pre-election, to make it include the divine decree, has grown out of dogmatic considerations in the interest of a rigid predestinarianism. The scope of this work does not admit a discussion of the infinitesimal hair-splitting which has been applied to the passage, and which is as profitless as it is unsatisfactory."

Thus it would appear that "foreknowledge" (*proginosko*) relates to the knowledge that certain individuals or classes would be needed to perform certain services, and predestination (*proorizo*) refers to the qualifications of those selected to fill these positions.

As entrepreneurs predict the necessity for the work to be accomplished in carrying out a proposed enterprise, God's foreknowledge of his overall plans and purposes foresaw the need for certain functions to be carried out to achieve the desired result. As an entrepreneur draws up the job descriptions for the needed workers, so God predestinated that those serving him in various ways must undergo certain specific training to fit them for their responsibilities.

Classes Foreknown by God

Jesus and his church are not the only ones spoken of in the Bible as "foreknown." Speaking of natural Israel of his own day the apostle Paul writes, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew [*proginosko*]" (Romans 11:2).

In fact God's foreknowledge and pre-planning for his human creation is so complete that Paul said on Mars Hill, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). Foreseeing the need of angels, God made angels. Foreseeing a work for the natural seed of Abraham, God arranged for their necessary training experiences. Foreseeing the need for leadership of his ancient people he "raised up" judges and deliverers for them (Judges 2:16; 3:9). Later he arranged for prophets to deliver his message to his people. Even the selection of their enemies was pre-arranged so as to give them the necessary chastisements. When Jesus was crucified, it was at the hands of those whom God foreknew: "Both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before [*proorizo*] to be done" (Acts 4:27,28).

Foreknowledge of Individuals

Not only groups of people, but divine foreknowledge is indicated in the case of certain individuals in the Bible who were prepared for their role while yet in their mother's womb:

Jeremiah: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5).

Apostle Paul: "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace" (Galatians 1:15).

A similar reference is found in Isaiah 49:1, though the primary reference appears to be prophetically applied to Jesus as Israel's Messiah. It is unclear whether these verses refer to Isaiah also, as a prototype of the nation's Messiah.

Another example of God's intentions to deal with a special servant in the womb is Samson. When the angel announced his birth to Samson's mother, he gave special instructions, saying: "For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come

on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines" (Judges 13:5).

It was also, while twins were in the womb of Rebekah, that the manner of their birth and their destinies were prophesied. Even the heathen king Cyrus was called by name and spoken of as the Lord's "shepherd" years before his birth.

In this broad array of individuals who have been both foreknown of God and prepared by him for special functions, there is ample evidence that God not only has the ability, but also uses that ability, to prepare certain people for specific functions even before their birth. However, this does not imply that he interferes with that person's free moral agency.

Free Moral Agency

The term "free moral agency" describes the freedom each individual has to make and carry out his own decisions—whether they be for good or for evil. Some honestly question whether such freedom can exist in view of specific prophecies of how certain individuals would act before they were even born.

God works with contingency plans. The principle of this concept is found in Jeremiah 18:7-10, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them."

It was in harmony with this principle that Jonah could make the unconditional prediction that Nineveh would be destroyed in forty days and yet, since they repented, God chose not to carry out that punishment at that time (Jonah 3:4,9,10).

While Jeremiah speaks only of nations, the same principle apparently works with individuals as well. Even though Saul of Tarsus was called from his mother's womb and commissioned to play a special role in the Christian church, he was not compelled to accept that commission or even to remain faithful to it, once embarked upon. Paul remarks of the continuous necessity to keep his body in subjection "lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Corinthians 9:27).

Another expression of this principle is in the words of Mordecai to Queen Esther when he calls upon her to intercede with King Ahasuerus to save the Jewish people from the plot of Haman. "Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who

knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:13,14). If Esther had not accepted the challenge, it would not have changed God's predetermined will that the challenge be faced; he would have raised up another deliverer.

An example which perhaps shows this harmony between predestination and free moral agency is found in the Lord's great prophecy. There a prediction is made that when the Lord returns there would be a "wise and faithful servant" to give the appropriate spiritual food to the "household." The promise is given to that servant that he would be made ruler "over all his goods." However the next verse shows God's contingency plan: "But and if that evil servant [the same servant, if he should take a wrong course of action] shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 24:48-51).

This is how predestination is balanced with free moral agency:

1. **Foreknowledge** determines the personnel needed to bring about the maximum results in the plan of God.
2. **Predestination** sets the qualifications for those positions and makes arrangements for the training of individuals to fit those positions.
3. **Free moral agency** is the factor that determines if any given individual shall eventually accomplish the roles which are set forth.

Predestination in the Christian Life

The apostle Paul relates these concepts of foreknowledge and predestination to the Christian in Ephesians 1:4-6: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

In this text we note that the choosing is not of the individual, but of any who would be "in him," desiring to be "holy and without blame before him in love." Then he proceeds on to the position for which such attributes of character qualify: "unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself."

This is in line with the same apostle's words in Romans 8:29,30: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

In this passage he focuses even more finely on what characteristics this foreknown class must achieve. They must be "conformed to the image of his Son." Jesus becomes the model for the entire "Christ class." As the top stone of a pyramid contains all the angles of the whole structure and is a miniature pyramid itself, so Christ forms the ideal prototype for all who would be "in him."

Having foreknown the need for such a class to work with Christ and having set forth the qualifications for all who would fill that office, it is the responsibility of applicants to live up to those standards to the best of their ability. While such sterling attributes are not attainable to imperfect mortals, they are reckonedly so through justification: "For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (2 Corinthians 8:12).

God has done his part. He has mapped out the course for us even "before the foundation of the world." Whether we attain the end of that course depends upon the degree to which we, through his sustaining grace, acquire those predestinated conditions. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).

Justification

Making the Church Righteous

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.—Romans 5:1.

What does it mean to be justified? This is a question that has been pondered by biblical scholars for almost 2,000 years. Yet, to the spirit begotten, our theme text provides the beautifully simple key of the pathway to approach God. An understanding of justification provides many insights into the harmony and beauty of God's plan.

What is justification? The word means to be "made right" or "made righteous." Righteousness means being perfectly right, justification has to do with being made right. Vines Expository of New Testament Words defines justification as "an acquittal from guilt." Justification comes from the same root as the legal term "justice." We might appropriately think of being justified as being "legally righteous." This legal standing provides the only basis at the present time for a relationship with God. Fallen man can only be made righteous through the merit of Jesus Christ which was applied for the fallen children of Adam. Only through this mechanism can mankind be made right in God's sight.

Why is legal righteousness necessary before one can have such a relationship? The key lies with father Adam who was perfect and righteous when God walked with him in the garden. God gave Adam a simple commandment: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). The measure of Adam's righteousness was based on the simple proposition obey and live, disobey and die. Because Adam willfully disobeyed God's commandment (1 Timothy 2:14), he and all of his seed have had to live under the penalty of death. God imposed a righteous and just penalty upon Adam and all his progeny. We know God cannot deal with unrighteousness. Thus an immovable barrier had been erected between God and mankind because of the corruption caused by the willful sin of a man who was created perfect. As a result since Adam's fall, all flesh (except for Christ) has been imperfect and unrighteous.

How could mankind escape the endless spiral of death and destruction? God had already pronounced his sentence upon mankind and it was not possible for God to revoke or change this judgment. Mankind was forced to learn the painful lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. However, because of the merit of Christ's sacrifice (a perfect life given for a perfect life lost, called a "ransom" in 1 Timothy 2:6), an avenue for redemption was opened through the resurrection of the dead. This is why the son was the Father's delight when he said, "Here am I, send me" (Isaiah 6:8). Just as father Adam caused the death penalty to be imposed upon the whole human family, Christ's willing sacrifice provides a mechanism to redeem all mankind. Only a perfect being who was separate from God could accomplish the task of removing the death penalty upon Adam and his race and

providing a way for mankind to be redeemed from the power of the grave. If Jesus were merely an extension or a part of Jehovah God, it could not be legally accomplished. Thus Christ's sacrifice provided an "acquittal from guilt" on behalf of his church and later on behalf of the world. Thus we see how the separation of the Father and the son, and the ransom, play an integral part in understanding justification.

God loves each and every human who ever lived. We cannot imagine the sorrow and pain that God experienced when Adam fell. We can only get some idea of this feeling when we observe the grief of parents when their children go astray. God not only provided a mechanism to rescue his precious creation, but fully authorized his son to execute this plan for their redemption. This is revealed in Isaiah 53:11 where the heavenly Father provides his remedy for dealing at the present time with the church: "By his knowledge the righteous one, my servant, will justify the many, as he will bear their iniquities" (NAS). Not only did God provide this mechanism for their redemption, he empowered this Righteous One to justify those whom he had chosen. The apostle Paul affirms this in his letter to the Galatians where he tells us "that God would justify the heathen through faith" (Galatians 3:8). It is clear God has empowered his son to justify and redeem.

The whole purpose of justification is to make the members of the church legally righteous so they can come back into a relationship with God. Our flesh is not actually righteous, it is legally righteous through the merit of Jesus Christ. Pastor Russell wrote: "Our justification, represented by the 'Wedding Garment,' put on when we are accepted of the Lord, covers not the New Creature, but merely the flesh, which is legally reckoned dead, sacrificially. In other words, justification does not signify a process of being made right, but a right condition already attained. The putting on of the 'Wedding Garment' signifies our entrance into the family of God as members of the church; the putting of it off would mean our rejection of the grace of God, and would imply second death." (Reprints, page 5960)

Elsewhere the concept of the wedding garment is referred to as the robe of righteousness. Without it, imperfect and unrighteous men could have no relationship with God. This is affirmed in the parable of the wedding garment when the man who was not wearing a wedding garment is cast out. "Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 22:13,14). This aptly illustrates that God does the choosing and it is God who justifies.

The robe of righteousness is provided not to cover the New Creature for it is already perfect. It is the flesh that requires justification or legal righteousness. The robe covers our unrighteous flesh in the same way that a coat covers a natural body. Should a consecrated believer ever remove the garment, come out from under the righteousness of Christ and personally reject the ransom, second death would be the result. The apostle explains: "For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the

Son of God, and put him to open shame" (Hebrews 6:4-6, NAS). This heavenly gift spoken of by the apostle is justification. It is the entry gate for coming into a relationship with God. Christ's merit can be applied only once, so, if a justified believer takes himself out from under the robe of righteousness, there is no other sacrifice available, there is no way back. This is why consecration is so serious. There can be no turning back once God accepts it.

The scriptures do not teach the thought of putting on the robe on a trial basis, for the robe is given by God only once. To suppose that it could be taken off if later deemed unsuitable would embrace the erroneous thought that coming out from under the robe of Christ's righteousness does not result in second death. Offering a consecration vow and receiving the robe of righteousness (i.e., becoming justified) means giving up earthly life rights. There can be no turning back as illustrated in what happened to Lot's wife.

Some have supposed that because "sanctification" is a life-long process, "justification" is also a process. The Scriptures do not bear this out. The term "justification," supporting the thought of a process, is used only three times in the Bible, all in the book of Romans. "Jesus our Lord . . . who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Romans 4:24,25). The apostle's thoughts continue into the fifth chapter: "But the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life" (Romans 5:16-18). Here the apostle Paul is speaking about justification of men collectively. Only in describing the collective experience of the church is the term "justification" used to describe a process in the Scriptures. Forty three times the word justified is used in the Bible. We are told that "we are justified by faith" (Romans 3:28, 30; 5:1; Galatians 2:16; 3:11,24); "we are justified by his grace" (Romans 3:24; Titus 3:7); "we are justified by his blood" (Romans 5:9); "we are justified in his name" (1 Corinthians 6:11). Each of these texts conveys the thought that we (the church) are justified (past tense), a process which is finished. The article on justification from the pen of Pastor Russell previously quoted concurs with this thought: "Justification is an instantaneous work." Justification is the gift of God when he accepts a prospective body-member's consecration. God does the choosing. This marks the sealing on a consecration. God makes an offer. The unrighteous believer hears the call, and grows in knowledge and faith to the point of consecration. A consecration vow to sacrifice one's all in service of the Lord is made by a believer. Finally, God chooses the believer, justifies him, and provides the robe of righteousness. From this moment forward a miraculous change occurs. "Our justification, represented by the 'Wedding Garment,' [is] put on when we are accepted of the Lord." God does the accepting.

As church members willingly give up their earthly life rights, their unrighteousness (sin) is covered that they might have a relationship with God. This justified condition affords them tremendous benefits. They are immediately blessed with the power of the holy spirit. This enlightens their hearts and minds to grow in understanding the heavenly Father. It has a transforming effect on their lives as they are invited to become sons of

God. Then they have the privilege of going boldly to the throne of grace in prayer. This communication with God has a transforming effect on their lives. As a result they grow in knowledge and peace. This peace is strengthened by an ever-increasing faith. All of this is only possible when they answer the consecration call and are justified by God. These are the benefits for justified believers that allow them to be faithful in their life-long Christian walk. By being justified and receiving these benefits, God gives consecrated followers all the tools necessary to be more than overcomers that they might remain faithful even unto death.

We look forward to the day foretold in Isaiah when those who are faithful will have an incredible privilege to glorify God: "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations" (Isaiah 61:10,11). We look forward to that day when The Church (head and body) will be privileged to cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before ALL the nations. In accordance with the plan of the master architect, justified believers are integral to the fulfillment of this great work, not by necessity, but by the grace of God. Then shall Jehovah's master plan bring all his creation into at-one-ment; once again the Mighty One shall be known and loved by all his redeemed children.

Sanctification

Duties of a Holy Priesthood

Sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy.—Leviticus 11:44

Homer Montague

Chronologically we have entered a new millennium, but for the consecrated, some things never change despite the passage of time. This includes the need for living a sanctified life from the time of spirit begetting until the very end of our course.

Sanctification and sanctify are related terms. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words conveys such meanings as: a) separation to God; b) the course of life befitting those so separated; c) the setting apart of the believer for God. Strong's Concordance suggests such definitions as holiness, hallow, keep holy, and purify.

One of many Scriptures which deal with the essence of sanctification or being sanctified relates to the laws concerning the people of Israel and the prohibition against partaking of foods defined as unclean. "For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth: to make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten" (Leviticus 11:44-47).

A Separated People

The Israelites were a chosen people, a separated people, a covenant people. They were called to righteousness or holiness and as a typical people their actions provide lessons for spiritual Israelites who also are a chosen people, a separated people, a covenant people called to righteousness and holiness. The apostle Paul wrote, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

Another text on this subject is from Leviticus 20:7,8: "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God. And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you." The Israelites were to live separated from others and in accordance with holiness. That was their part. They were not to follow the idolatrous practices of the heathen (in this instance, sacrificing their children to Molech) but to resist any such evil inclinations and be obedient to the heavenly Father's instructions. God also had a part in their sanctification. Through his providences he would especially bless and keep the Israelites from defiling influences as long as they obeyed his word.

In the Passover type, the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage was predicated upon the deliverance of the firstborn who according to Exodus 13:2,12,13 were sanctified or set apart as specially belonging to God. Later the tribe of Levi was exchanged for the firstborn and chosen for a special service in connection with the tabernacle arrangements.

A Separated Priesthood

From the Levites the priestly family of Aaron and his sons was chosen for a holy service. Similarly, in Numbers 8:6-19, the consecration of the Levites who assisted the priests is described even though they were not permitted to enter the tabernacle and view the holy vessels in the sanctuary (Numbers 18:1-3).

In some of the ceremonies and functions the typical under priests were closely identified with the high priest. The high priest typified Christ Jesus, the under priests represented spirit begotten new creatures whose life is to be directed by the great High Priest (Hebrews 3:1).

This is the attire which was to be worn by the under priests: "And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets shalt thou make for them, for glory and for beauty. And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office. And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness; from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach: and they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that they bear not iniquity, and die: it shall be a statute for ever unto him and his seed after him" (Exodus 28:40-43).

God was very specific in giving instructions concerning what the priests should wear as they fulfilled their offices. Holiness or sanctification in regard to their services was not optional and any failure to follow his instructions exactly would result in death. Thus there would be a sense of awe associated with the great privilege of serving God as they ministered in holy affairs.

When the Aaronic priesthood was inaugurated, there was a special seven-day consecration ceremony before Aaron and his sons were officially installed into office and could begin to fulfill their duties. Notice these words regarding purity and separation: "Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water. Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the LORD, that ye die not: for so I am commanded. So Aaron and his sons did all things which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses" (Leviticus 8:6,35,36).

The priesthood needed to be washed and remain separated from the people during their consecration; they were not to venture outside the court during this seven-day period. Water as a symbol is universally understood as an agent to remove uncleanness or

defilement. The thought of sanctification is dramatically brought to mind in this ceremony.

Here are some of the duties specifically given to the under priests to perform in their role as a sanctified or separated class:

They were to offer the morning and evening sacrifices (2 Chronicles 13:10,11).

They were to serve as instructors or teachers of the people (Deuteronomy 24:8).

They were to blow silver trumpets to sound an alarm at the time of war or to announce special feast days (Numbers 10:9,10).

They were to pack the tabernacle and cover the sacred furnishings of the sanctuary in preparation for moving from place to place as God directed (Numbers 4:4-15).

They also appeared to be part of a council of judges who rendered decisions in case of disputes; their findings were to be accepted by the people (Deuteronomy 17:9-13).

Under priests had sacred obligations to fulfill in various matters pertaining to the nation. If they performed their duties properly, they surely received rich blessings from God. However, if they disobeyed the heavenly Father, they were severely punished for their misconduct.

Priestly Misconduct

"And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD" (Leviticus 10:1,2).

The nature of the strange fire is not specified, although Nadab and Abihu may have been intoxicated when they went into the sanctuary as may be inferred from Leviticus 10:9. Nevertheless, their disobedience and lack of reverence for God's commands were the very opposite of a sanctified spirit. Their deaths were intended as an object lesson concerning the dire consequences for ignoring the heavenly Father's statutes.

Another example of priestly misconduct and unholy behavior which incurred God's wrath was manifested by Phinehas and Hophni who were the sons of Eli, the high priest. In their service as under priests they forcibly took from the people more than their share of the peace offerings (1 Samuel 2:12-17). Additionally, they committed immoral sexual acts with women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting (verse 22). Eli's sons

were unfaithful in performing their duties as under priests. As the Lord's servants they should have been instructors by word and example in righteousness and in demonstrating reverence for the heavenly Father. Ultimately, however, they were slain while bearing the ark of the Covenant as the Israelites battled the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:11). This seems to be a clear fulfillment of an earlier verse of Scripture: "If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them" (1 Samuel 2:25).

Spiritual Israelites can glean important lessons from studying the manner in which natural Israel's typical under priests fulfilled their duties. The apostle Peter describes the status of spirit begotten believers in his first epistle: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).

Before attaining this new standing, however, individual believers had a part in their own sanctification. They had to first recognize their undone condition. In being drawn by the word of God, they learned there was a way to have access to the heavenly Father through Jesus. Upon hearing the terms of discipleship including self-denial and cross-bearing (Matthew 16:24) if such make a full consecration to do God's will and are spirit begotten, they have indeed sanctified themselves. God's sanctification of believers is to direct their lives and set them apart for his service so they will eventually be united in kingdom honors with Christ Jesus to bless the world of mankind.

Antitypical Under Priests

As antitypical under priests, the church is sanctified by the truth: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Not only did Jesus pray for his disciples who were present with him at the time but his petition was on behalf of all the members of the gospel church to this very day. The sanctification given by God is a process that is directly related to a believer's study of and feeding upon Scriptural principles contained in the Bible. There the standards of holy, righteous conduct are set before a Christian's mind. Obedience to its teachings will separate a believer more and more from the spirit of the world, and purify his mind and promote increased spirituality.

The holy spirit is used by the heavenly Father to accomplish the work of sanctification in each of his children. Not only does it enable the believer to comprehend the truth but it strengthens a desire to focus upon heavenly things and to lead a life of righteousness and self-denial. This is essential for overcoming the influence of the world, the flesh, and the adversary. The power of the holy spirit enables the Christian, both to will and to do of God's good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

We are assured from the Scriptures that sanctification is the will of God concerning the spirit begotten (1 Thessalonians 4:3). The ascertainment of God's will is of paramount importance as the sanctification process continues in a believer's life. A text which well expresses the means by which such discernment can be gained was penned by the apostle

Paul: "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2).

For antitypical under priests the work of transformation will be evidenced by activity in the Lord's service until the flesh is totally consumed. Sometimes we might look at the apostle Paul's endurance as recorded in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28 and wonder how he was able to persevere through all those experiences. We conclude that because he had fully committed himself to serving the cause of God and the truth at all costs, the Father provided him with needed grace to withstand even the most adverse circumstances.

Duties of Antitypical Under Priests

These are some of the many duties which sanctified, faithful, antitypical under priests may be expected to perform:

1. **Fellowshipping.** The privilege of communing with others who are walking in the narrow way should never be neglected. Discussing spiritual matters and experiences with fellow under priests can give much encouragement to continue serving the Lord faithfully despite difficulties to the flesh. The body of Christ includes all believers who truly possess the spirit of the Master. One should meet regularly in the home class as well as with others outside of one's immediate spiritual circle whenever possible to promote mutual edification (Psalm 133:1-3).
2. **Rejoicing.** The knowledge of God's plan for the world of mankind should evoke much exultation within a believer's heart. A rightly exercised follower of Christ can put into proper perspective the gloomy circumstances which surround humanity today. Little time should be spent in pondering all the evils which presently exist in society and about which mankind is powerless to change. But by pointing to the glorious kingdom as the grand antidote for this time of weeping, others not so blessed with this understanding may be given a sense of hope that things will not always continue as they are today. A text that well expresses the attitude that should be manifested among truly sanctified under priests of this day is, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice" (Philippians 4:4).
3. **Forgiving.** One of the most important priestly duties is that of having a forgiving spirit. It is highly unlikely that anyone can honestly claim never to have been injured by someone else. The response of believers always should be one of sympathy and mercy towards those who offend. In Luke 17:3, the Master indicates if one's brother should trespass against him, he should be rebuked and if he repents, forgiveness should be granted. This would seem to relate to a serious offense and not a trivial matter which might well be overlooked especially if it appeared to be unintentional. However, if the circumstances seem to warrant addressing the matter, in the spirit of Matthew 18:15, the offended party should go to his brother privately to discuss the situation. In the overwhelming majority of the cases, such action would secure acknowledgment of the wrong if actually committed and forgiveness from the heart should be rendered. Even if

no expression of repentance were made at that time, no ill will should be harbored against the perceived offender. Unless it is an extreme situation, the option of following Matthew 18:16 to further pursue the matter with witnesses need not necessarily be followed. Nevertheless, the temptation to speak to others about the perceived wrong which was experienced at the hand of the errant brother must be resisted at all costs since such activity would be contrary to the spirit of sanctification (James 4:11).

4. **Praying.** There is probably no aspect of sanctification more critical than prayer since it is the means by which a Christian gains access to God. This unspeakable privilege is brought to our attention by the Master's example while sojourning on earth and laying down his life in sacrifice on behalf of all mankind. If he who knew no sin spent an entire night communing with the heavenly Father (Luke 6:12), what priority should prayer have in the lives of believers who have deficiencies according to the flesh?

Instructions concerning how to pray are contained in the example which Jesus provided his disciples in Matthew 6:9-13. In approaching the throne of heavenly grace, reverential fear is immediately brought to our attention as we are informed, "Hallowed be thy name." God is the source of all sanctification and that thought should always be kept uppermost in mind so that a believer can make the proper approach whether it is for the purpose of supplication, intercession, thanksgiving, or obtaining needed grace. If the disciple of Christ first learns the proper attitude of heart in coming to the Father, he surely will be educated by the holy spirit in how to offer effectual prayers; his desire will be to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

5. **Self-denial.** Without the work of sanctification in a believer's life, it would be impossible to sustain the necessary spirit of self-denial which is required for all who ultimately will become members of the royal priesthood. The tendency of the "old man" which is reckoned dead is to reassert itself to attain what it considers its legitimate rights, even if they are not necessarily of a sinful nature. In Colossians 3:2 the sanctified are reminded to set their affection on things above rather than those things of earth. Stimuli presented to our human senses in terms of the good things this world has to offer can be quite seductive without a fixed purpose that is strengthened in the new creature by the power of the holy spirit. It is quite unnatural according to human thought not to desire such things as wealth, prominence, ease, good name, and creature comforts. A determined course to resist seeking out these things will require obedience to God's will. Following his way requires a submissive heart that values the heavenly Father's smile and disregards the disesteem in which a believer is held by those who are not pursuing a life of sanctification. Even the apostle Paul whose lifestyle is worthy of a believer's emulation recognized the necessity for engaging in a serious warfare against his flesh so that all of his strivings to do God's will would not be in vain. This is his somber assessment of the matter: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Corinthians 9:26,27).

Conclusion

It has been God's purpose to select a sanctified class from among mankind who will lead lives of holiness in preparation for the bestowing of future blessings on the human family. The heavenly Father dealt with the nation of Israel and its priesthood to set forth the required standards of conduct deemed suitable for exaltation to a ruling position in the soon-to-be established kingdom under the direction of Jesus Christ.

Just as there were requirements for approved service as a member of the Aaronic priesthood, there are many activities in which the antitypical priesthood must engage during the Gospel age period to merit a position within the body of Christ.

May the spirit of this exhortation abide in the heart of every true Christian: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

From Earthly to Heavenly

The Deliverance of the Church

*As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.—
1 Corinthians 15:49*

David Rice

In this change from earthly to heavenly lies the great hope of the saints. Those who patiently apply themselves to the lessons of life, continually setting aside earthly attractions and pleasures for "treasure in heaven," must have the keenest interest in the time, nature, and circumstances of the change which is the goal of their present life.

It is not possible to know what the spirit realm is like, or the details of the glorious inheritance awaiting us, because our experiences are earthly, and the spirit realm is so different a level of existence. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him" (1 John 3:2).

But this we do know—we will not be flesh and blood as at present, nor of any corruptible substance. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Corinthians 15:50). Our old bodies will not be assumed into heaven, or transmuted. The spirit is altogether different than the flesh, and our change into the spirit will follow, and require, the death of the human nature and its body of flesh. Thus we are obliged to be "faithful unto death" in order to receive the crown of life in heaven (Revelation 2:10).

The Time Has Come

The apostle Peter referred to the "word of prophecy" as "a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (2 Peter 1:19). In this comment Peter may have drawn from Psalm 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path," and perhaps from the parable of the virgins in Matthew 25 associated this lamp with the advent of Christ. (Matthew 25:6 even speaks of a "midnight cry," as Psalm 119:62 speaks of rising "at midnight.")

Each of the virgins in the parable "took their lamps," the wise taking care to bring sufficient oil in case of an unexpected delay. So with the saints looking for the coming of their heavenly bridegroom, they have taken their lamps—the word of prophecy. This was fulfilled by reverent students of prophecy throughout the age looking for the advent of Christ, but it was particularly demonstrated in the Adventist movement of the early 1800s, which scrutinized so carefully the prophecies of Daniel for whatever light they might shed on the advent of Christ.

Among these, a series of three time prophecies—the 1260, 1290, and 1335 days of Daniel 9:25 and 12:6-13—mark a progression of dates now identified as 1799, 1829, and 1874, which introduced the waiting ones to the blessed appreciation of the Lord's presence.

Thus, and by other means, has the lamp of prophecy lighted the way to this harvest of the Gospel age. The Lord taught us that when we begin to see the events of the harvest come to pass, we should be the more earnest in anticipation of our release: "Look up, and lift up your heads, for your deliverance draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

Some Precede Others

All the saints will receive their change before the close of the harvest, and thereafter "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43). But evidently the time has already come for the saints of bygone years to receive their change, even before the saints of the harvest have completed their walk.

This seems to be the testimony of Paul in 1Thessalonians 4:13-18. Paul's purpose in this passage was to comfort the brethren "concerning them which are asleep" in Christ, explaining that they will have priority in the sequence of the resurrection. Paul said when the Lord returns, "we which are alive and remain into [eis] the presence [parousia] of the Lord shall not precede them which are asleep" (verse 15). In fact just the opposite, the sleeping ones precede the others. "For the Lord himself shall descend ... and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up" (verses 16 and 17).

The words "first" and "then" deserve some attention. "First" is from the Greek *proton*, and in this case is rendered "firstly" in Marshall's *Diaglott*. The "ly" suffix is that translation's way of showing that the word is used as an adverb, that is, it pertains to the verb "will rise again." In other words, the sleeping saints are raised first, in order of sequence, before those who are alive and remain into the presence of Christ.

In English "then" serves a variety of uses. It can be a logical connector (if ... then ...), or mean "at that time" (when we arrive, then we will rest), or mean "afterwards" (first we will eat, then we will sleep). Fortunately for the sake of clarity, the Greek uses three different words for these purposes: *ara* (as in Matthew 24:45, "who, then ..."), *tote* (as in Matthew 24:30, "then shall appear ..."), and *epeita* (as in Galatians 1:21, "afterwards"). It is *epeita* which is used in the Thessalonians text: "The dead in Christ shall rise first: afterwards we which are alive and remain shall be caught up." It is a matter of sequence.

However, the following words—"together with them"—have confused the issue, particularly since the Wilson *Diaglott* renders the phrase "we ... shall at the same time with them, be caught away." There is clearly an incompatibility between "afterwards" and "at the same time," and the rendering of the latter is evidently at fault. There are two texts in the King James translation where the expression "same time" appears: Matthew 18:1 and Acts 19:23. The word for "time" in the first is *ora* (hour), and in the second is *kairon*

(time). Neither appears in the Thessalonians passage. If Paul intended the thought "at the same time," presumably he would have used one of these words to express his thought.

The words Paul used are hama sun—together with—and neither word is ever rendered "time" in the common version. However the expression "at the same time" is included in the definition of hama in three sources—Strong's, Vines, and a lexicon by Moulton. Are these adequate defenses for the Wilson Diaglott translation?

Clearly, in context, it does not express Paul's thought because it is at odds with "first" and "afterwards." The issue is about the concept of "together." When people experience something together they frequently experience it at the same time, so the word can imply the thought, and thus be mentioned in the definition. But sameness of time is not a necessary element of the meaning. For example, Paul says of mankind, "They are together [hama] become unprofitable" (Romans 3:12). He does not mean all people became unprofitable at the same time, but by the same experience—disobedience—Jews to the Law and Gentiles to their conscience. This occurred by reason of the various sins we exhibit through the 6,000 years of sin and death. Togetherness of experience, not of time, is the issue.

It is similar with respect to the word sun [with]. Paul said "if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him" (2 Timothy 2:11). The word "with" is sun (as a prefix) in the first instance. We die together in the sense of a shared experience, but clearly not at the same time.

1 Thessalonians 4:14 uses the word similarly. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with [sun] him." This does not mean we come back with Jesus, for Paul's whole point in the following verses is that the saints are raised after Jesus returns. But just as God raised Jesus from the dead, so God will raise us "with" him—in the same experience. But our raising and his are separated in time by nearly 2,000 years.

2 Corinthians 4:14, in the better manuscripts (followed by modern translations), says "He [God] which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with [sun, not `by,' en, as in King James] Jesus." Again, the same experience, but at vastly different times.*

All Fall Asleep

In 1 Corinthians 15:51-53, Paul is consistent with his teaching in 1 Thessalonians 4. He distinguishes between those dying before the Lord's second advent, and those dying afterward, as respects the time of their resurrection change. However, in this passage there are problems both with the translation of the common version, and with the texts used as the basis of the common version. Here is the King James rendering: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; 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."

The problem of translation appears when we consult the Marshall's Diaglott for verse 51. Rather than saying "we shall not all sleep" it says "we shall not all fall asleep" which is quite a different thought. The former is true, not all saints will sleep in death, since those who die after the Lord has raised the "sleeping" saints will not sleep in death but will be raised at once. But the latter rendering, "we shall not all fall asleep," is a more precise rendering of the Greek. This presents us with a difficulty for we do all expect to die—to "fall asleep."

Even this rendering is not technically precise. Moulton's lexicon shows this spelling to indicate "first person, plural, future, indicative, passive" (but with a "not" before it), which would be something like "we shall not all be being put to sleep." But this does not change the problem.

The solution is in a better manuscript, and has to do with the placement of the word "not"—ou in the Greek. In some of the best manuscripts (including the Sinaitic) the word does not appear before the word for sleep, but before the expression about being changed in a moment (see "Manuscript Evidence and the English New Testament," James Parkinson, page 7). These manuscripts say something like "we shall all fall asleep, but we shall not all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, in the last trump."

This does solve the problem. All the saints will fall into death, but only those living after the Lord's return will be changed "in a moment [the moment of their death], in the twinkling of an eye" during the last trump. Those who died before the second advent of Christ had to await the end of the age before their change.

This approach to the passage seems to be confirmed by Paul's words following. "For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised ... and we shall be changed." Those who were resting in death are described as raised, and those who live into the sounding of the trumpet are said to be changed, that is, at the moment of their death.

The dead, who lie corrupted in the grave, then put on incorruption. The living, mortal saints, who die and are changed, are said to put on immortality. "The dead shall be raised incorruptible ... For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Corinthians 15:52,53).

Prophetic Testimony

That some saints are raised before others during the harvest seems to be shown in Revelation also. Chapter 15 speaks of "seven angels having the seven last plagues," who come "out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles ... and the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled" (verses 1, 6, and 7).

These seven angels evidently represent saints in glory, beyond the veil, who have received their reward, but at a time before the entire body of Christ has been gathered

into heaven. If so, it would confirm the thought drawn from Paul's lessons that the saints are not all gathered at once—that after the sleeping saints are raised to life, the living saints remain in the flesh for some period until, one by one, they pass into death and join the heavenly gathering.

The evidence that these seven angels do represent saints in glory comes both from the symbols in Revelation 15 and a comparison of this passage to the dedication of Solomon's temple in 1 Kings 8:6-11. The latter passage says the priests who brought the ark of the covenant into the most holy came "out of the holy [and] the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord." This is very similar to the scene in Revelation 15: the seven angels came out of the temple, then "the temple was filled with ... the glory of God ... and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."

The comparison suggests the seven angels in the Revelation passage are the same as the priests in the 1 Kings passage, and Revelation 20:6 shows that the priests are the saints. After the raising of the saints there is an interim work before they can "enter into the temple" to function as priests. Meanwhile the judgments of God, the seven last plagues, must clear away the old order. Until then "no man [priest] was able to enter the temple."

The description of the seven angels is consistent with them being the saints. They wear "pure and white linen" which Revelation 19:8 interprets as "the righteousness of saints," and they have golden girdles indicating divine service.

But if these are saints in glory, clearly they are not the completed church, for at least some saints remain in the flesh during the seven last plagues. The last plague in Egypt, which corresponds to the last of the seven in Revelation, saw the deliverance of the firstborn, which implies some saints are not delivered until the outset of the last plague. Also, Revelation 16:15 implies that during plague six some saints still need to watch, and attend to their garments, lest any "see his shame." This jeopardy only fits ones still on earth.

Additionally, in Isaiah 6:1-7, another scene of judgment where "the house was filled with smoke," Isaiah as the Lord's prophet represents a class which needs purging to be a fit spokesman to pronounce the judgments of the Lord (verses 5-12)—presumably saints in the flesh during the time of judgment. Also, 1 Kings 22, which describes the coalition of Ahab, Jehoshaphat, and 400 false prophets, evidently pictures the coalition of dragon, beast, and false prophet in the sixth plague. Micaiah in 1 Kings 22 represents the Lord's people afflicted for their stand against the coalition. All of this speaks of some saints remaining in the flesh up to and through plague six.

The Morning Comes

Through all the tumults and tribulations of the age, the Lord has been with his saints to establish their faith, and care for their needs. Now we live in the morning of her

deliverance: "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that when the morning appeareth" (Psalm 46:5, with marginal rendering). The dawning of the new day is upon us, but though "the morning comes," its opening is attended by "a night also" as the troubles incident to establishing the new day come to a focus (Isaiah 21:12).

So it is that in the restless tossing of the waves, and the fitful birthpangs of the new order, the saints see the signs of their full release just at hand. "Only a few more trials, only a few more tears," until the body complete in glory will usher in the glorious kingdom of God. The rejoicing of the saints in this prospect is not "selfish in its character; for the deliverance and exaltation of the church of Christ will be the harbinger of a speedy deliverance to the whole race, from the tyranny and oppression of the great enslaver, Sin ... `For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain ... waiting for the ... deliverance of our body' (Romans 8:22,23)" (Volume 3, pp. 227, 228).

* For more technical comments on this passage please refer to the article "1 Thessalonians 4:14-17," in *Beauties of the Truth*, February, 1999.

A Church of Jews and Gentiles

Unity With Diversity

*So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.—
Romans 12:5*

A verse by verse study of Ephesians 4

Although the apostle Paul was born a Jew, raised a Pharisee, and sought out the local synagogues for worship on the Sabbath, yet he is best known as the "apostle to the Gentiles" (see Romans 15:16). Undoubtedly this was partly because his Christian missionary ministry carried him to the outlying areas of the Jewish Diaspora. Acts 2:9-11 names some fifteen areas where these Jewish emigrants were living.

Ephesus was a seaport town on the west coast of Asia Minor at the mouth of the Cayster River. Its all-weather harbor brought much traffic from Europe and Africa and gave the wealthy town a cosmopolitan atmosphere. The main religious worship of this diverse city was in the great temple of Diana, a magnificent structure dating back to the times of the Amazons, fabled Scythian warriors from the eighth to the fourth century BC. It was destroyed in a fire and rebuilt in the second century before Christ. It was more than a temple and treasure house; it also served as an art gallery, a sanctuary for criminals, and a major tourist attraction with its attendant horde of dealers in souvenirs, antiques, and relics.

The Christian church in Ephesus, as in so many cities of the Diaspora, was a heterogeneous mixture of Jews and Gentiles. With their diverse customs, varying beliefs, and different economic conditions, there was a natural tendency toward cliques and schisms in the church. It is to these that Paul writes his epistle which was sent at the same time, via Tychicus, as the letter to the Colossians, a sister church with much the same make-up and similar problems.

Principles of Unity—Ephesians 4:1-7

"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; endeavoring 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."

The word "therefore" connects this chapter with the previous one, but it is a comparison of contrast and not of similarities. Chapter three ends with an anthem of praise for the glories to follow, whereas chapter four exhorts to lowliness. Emphasizing this theme,

Paul emphasizes his own abased state—as a prisoner in Rome. Yet he does not consider himself a prisoner of Nero, but of the Lord. It is with the proper view of all things being of God that he begins his exhortation.

The three fundamental traits urged by the apostle—lowliness, meekness, and long-suffering—are all important in sustaining good relationships. The first two are mental attributes, while the last flows from their attainment. Lowliness is the objective recognition that we are imperfect and therefore in no position to judge another on his deficiencies. It is the same requirement as the first beatitude: "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3).

Meekness on the other hand is a fruit of power. The Lord Jesus was meek, not because he lacked resources, but because he was pliable in the Father's hand to be molded as his Father would desire. Professor Vine expresses it well: "Described negatively, meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest; it is equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all."

Having these characteristics in a diverse and perhaps emotionally-filled church, are the prerequisites Paul saw that the Ephesians needed to "forbear one another in love."

Based upon these fundamentals, it is the "unity of the spirit" which the Ephesians must endeavor to obtain. Such a unity was to have been a present accomplishment, one which they must strive to maintain. This was not a unity of the flesh. That would be impossible considering their diverse backgrounds. The ways of the flesh were to be put away. They were now to act as new creatures. For them "old things" should have passed away and "all things become new" (2 Corinthians 5:16,17). They were not to look at each other "after the flesh" but as coming under the blood of Christ, and him crucified.

This new "unity of the spirit" would contain seven elements:

1. **One Body.** Their individual standing as "new creatures" is the first basis of their unity. Such unity however does not imply uniformity. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office" (Romans 12:4).
2. **One Spirit.** Each of the Ephesians attained that "one body" through the same method. They were all begotten of the same spirit, the holy spirit. Their aims should now be spiritual and they should be looking at each other as pursuing the same goals.
3. **One Hope of your calling.** As natural men, their goals were different. Some pursued one trade, others a different one. Now they had the same vocation, the same "calling," the "high calling." Now their goals were alike, to live and reign with their spiritual master.

4. **One Lord.** As their vocations were now the same, so was their leader. As partakers of the heavenly calling their consideration was to be centered on "the apostle and high priest" of their profession—Christ Jesus (Hebrews 3:1).

5. **One Faith.** The emphasis here is not on unity of belief, but unity of faith. The stages of development of that "one faith" may well vary from individual to individual. As C. T. Russell has well phrased it: "True faith must begin with the one kind of seed-faith in all, no matter what stage of development each may attain" (Reprints, p. 1572).

6. **One Baptism.** Baptism here is not used in the sense of water immersion, but the deeper baptism into Christ of which water is only a symbol. In this discussion it shows the unity of determination which all true Christians share. It is the positive response to the query of Jesus, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with."

7. **One God and Father of all.** Above all theirs was to be the unity of family—not the old natural family ties, but a new family with God as their father and all of them as brothers—Jesus being the elder brother (Matthew 23:8-10).

Before leaving this section, the apostle has a "but" to add—a caution that within this unity there may be diverse measures of the same spirit. But whatever the measure, it is the same spirit. These words are parallel to that of the same apostle in Romans 12:3, "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."

The Gifts of Christ—Ephesians 4:8-13

"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) 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 fullness of Christ."

This desired oneness, like everything else in the spiritual realm, revolves around the death and resurrection of Christ. It is a unity not attainable alone, but only with divine assistance. And so Paul asserts that when Jesus ascended he provided the means to lead forth from the grave a multitude of captives. Another result of his ascension was the provision of gifts for mankind. These gifts were individuals specially raised up to provide

leadership to mankind—to the church at the present time, and to the entire world in Christ's glorious kingdom. Paul enumerates four of these gifts:

1. **Apostles.** The "twelve apostles of the Lamb" are the foundation cornerstones of Christ's provision for his church (Revelation 21:14). These (with the exception of Paul) had personally known the Lord, traveled with him, and learned his teachings first-hand. They alone, of all the church, were inspired in their writings. They alone had the ability to pass on the miraculous gifts of the spirit.
2. **Prophets.** In the early church Christ saw that it was necessary to supply some especially endowed with the gift of oratory to both simply explain and emotionally motivate those attracted to the Christian message.
3. **Evangelists.** Evangelists build on the works of the apostles and prophets, making ageless truths relevant to present situations and attracting non-believers to the message of Christ.
4. **Pastors and Teachers.** These two offices are grammatically linked in the Greek and are for those charged with teaching the church through the study of the word. While a "teacher" focuses more on intellectual matters, a "pastor" makes these truths relevant to daily Christian living. This work is well illustrated by the work of the Levites in Nehemiah 8:8.

Verses 12 and 13 detail the object of this four-fold ministry. In verse twelve we read of two current results while verse thirteen gives the long-range purposes. Looking first at the immediate objectives, we find:

To equip the saints for the work of ministry (RSV). Present lessons, whether learned through instruction or by experience, are all for a future ministry of the church. This is summarized in an oft-quoted expression from the familiar "To Us The Scriptures Clearly Teach" found on the inside cover of this journal. The statement reads: "The present mission of the church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace to be God's witness to the world and to prepare to be kings and priests in the next age."

The edifying of the body of Christ. Whereas the first objective is external for the benefit of others, this one is internal, dealing with the development of a character that is copied after that of their Lord and Master.

The ultimate goals of these gifts must await the glorification of the church. These include:

Unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. While faith and knowledge are closely related, they are to be distinguished in this passage as cause is to effect. The Greek word here rendered knowledge, *epignosis*, is an active knowledge, an

acknowledgement. It describes the mental assent to and obedience of that which is believed. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22).

A perfect man—the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Likewise, these two terms are meant to build on each other. Not only is the Christian to be developed with the qualities of perfect manhood, but beyond that he is to acquire the spiritual attributes of Christ himself, a sacrificial nature that goes beyond the requirements for earthly life. The latter phrase might be paraphrased, "unto the full mature likeness of the character of Jesus himself."

Stability and Growth—Ephesians 4:14-16

"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 compacted 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."

Stability was sorely needed in the early church. In fact, it is sorely needed in every period of the church's history. Truth is not easily interpreted. "The Bible," it is said, "is a harp upon which any tune can be played." More discordant notes have been heard from Christian pulpits than the sweet harmonious sounds of the true gospel. It is for this reason that God has raised up strong teachers throughout the years—those who could discern the true tones of yesteryears and adapt them to the reality of the present.

The New Living Translation has caught the thought well: "Then we will no longer be like children, forever changing our minds about what we believe because someone has told us something different or because someone has cleverly lied to us and made the lie sound like the truth." Paul describes them as "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:7). The certainty of truth is not always open to every new theory. So sure was Paul of his teachings that he wrote, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). It is not surprising that some of these specious theories appear to have the ring of truth for "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14).

Not only does our text warn of the cunning craftiness of the deceiver, it gives a clue as to how to determine the true minister of Christ's word. He will be the one "speaking the truth in love." It is gentleness, humility, and consideration of others which mark the authentic minister rather than his deep mental reasoning powers. The latter may be nothing more than "worldly wisdom," grounded more in philosophy than in the word of God; but the former can never be truly assumed only outwardly since they spring from the heart and a transformed life.

For the body of Christ, as for a natural body, to grow healthy and strong, there must be a unified working together of its various organs. It is in this development of Paul's reasoning that he branches out from the "gifts" of special teachers, to the function of every member, "every joint." The body of Christ is truly interdependent. Paul waxes eloquent on this theme in 1 Corinthians 12:20-27: "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. 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 honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; 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 honor 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 honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

Each Christian is anointed to serve in this body. Each has a talent. Each must seek to use it to influence and assist every other member of the body. And each must recognize his need for the talents of the other and draw upon it if he would be truly spiritually healthy.

Be Not Conformed—Ephesians 4:17-19

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

Paul's reasoning in the next two sections of our chapter closely parallels his thoughts in Romans 12:2, "be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

The analysis here given of the thinking of the natural mind, while scathing, is most perceptive. The Greek *mataioetei*, here translated "vanity" has the thought of emptiness, particularly as producing no satisfactory results. This vanity Paul attributes to the fact that the heart is blinded or hardened, not willing to think of that which benefits others above that which benefits itself. Thus lacking sensitivity, actions become controlled by natural passions, two of which the apostle mentions specifically: the sexual and monetary drives.

Transformation the Answer—Ephesians 4:20-24

"But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

True Christianity begins with a new mind set. Historically the Bible treats one's attitudes toward others in two steps of development. As a result of the fall, man's priority is to place self first—the survival of the fittest. Mosaic Law raised this standard one step higher—to "love thy neighbor as thyself." Christ lifted the bar one level higher yet, to sacrifice one's self for others even as Jesus loved fallen man enough to give life itself for them.

The basis for this new outward-reaching man is within. Before one can truly help others to live productive lives, he or she must develop the necessary qualities within—righteousness and true holiness. While the concept of "true holiness" may seem to be a contrast with the hypocritical holiness of the Scribes and Pharisees, that is not the thought of the Greek expression. It denotes a holiness that grows out of truth, a holiness that is based on laws that even predate those of Moses—the law of God as written in the conscience of man. This is how Sophocles phrases these laws in his *Antigonus*:

"Nor did I deem thy edicts strong enough,
That thou, a mortal man, shouldst overpass
The unwritten laws of God that know not change.
They are not of today nor yesterday,
But live forever, nor can man assign
When first they sprang to being."

Practical Applications—Ephesians 4:25-32

"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Paul begins his list of specific applications by stressing the necessity of an open, sincere, and honest communication within the Christian community because of mutual interdependency — "for we are members one of another."

He continues by showing that there is a proper and an improper anger. All anger is not necessarily a sin, but all anger opens a temptation to sin. In his notes Barnes suggests six areas where anger becomes sin:

- "1. When it is excited without any sufficient cause—when we are in no danger, and do not need it for a protection. We should be safe without it.
2. When it transcends the cause, if any cause really exists. All that is beyond the necessity of immediate self-protection, is apart from its design, and is wrong.
3. When it is against "the person" rather than the "offence." The object is not to injure another; it is to protect ourselves.
4. When it is attended with the desire of "revenge."
5. When it is cherished and heightened by reflection.
6. When there is an unforgiving spirit; a determination to exact the utmost satisfaction for the injury which has been done."

In any case, anger is to be temporary and attempts should be made to resolve the issue "before the sun goes down," else there will be the temptation to "give way to the devil."

The contrast in the next admonition is most poignant. Not only were they not to follow a former life style which may have occasioned theft, but they were to be gainfully employed, not merely for their own gain, but to have the ability to give to one in need.

Not only was a Christian to watch his emotions and actions, he was also to watch his words. One of the strongest pressures to conform lies in the area of our speech. Daily we are assaulted with not only vile language, but also with words condemnatory of others. These are to have no place in a transformed life.

To revert to the ways of the world, Paul says, would "grieve the spirit" since it would be a direct renunciation of the purpose of God having bestowed his spirit. Such "grieving" of the spirit, though serious, is to be distinguished from the far more serious "quenching" of the holy spirit, which involves completely extinguishing the new life (1 Thessalonians 5:19).

The chapter concludes with a list of qualities of the new life which must be substituted for the bad qualities of the former manner of living. Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil-speaking, and malice are all to be replaced with kindness and tender-hearted forgiveness. In such a way the body of Christ, with all of its beauty of diversity, can grow into the productive unity God designed for it.

Short Devotional Features

In the Eons of Eternity

The church's work throughout eternity, too, will be most glorious. The work of the thousand years will be only the beginning. When the world is turned over to the Father at the end of the Millennial age (1 Corinthians 15:24-28), there will be a great future work for Christ and the Church to do. God has not told us the particulars about those "ages to come" beyond the Millennium, but he has given us the great book of the heavens to study. There by the aid of powerful telescopes we see millions of worlds. If God "formed the earth not in vain, but formed it to be inhabited," we may be just as sure that he formed all of these other worlds for a definite purpose. If they are to be inhabited, agencies will be needed for the ordering of these worlds for habitation, and for their later training and instruction.

When Christ and his bride shall have brought the earth and mankind back to perfection, they will have become properly prepared for their work of the everlasting future. Is there anything in the Bible which refers to their future beyond the Millennium? Yes. The apostle says, "That in the ages to come, God might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:7). So we know that a glorious eternity of happiness and blessed service awaits us in the limitless ages beyond the thousand years.

—Harvest Gleanings III, p. 656

Where Shall I Work?

"Father, where shall I work today?"
And my love flowed warm and free.
Then he pointed me toward a tiny spot
And said, "Tend that for me."
I answered quickly, "No, no, not that!
Why no one would ever see,
No matter how well my work was done.
Not that little place for me."

And the word he spoke, it was not stern,
He answered me tenderly:
"Oh, little one, search that heart of thine,
Art thou working for them or me?
Nazareth was a little place,
And so was Galilee."

—Anonymous

Whiter Than Snow

What a beautiful sight it was, this morning, when we looked out, and saw the ground all covered with snow! The trees were all robed in silver; yet it is almost an insult to the snow to compare it to silver, for silver at its brightest is not worthy to be compared with the marvelous splendor that was to be seen wherever the trees appeared adorned with beautiful festoons above the earth which was robed in its pure white mantle. If we had taken a piece of what we call white paper, and laid it down upon the surface of newly-fallen snow, it would have seemed quite begrimed in comparison with the spotless snow.

This morning's scene at once called the text to my mind: "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." You ... shall not only be washed in his precious blood until you become tolerably clean, but you shall be made white, you shall be "whiter than snow." When we have gazed upon the pure whiteness of the snow before it has become defiled, it has seemed as though there could be nothing whiter. ...

There is a permanence about the whiteness of a blood-washed sinner which there is not about the snow. The snow that fell this morning was much of it anything but white this afternoon. Where the thaw had begun to work, it looked yellow even where no foot of man had trodden upon it; and as for the snow in the streets of London, you know how soon its whiteness disappears. But there is no fear that the whiteness which God gives to a sinner will ever depart from him; the robe of Christ's righteousness which is cast around him is permanently white.

"This spotless robe the same appears
When ruin'd nature sinks in years.
No age can change its glorious hue,
The robe of Christ is ever new."

—Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Spurgeon Sermon Collection*,
vol. 4, pp. 525, 526

The Joys of Heaven

We know not where those heavenly regions are,
Yet gazing long into yon starlit space,
We think that somewhere in those depths afar
God has his everlasting dwelling-place;
And when the sun at even shows his face
All wreathed in glory ere he sinks to rest,
We see in fancy in the clouds that grace
The clear and tranquil beauty of the west
The famed Hesperides, the islands of the blest.

The joys of Heaven! When musing on the theme,
There comes the thought, that those pursuits which fill
Our leisure hours on earth may, in the scheme
Of things eternal, be continued still,
But with exalted powers and Heavenly skill,
And with the knowledge that whate'er we do
Is in accordance with the Father's will,
Free from the imperfections which we know
Distort and mar our best achievements here below.

—W. H. Pepworth, excerpt from *Poems of the Way*, p. 159

Break Forth Into Singing

Isaiah 49:13

There is a beautiful story which tells of song birds being brought over the sea. There were thirty-six thousand, mostly canaries. The sea was very calm when the ship first sailed and the little birds were silent. They kept their little heads under their wings and not a note was heard. But the third day out the sea ship struck a furious gale. The passengers were terrified. Children wept. Then a strange thing happened. As the tempest reached its height the birds began to sing, first one, then another, until all thirty-six thousand were singing as if their little throats would burst.

When the storm rises in its fury,
do we begin to sing?
Should not our song break forth in ten-fold joy
when the tempest begins?

It is morning in my heart!
And I know that for me life begins again,
It is morning in my heart!
It is morning, it is morning in my heart!

Jesus made the gloomy shadows all depart.
Songs of gladness now I sing,
For since Jesus is my King,
It is morning, it is morning in my heart!

Try singing. Singing in the storm!

--*Songs of the Nightingale*, p. 6

NEWS AND VIEWS

Pastoral Bible Institute News

www.heraldmag.org

Do you want to connect to a Bible Student web site but can't remember its address? Just remember www.heraldmag.org Prominently displayed on the opening page is a "links" button that leads to selected Bible Student web sites. A click on a listed site will take you directly to it.

The Herald on Tape

Each issue of the Herald magazine continues to be recorded on audio tape and sent to subscribers around the world. The tapes are sent free to those who are legally blind and who renew their request for them once each year. Others may subscribe for just \$24 for six issues. Use the form inserted into this issue to start your subscription. Those with audio tape players in their automobiles may find that listening to the magazine is one way to reduce the stress of a daily commute.

Around the World

Last week the world quietly passed a new milestone: For the first time, we now have two nations with populations of more than 1 billion each. On Thursday, India officially reached the 1-billion figure. China passed the billion mark about two decades ago and now has 1.3 billion people. No other country comes close to these two. The United States ranks third with 270 million; Indonesia is fourth with 210 million.

—Los Angeles Times, 5/17/2000

Israel

According to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), 230,000 survivors of the Nazi Holocaust are currently living in Israel, 130,000 of whom survived the ghettos and concentration camps. The newly released data was compiled by the CBS at the end of 1997 and the start of 1998. Most of the survivors, 205,000, live in municipal settings. Of this group, 17,000 men and 21,000 women escaped the Nazis by hiding; 25,000 men and 33,000 women lived in the ghettos; 29,000 men and 20,000 women were in forced labor camps; and 17,000 men and 24,000 women survived concentration camps. The survivors comprise over 30% of Israel's over 60-year-old population, and 40% of the over 75-year-old category.

—Israel Wire, 5/1/2000

There is a possibility of shortages of drinking water by the end of autumn, former water commissioner Dan Zaslavsky told The Jerusalem Post. Zaslavsky, professor of soil and water engineering at the Technion in Haifa said the general public is not aware of the seriousness of the severely depleted state of Lake Kinneret and the country's underground reservoirs, which he maintained is nothing short of catastrophic. [He is] convinced that desalination of sea-water would cost about the same [as importing water in tankers] and would be less risky and more beneficial in the long-run. It is expected that the cost of establishing a sea-water desalination plant alongside one of the existing Israel Electricity Corp. power stations would be \$80m. to \$100m. The plant would be capable, at the outset, of producing 50 million cu.m. of water a year. Production would cost around 70 cents a cu.m and capacity could be increased relatively easily

—Jerusalem Post, 6/20/2000

Contrary to previous estimates which spoke of a constant decrease in the [number] of the Jewish people, the past two years have actually seen a small increase of about 100,000, from 13.1 to 13.2 million Jews in the world, according to Professor Sergio DellaPergola, from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who is an expert on Jewish demography. In a conversation with Ha' Aretz, DellaPergola said the new figure was due primarily to developments in the former Soviet Union, where many individuals who were not recognized as Jews are now asserting their true identity. However, in the rest of the world (apart from Israel), the Jewish population is declining steadily by a rate of some 30,000 a year. Assimilation also continues to rise sharply, reaching a peak of 75 percent in Germany and Ukraine. The Jewish world, the demographic expert said, is rapidly approaching a situation of zero natural growth (an identical number of births and deaths), and a negative growth is only being averted by the natural growth of the Jewish population in Israel. In addition, DellaPergola said, only 25 percent of the children of mixed marriages in the United States define themselves as Jews, and the situation is no different in many other countries. Of the 13.2 million Jews worldwide, 8.3 million (63%) reside in the Diaspora and 4.9 million (37%) in Israel. In the former Soviet Union there are fewer than half a million Jews, (about 468,000), due mainly to the large-scale emigration of Jews to Israel as well as to the United States and Germany.

—Ha' Aretz, 6/22/2000

Editor's note: Prof. Yirmiyahu Branover, chief editor of a new encyclopedia on the topic of 1,000 years of Russian Jewry, says, "Until now, the Jewish Agency, Hebrew University and other groups have assumed that 1 to 1.5 million Jews live [in Russia]. Our studies indicate that some 5 million Jews still live [there]." Branover's researchers were instructed to consider as Jews only those who fit the criteria for Jewishness under Jewish law.

Islam

The Islamic Movement in Israel has a master plan to build a fourth mosque on the eastern side of the Temple Mount, according to a detailed report prepared by security officials concerning how the Waqf (Islamic religious trust) and the Islamic Movement envision the holy site. The construction of the mosque is a long-term plan, which is currently only

in the discussion stage, unlike the other plans outlined in the report. Raid Salah, one of the heads of the Islamic Movement, told Ha'aretz that the entire area of the Temple Mount is an inseparable and integral part of the Al Aqsa Mosque. The Committee for the Prevention of Damage to Antiquities on the Temple Mount—a non-partisan body comprised of members representing a range of political views—is calling on the Prime Minister to order the Waqf and heads of the Muslim community to declare a freeze on the current situation of the Temple Mount and define a new status quo. Jerusalem police commander, Yair Yitzhaki, told the Knesset Education Committee a few months back that the Waqf has six separate building plans prepared for the Temple Mount, but refused to go into details. An appeal to the District Court by Yehuda Etzion of the Hai Vekayam Movement that demanded the Waqf reveal their plans for the site on the basis of the Freedom of Information Act met with the state's refusal since the information was considered secret.

—Ha'aretz, 6/18/2000

Mahathir Mohamad, Malaysia's Prime Minister, attacked Islamic fundamentalists for opposing technological change. He urged Muslim countries to embrace modern science to prevent rich Western nations from ganging up to use technology to turn them into banana republics. Dr. Mahathir was speaking to the 56-member Organization of the Islamic Conference in Kuala Lumpur of foreign ministers from Muslim nations. He said opposition Islamic conservatives had condemned the modernization program. The 74-year-old leader said that centuries ago Muslims had the world's most highly developed culture and knowledge of science." Islam enjoins us to seek knowledge. Enough of us must be assigned to the acquisition of the necessary knowledge and skills of the Information Age so as to enable us to catch up with our detractors and our enemies," he concluded.

—Financial Times, 6/28/00

Christendom

Premier Costas Simitis has set his government on a collision course with the powerful Greek Orthodox Church by abolishing religious affiliation from national identity cards. Demanding to know people's beliefs no longer concerns the state "as unfortunately it did in past times," Simitis said in announcing adherence to a 1997 law dropping the religion category. "Recording religion on ID cards restricts and insults, directly or indirectly, the religious freedom of the citizen," he said. The move was backed by human rights groups and minorities such as Muslims, Jews, and Roman Catholics, who claim the religion entry breeds exclusionary nationalism and allows for discrimination. The church, however, is seething. Church leader Archbishop Christodoulos has demanded religion remain an optional entry on the ID cards required for all Greeks over age 14. Church leaders consider the reforms a direct blow to Greek Orthodox heritage. More than 90 percent of Greeks are baptized into the Orthodox faith. They also worry the ID issue could advance efforts to formally separate church and state similar to other European

Union nations. Greece is the only EU nation that requires citizens to declare their religious beliefs and one of the few with state identity cards.

—Associated Press, 5/25/2000

Bankruptcy is looking more inevitable for the Anglican Church of Canada. Canada's third-largest denomination, with 800,000 members, is facing 1,600 claims from native Indians who are demanding to be compensated for physical and sexual abuse they endured at residential schools run by the church from 1800 to the 1970s, news reports said. The lawsuits amount to \$1 billion and the church's parent organization, the National Synod, has less than \$7 million in assets and is expected to run out of money in 12 to 18 months, church spokesmen told MSNBC. "If bankruptcy becomes inevitable, we really are called to be the body of Christ. Dead. Absolutely dead. And just as absolutely destined to rise," Anglican Archbishop Michael Peers said. The residential schools began as a way of crushing Indian culture and assimilating Indians into white society, MSNBC said. Children were forcibly taken from their homes and beaten if they spoke their native language, it said. They often were poorly fed and clothed. Four churches that ran the schools—the Anglican, Roman Catholic, United Church, and Presbyterian—along with the government of Canada, are being sued by about 7,000 survivors of the schools.

—MSNBC, 5/22/2000

Economics

Globalization is on trial at a special session of the United Nations General Assembly in Geneva, called to review progress since the UN social summit in Copenhagen five years ago. Since then, says the UN, global poverty, inequality and insecurity have increased, with one in five of the world's population living on less than \$1 a day. The US is opposing a proposal by Canada, backed by the European Union and developing countries, to study the feasibility of a "Tobin tax"—a levy on currency transactions first suggested by James Tobin, the Nobel prize-winning economist. Proponents claim such a tax could raise as much as \$250 billion a year for development. The UN secretary general called for more commitment to combating poverty and exclusion. The report issued by the UN, IMF, World Bank and OECD, called for more commitment from both rich and poor countries to combating poverty and exclusion. The report sets out seven goals for achievement by 2015. These include halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty, universal primary education, reducing child mortality rates and promoting environment-friendly development.

—www.paris21.org/betterworld, 6/26/2000

Zimbabwe's general election in June swept away the one-party state that President Robert Mugabe has run since the 1980s. John Makumbe, politics lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe, said, "This marks the beginning of democracy in Zimbabwe." The results of the election show that millions of Zimbabweans are eager for change after two decades of uninterrupted Zanu rule and years of corruption and economic mismanagement. "The

new legislature assumes office at a time when the entire nation is consumed by romantic and almost terminal levels of expectation—all this unfortunately in the face of an impending economic holocaust," wrote Brian Kagoro, lawyer and proponent of constitutional reform. Zimbabwe problems include a dearth of foreign exchange and an unemployment rate of more than 50 percent. Commercial farmers, the mainstay of vital export industries in tobacco and horticulture, continue to emigrate to Mozambique and Zambia or Australia and Britain. "We are in real danger of being abandoned by most investors and most donor agencies," said Mr. Makumbe.

—Financial Times, 6/29/2000

Science

After more than a decade of dreaming, planning and heroic number crunching, [the National Institutes of Health's National Human Genome Research Institute and Celera Genomics] have deciphered essentially all the 3.1 billion biochemical "letters" of human DNA, the coded instructions for building and operating a fully functional human. It's impossible to overstate the significance of this achievement. Armed with the genetic code, scientists can now start teasing out the secrets of human health and disease at the molecular level—secrets that will lead at the very least to a revolution in diagnosing and treating everything from Alzheimer's to heart disease to cancer, and more. In a matter of decades, the world of medicine will be utterly transformed, and history books will mark this week as the ceremonial start of the genomic era.

—Time, 7/3/2000

Hebrew University researchers have worked out a method of growing bright red tomatoes with exceptional amounts of vitamins and minerals using genetic engineering. Material resisting oxidation is the secret, with large quantities of Beta-Korten which turns into Vitamin A in the body. The researchers checked the various strains of tomatoes in the country to determine those with the strongest red color. The "Kaye" Prize of the Hebrew University has been awarded to the doctoral student, Gil Ronen, for the discovery.

—Israel Wire, 6/12/2000

An innovative operation of the inner ear has resulted in restoring hearing to deaf people as well as children born deaf. The revolutionary technique involves implanting the shell-shaped Cochlea in a manner bypassing the sound-relaying factor in the inner ear and connecting it by an electrode directly to the brain. The system was invented by Professor Yona Kronenberg at the Sheba Medical Center in Tel Hashomer and will be displayed for the first time at an all-European scientific congress in Berlin and later in Antwerp with emphasis on using it for children. Prof. Kronenberg said the electrodes are introduced into the inner ear and connected to the auditory nerve which, in deaf patients, may not be deteriorated but essentially disconnected.

—Israel Wire, 4/27/2000

Book Review

The Servant, James C. Hunter, Prima Publishing, 1998, 187 pages.

It is unusual to find a book ostensibly about managing people and relationships dedicated "To the Glory of God." Yet after reading James Hunter's one-week step-by-step journey along the road to discovery, one understands why he did this: his "journey" occurred in a Michigan monastery.

Hunter was a general manager of a large manufacturing facility. He appeared to be a successful executive as the world measures success, but he knew his world was falling apart. His wife was unhappy, his son was becoming increasingly rebellious, and the hourly employees at the factory had nearly succeeded in getting a union to represent them because of their discontent.

Hunter turned to his pastor for advice and was told about a retreat at a monastery, something he would never have ordinarily consented to attend except for one thing: one of the monks at that monastery was a former Fortune 500 executive he knew by reputation.

As Hunter learned at this retreat, successful leadership—whether it be of a family, church, little league team, or business organization—depends upon following certain principles, principles that were articulated by Jesus Christ: "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matthew 23:11). Authority to lead is most effective and powerful when it is the result of service and sacrifice on behalf of others.

Hunter's first day in class was humiliating. As each student introduced him or herself, he was thinking about what he would say. When it was his turn, the instructor asked him to summarize what the preceding student had said. He had no idea. Listening, he was to learn, is a fundamental attribute of a good leader, and he didn't listen. No surprise there. Few do. Reading and writing are taught, and sometimes speaking. But few have had any training in listening even though much more of our time is spent in this activity than in the other three.

Hunter learns that service and sacrifice come from love, a concept that makes him uncomfortable until he is shown that this kind of love describes actions, not feelings. Again it is Jesus who, when summarizing the commandments, subsumes them all by invoking love (of God and one's neighbor—Matthew 22:37-40). A surprising concept is that love in action does not require one to like its object. Vince Lombardi said, "I don't necessarily have to like my players and associates but as the leader, I must love them. Love is loyalty, love is teamwork, love respects the dignity of the individual. This is the strength of any organization."

This book allows us to see into Hunter's mind—a man who does not consider himself to be religious—as he gradually comes to the realization that he must follow Christian principles if he is to turn his life around. Although he tries to resist this "message," at the end of the week it appears he really has learned this lesson.

—Michael Nekora