

## INTEGRITY

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In keeping with the connotation of its name, INTEGRITY seeks to encourage believers in Christ to strive to be one, to be pure, and to be honest and sincere in word and deed, among themselves and toward all men.

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# Integrity

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He who walks in integrity walks securely. Prov. 10:9.

## FROM THE EDITOR

A student at Malone College (a Quaker school in Canton, Ohio) recently wrote: "I have spent 3 years in a 'loyal' Bible college and am attending Malone for convenience sake. I am an 'official' ordained, licensed preacher for the Non-Denominational Fellowship of Christian Churches and Churches of Christ. All this seems rather empty when at Malone in chapel service we join hands and sing 'they shall know we are Christians by our love.'" Although some readers may be alarmed by such a statement, we regard it as a healthy sign, inasmuch as it reflects concentration on what is really fundamental and necessary in religion. It is typical of numerous letters. When we talk about identifying marks of the church, we are much too prone to omit the one characteristic that Jesus stressed so vigorously.

Another writer asks us to send a copy of our journal, "Tell It Like It Is." Although we publish under another name, certainly men of "integrity" should "tell it like it is," and we are happy to be thought of in that connection. Some readers will perhaps doubt that we really tell it like it is, but we hope they will never have occasion to accuse us of failing to tell it like we think it is.

If all Christians will honestly devote themselves to the essentials of the Christian experience, perhaps we will even become so threatening to the world that people will want to start killing us again! HGL

### The Church I'd Like To See

Dean A. Thoroman

With a new year and a new decade, plus some new insights and new intentions, I cannot keep from expressing a few of my hopes regarding the church I'd like to see in the 70's. The church I'd like to see is one with an

#### ATMOSPHERE OF FREEDOM!

Too long have we known and felt the restrictions of legalism and the shackles of fear. I'd really like to see an "Independence Day" for each disciple of Jesus, with such a bursting of bonds that keepers of orthodoxy would know that their control over the minds of men extends no further than themselves. Perhaps on this same "Independence Day" there might be such total rejection of fear that professional preachers and domineering

leaders would no longer be able to enforce dogmatic decisions. Truly, I'd like to see each Christian recognizing and enjoying the freedom he has in Jesus.

This atmosphere of freedom would carry over into every facet of an individual's life. He would, more than anything else, seek freedom from fear. The free man in Christ would know that he has a right to read anything he wants to read (including INTEGRITY and GOOD NEWS FOR MODERN MAN!) and to judge for himself as to the value of the contents of his personal choices of reading matter. Further, he would not allow anyone else to dictate what he could study, what he could listen to, and what he could express.

Freedom of expression includes just as much liberty to speak one's belief in matters of religion as in any other matters. I fervently hope to see more and more freedom in the pulpit, more honest expression in Bible classes, and more openness in church publications, including weekly (Should I say, "weakly"?) bulletins.

Of course, such an atmosphere is possible only when and where each of us recognizes the EQUALITY of believers in Christ. So, I'd like to see more congregations with

#### DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP!

How can members of the Church of Christ say there is no hierarchy in the church of the Lord, while doing everything in their power to establish an authoritarian system in which the edicts of elders are equated with pronouncements from heaven? Many saints join me in longing to see the day when the ministry of Christ will be identified by behavior rather than by position. There are children of God who will no longer allow their consciences to be overruled by overbearing elders and preachers. The church of God has no final authority except the Bible. Notwithstanding the recent rash rush of preacher pronouncements, elder edicts, bulletin blasts, and lectureship lip, there is an increasing number of disciples who knowingly break tradition in order to demonstrate their release from the unauthorized control of Bible-spouting tyrants. Wouldn't you like to see a church with leaders whose example of godliness so thrilled and challenged that individual progress is inevitably inspired and mutual support is gladly given?

May the Lord help each one who aspires to lead His people to know and to respond to his own weaknesses. May there be full and open communication between the "governed" and the "governors." May the approach to problem-solving be on a mutual basis, with each one who participates recognizing the valuable contribution which each other participant makes in this group process.

Do you think it is possible that the 70's may be the decade in which church leaders finally recognize and admit that their authority extends no further than those who select them are willing to grant? Would it be possible to find a group of elders who could recognize the congregation's wisdom in asking them (the elders) to step down, and that this wisdom would at least be equal to that shown when the elders were selected?

Too, I'd like to be part of the church that

#### ENCOURAGES INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT!

How greatly we need to grow up! We desperately need to mature enough to accept one another - just like we are. Each of us wants to be accepted and we search for that company that makes us comfortable. If there ever was a society which ought to accept "with no strings attached," that society should be God's church! I once heard something that made a profound impression - so much so that I memorized it immediately. This is what it was: "The church is not an exhibition of perfect saints, but an institution for the perfecting of saints." I'd like very much to be part of the church which understands and practices something very close to that statement.

Each of us also needs to be encouraged to do what we believe is right according to God's will as we currently understand it. What a glorious body of people it is that continuously seeks the best for all who are part of it! Sermonizing probably has its place, but it surely is not when a person is down and almost out! Who has a right to look down his nose at anyone else? "Let him who has no sin cast the first stone!" Why didn't anyone throw any rocks that day? Would you have thrown one if you had been there? If not, can you throw one now? The church of the 70's needs more hands that help than those which toss stones.

A climate of acceptance and encouragement will lead to individual involvement. The growing church becomes strong only as individuals are strengthened, and spiritual exercise is the best guarantee of continuous growth. There is no real, permanent growth until a person finds the path of service. How could anyone keep from wanting to be part of the body of Christ when each member is alive and active, Spirit-controlled and spiritually concerned?

In the decade ahead, I'd like to be in the church that

#### EMPHASIZES "WEIGHTIER MATTERS!"

Someone told me just the other day that he would like to see the time when the church would have more DOING sessions than TALKING AND

LISTENING sessions. Wouldn't it be great to be part of a group that put more emphasis on GOING OUT than on COMING IN?

Does it do any harm to dream a little? I'd like to see a congregation that treated its "wayward" members at least as respectfully as its "prospects." From a personal viewpoint, I can testify that some of my brothers and sisters in Christ treated me with more respect when I was (in their eyes) a rank sinner, than at present when I am (in their eyes) an "erring" brother. Truly, I have a special interest in seeing the day when God's people will demonstrate love as much as they talk about it!

My hopes for the future include a longing for evidence that God's Spirit really lives in and guides all who claim to be part of His family. May we reach the point that we are as interested in "the fruit of the Spirit" as we are in "forgiveness of sins." May our desire to be "doctrinally right" not prevent us from recognizing our "spiritual wrong." In short, may we never forget our personal need for the grace of God!

To bring this essay to a close, I'd like to see a church that

#### INSISTS ON "TELLING IT LIKE IT IS!"

If that means that we recognize that the real power structure in the Lord's church is NOT the eldership, but very likely the elders' wives - or the preacher - or his wife - then, that's the way we'll tell it! If it means that we shall do everything in our power to expose hypocrisy, no matter where it exists, that's what we will do. Who knows? It may mean that a few preachers would even decide that "full-time" preaching can be done without being on a church payroll! Some deacons might be appointed for a temporary work and their "office" would terminate as soon as the work was completed. Deaconesses might exist without ever being officially recognized. "Services" of the church could be defined in terms of what the congregations are actually doing to help people in their community. Emphasis on conformity and uniformity would be replaced by an intense desire to do whatever God wants done - whether anyone else does it or not!

We are on the threshold of an exciting decade! Let us thank God for allowing us to be here to share in His richness! May we stop acting like scared sheep and rejoice that we are truly His cared-for sheep. Let us act like MEN OF GOD! Recognize the one mediator between ourselves and God - THE MAN JESUS CHRIST. My heart is overflowing with gladness for the great days God has in store for all who "lay by Him in store" against that GREAT DAY. The church I'd like to see, in whose membership I'd like to be, is the church that faces the eternal future with confident expectation of marching right on to ultimate, joyous victory in the presence of Jehovah. Wouldn't you like to be there, too? ☞☞☞

"You will always have poor people with you, and any time you want to you can help them." (Mark 14:7 TEV.)

The helpfulness of the early church was one of its outstanding characteristics. The original disciples had noticed Jesus' example and were determined to emulate his ministry. He was moved with compassion when he saw the people like sheep without a shepherd, "harassed and helpless." They were aware of his compassion and were not afraid to come to him with the urgent cry, "Lord, help me!" Because he identified with the people and became one of them, he had the ability to help. It is said of him, "Because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted." Both his compassion and ability are unlimited.

There is an old saying that "God helps those who help themselves." It contains some truth, but since it is of mythological origin, we might expect it to come short of what the Bible actually says: "While we were yet helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6). God helps us when we are beyond self-help. One of our favorite hymns says:

When other helpers fail, and comforts flee  
Help of the helpless, O, abide with me.

We know that we can depend on God, but men are different. Our help is often too little and too late. Samuel Johnson illustrates the latter fault in his "Letter to Lord Chesterfield": "Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help?" Those who have gone through the crisis do not need us. If we are to help them, we must be there in the midst of extremity. On the other hand, the help we render is often too short-lived. We get a man on his feet and then turn our backs and let him fall again. Shakespeare aptly says:

'Tis not enough to help the feeble up,  
But to support him after.

There is much concern for helping the poor in this generation (if you doubt this, analyze your tax bill). It would seem that the church should be ahead of the children of the world in this regard, but we are often behind. How many churches among us really have a serious ministry of helpfulness? Can we talk responsibly about restoring New Testament Christianity without giving due attention to this mark of the early church?

Of particular significance for those who seek to reproduce the ministry of the early church is the function of "helpers" in 1 Cor. 12:28. The exact meaning of "helpers" is not agreed upon, but most scholars are convinced that the term refers to functions rather than functionaries. They are men-

tioned along with "administrators," and some have concluded that the two terms foreshadow the work of deacons and elders respectively. However, it is doubtful that this identity can be sustained. Apart from the fact that helpfulness is a term of general application, Acts 20:35 seems to obviate this conclusion, for there the elders are told to "help the weak," and the verb used (antilambano) is cognate with "helpers" (antilempseis) in 1 Cor. 12:28. Here, as with all functions in the New Testament, it is risky to make hard and fast distinctions; there was a general overlapping of work among the original ministers. And it seems virtually certain that Paul is thinking of personal gifts rather than offices in 1 Cor. 12.

1 Cor. 12:28 is a valuable warning that there is much about the ministry of the early church that we do not understand, a fact that should be pondered carefully by those who believe that the church today, in order to be scripturally organized, must exactly duplicate the offices of the original disciples. Even if the office of "helpers" was in later times associated with deacons, are we to conclude that this was the original conception? And are deacons to be the only helpers? Furthermore, if helpers are deacons, and if the work of deacons has come to mean a humbler service than that of elders, why are deacons mentioned first in 1 Cor. 12?

In a list of charismata in Rom. 12:8 Paul mentions (in addition to "service") "he who gives aid" and "he who does acts of mercy." These may be compared with "helpers" in 1 Cor. 12:28, but "he who gives aid" translates a Greek participle which is used of elders "who rule" (1 Tim. 5:17). Either of these terms may be associated with the helpers, as may also "instruction" and "exhortation" in the same passage.

Another relevant passage is 1 Thess. 5:12-14, which refers to those "who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you." There is no evidence that the formal distinctions we make between ministers today is to be seen in this verse. It is often applied to elders, but this association very likely comes from our attempts to read into New Testament passages our own conceptions of the ministry. It is true that "are over you" represents the Greek proistemi ("who rule" in 1 Tim. 5:17), but unless one takes the extreme view that this term never refers to any but elders, there is no reason to apply 1 Thess. 5:12 to elders exclusively. The exhortation to "help the weak" in verse 14 is given to "brethren" in general. And the whole passage - "admonish the idle, encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, be patient with them all" - could very well serve as a commentary on "helpers" in 1 Cor. 12:28.

A flesh-and-bones example of the ministry of helpfulness is Phoebe, "a deaconess" and "a helper of many" (Rom. 16:1-2). "Deaconess" is from the common term for minister in the New Testament, and it refers to a wide range of activities, from preaching to serving tables. "Helper" (prostatis) is a noun form of "rule and/or give aid" (proistemi), and it is a recognized equivalent of "helper" (antilempsis) in 1 Cor. 12:28.

Now, if *proistemi* (whether translated "rule" or "give aid") refers only to elders, this would make Phoebe a female elder. However, if terms like "deaconess," "help," "rule," and "give aid" are to be regarded as general terms for Christian helpfulness apart from any appointed ministry, then we need see nothing more in Phoebe than a good Christian woman who had dedicated herself to the patronage of the saints. Her example shows what troublesome questions we can raise when we try to build too much of a case on words. By the sort of reasoning we so often apply to our study of the ministry, we can make her both a deaconess and elder!

The household of Stephanas (1 Cor. 16:15-16) is another illustration of Christian helpfulness. They "devoted themselves to the service of the saints," and the Corinthians are told to "be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer." These statements will repay careful study. "Devoted themselves" is literally "appointed themselves"; "service" is literally "diaconate." If "service" is to be taken in the official sense (office of deacon), then the household of Stephanas was a self-appointed diaconate. (We will let the reader judge for himself the implications this would have for present-day functions!) "Be subject" comes from the same original word which is frequently used to bind upon the congregation unwavering obedience to elders (it is also used of our duty to all Christians, Eph. 5:21). But if unquestioning obedience is implied in the term, then the responsibility would apply to "self-appointed deacons" as well as elders. Another warning that it is easy to overstate our case!

Actually, what we are confronted with in these passages is the dedication of members of the early church to Christian service. Although various forms of this service were sometimes regarded as special personal gifts, they do not need to always be so regarded. There is, in fact, a grave danger in viewing them as prerogatives of office, since that approach tends to alienate the one who does not have an "office" from the work he should be doing. It is apparent that the early church was not nearly as concerned with special offices as some of us are today. Their service was not motivated by desire for office, but rather by eagerness to help.

In view of the fact that the judgment picture in Mt. 25 refers to no basis of discrimination except various kinds of service, the church today needs to seek vigorously to recapture this spirit. One does not have to be appointed by an apostle or elected by a congregation to do this work. If we have the gift, let us try to exercise it. There will always be poor or weak or outcast brethren to practice on. The cry of those in physical, mental and spiritual distress still rings out. In helping them we help the Lord, and he will judge us accordingly. "The kind of religion which is without stain or fault in the sight of God our Father is this: to go to the help of orphans and widows in their distress and keep oneself untarnished by the world" (Jas. 1:27 NEB). It is worthless to speak of restoring the New Testament ministry, unless we restore this. \$\$\$

Most serious Bible students will agree that the church (any community of believers) is less than perfect. We have not yet learned all truth, nor have we learned to apply all the knowledge we have acquired. Christ says that love is the greatest command, but who practices it perfectly? In 1 Cor. 8:2 Paul says that if any man thinks he knows anything, he doesn't know it as he should. James D. Bales says that no congregation has ever perfectly measured up to the scriptural standard (GOSPEL ADVOCATE, August, 1963). As long as the church consists of humans it will have need of being reformed.

If we are in earnest in searching for the truth and letting Christ rule our lives, we will be able to see our faults and try to correct them. It is not so bad to be found in error, but to learn of our error and refuse to change is inexcusable. Those who see a need to change some of our thinking and practices will most assuredly run into a wall of opposition, which in most cases will be insurmountable. The nature of this opposition is always the same. Following are seven walls of opposition that are almost invariably faced by the reformer.

1. "WE HAVE ALWAYS DONE IT THIS WAY." Most people object to any change in habit or routine. There seems to be some kind of security in following in the same old rut. If we get out of the rut, there is too much unfamiliar ground to cover. It is better to stay in the rut than to be right. Without the slightest investigation into a new idea or thought, it is automatically objected to because it is new.

2. DISCREDIT THE PEOPLE INVOLVED. Never discuss the issues; get personalities involved. Those who oppose change will discredit those with new ideas by making snide remarks about their personal habits. We often hear such expressions as: "too much education," "they have studied so much they have lost their balance," and "they are dangerous men and will lead the sheep astray." This is what the Jews did in John 9. Jesus had healed the blind man, and the Pharisees were very disturbed. They finally told the healed man to give God the praise because Jesus was a sinner. And this was because Jesus had healed him. What they really feared was Jesus' teaching.

3. SUSPICIOUS CONNECTIONS. "He's one of them," is a familiar cry. It is also as old as the New Testament. In John 7 the Pharisees were trying to get hold of Jesus, but Nicodemus asked if, according to their law, one was to be heard before he was convicted. Their answer was, "Thou art from Galilee also." In other words, you are one of them. This is a vague generality to cause suspicion and doubt about one who sincerely sees a need for change and speaks out.

4. DISTRUST. People can easily be alarmed by attacking the motives of the innovators. Instead of looking at the issue, question their intentions. What's at the bottom of this? Why does anyone want to change things? There must be an evil conspiracy going on. Those who see things differently are accused of trying to get a following, overthrowing authorities and creating division, when all they seek is a closer walk with Jesus and a willingness to share their knowledge and joy with other people.

5. "WAIT A LITTLE WHILE. This is not the time." Today is the plea, eternal exclusion commonly the object. The cry is for a need of caution and circumspection, that danger lurks in the dark: "you may have the truth but..." "Go slow. One thing at a time. People are satisfied and should not be disturbed." This is the one thing that really shows the fallacy of the objectors. Privately they will agree with you but put up the objections cited to pretend a great danger in trying to reform NOW. In fact, in public they will more often than not lie about agreeing with you. The desired result is not to go slow, but to stall forever.

6. "IN ATTACKING US YOU ATTACK THE LORD AND HIS CHURCH." Churches sometimes drift into unholy and unscriptural practices. For example, the clergy system which is widespread today. When someone in the congregation has the audacity to point out the condition to which they have deteriorated, he is looked upon as a railer against the church. We are told that such a person is not fit to be associated with because he degrades the Lord's Body. Can we not speak out against error without attacking the church? If elders or preachers become corrupt, does this corrupt Christ? It might corrupt the body, unless they repent and reform.

7. SQUELCH OPEN DISCUSSION. If leaders are wrong or have the least doubt about their position on any issue, the worst thing they could do is to have an open discussion. They have nothing to gain and everything to lose. The people will likely see the weakness of their position. If people have an opportunity to look at an idea and judge it on its own merits, they will more than likely follow that which coincides with truth. If the leaders happen to be in error, they are in danger of losing their place in the organization. This was a problem that Jesus encountered while he was in the flesh. In John 12:42-43 we read of many of the chief rulers who believed on Jesus but would not confess him "lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." In John 11, after Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead, the Pharisees were trying to decide what to do with him because of his many miracles and concluded, "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation."

There is a need to guard against error creeping into our lives and practices in the church. This happens when we are influenced by the world

and let the truth become watered down. It also happens when we place our traditions above the commands of God, or teach for doctrine the commandments of men.

There are in the church today many practices that need to be looked at. We clearly have a pastor system (highly organized) that will weed out and destroy any member who tries to help us get untangled. We need to look at the unscriptural authority we have invested in the eldership, the stressing of "doctrinal matters," and our seeming ignorance of the scripture and dependence on the preacher to educate the flock. We need to take another look at our use of words, such as: church, worship, disfellowship, fellowship, and a score of others that we have given a different meaning than the original one. Our look should be free of undue emotional strain caused by others and free from the objections mentioned above. If we have arrived at all the truth, we will only fortify our faith. If we have not arrived, then a study will only bring us closer to the truth. Either way we can't lose. The only way we will lose is if we blindly follow others without investigating for ourselves.

Ross W. Dye has said, "When we want to discriminate where God has not; when we take the view that 'our side' represents the 'good guys,' and the 'other side' represents the 'bad guys'; when we want to reduce the size of the church to the dimensions of our customs and prejudices; we thereby declare ourselves to be a denomination.

"A denominationalist is a person who has a narrowminded attachment to a party, a school of thought or the like. There is always a danger that Christians will become attached to an opinion or an interpretation to the extent that they would impeach the faith and Christian character of those who differ. Such people are bigoted, narrow, factious and denominational. They want to set themselves apart and exclude others whom God accepts." ("Trends Toward Denominationalism," GOSPEL ADVOCATE, October, 1963.)

This situation exists in the church today just as Brother Dye pictures it. This is reason enough for all to be concerned and start a reformation, restoration, or whatever you would call it, the objections one has to face notwithstanding. ¶

#### MOVING?

If you are planning to move, be sure to send us your change of address. That way you won't miss any issues of INTEGRITY. Always include your zip code!

## "Does It Mean Nothing To You, All You Who Pass By?"

John Smith

With her tiny baby, warmly wrapped, cradled in one arm and a small pre-school boy held tightly by the hand, her face a picture of apprehensive and yet determined emotion, a young mother walked into the office of a church-sponsored child care institution.

She was in her early twenties, no longer married. She hadn't finished high school, and when her husband left her, she had tried desperately to keep her small family together, but there was no way. The best job she could get paid only \$60 per week, and after taxes and a baby sitter she couldn't even pay her rent. She was now in the process of giving up her children so that they could have a chance; a loving, tender decision for them, but it was tearing her apart emotionally.

The institution happened to have room for the children and so could ease the burden of this young mother, but as she signed the papers to secure their future, I couldn't help but wonder about HER. Where was HER salvation? Where was the salvation of this little family? She wasn't casting her children, like worthless offal, upon a benevolent, understanding society, as many do, but rather had made an agonizing decision to attempt their salvation. What did the church offer her?

I reflected upon the many beautiful, air-conditioned, padded-pewed cathedrals built by Christians who gloried in their personal work programs, campaigns, gospel meetings, etc., and wondered, "What is their relationship to this pilgrim?"

I couldn't help but think of a meeting I attended recently to discuss the future building plans of a local congregation. Nearly half a million dollars were to be expended on this new project. As the architectural schemes for the auditorium and classrooms were unfolded and the various virtues of each new facility were extolled, several questions began to arise within me. First, whom was this building for? On whom were the blessings of this half million dollar investment to fall? Quite obviously, on the church members. This building had no relationship to the community at all! The main expenditure was for an auditorium that would only be used less than two hours a week and used only by the builders themselves.

No plans were made or even discussed to attract the community. No kitchen was proposed to serve the hungry; no gymnasium to serve the children and young people who have no place to go; no store room for clothing, furniture, and groceries to assist the needy; no counseling for the discouraged and mentally troubled, the alcoholics and the prostitutes. Not a single place of pure beauty to meet the aesthetical needs of the dreamers and the philosophers. No, just a nice place, for nice people, who live in nice houses and drive nice cars and say nice things, to other nice people!

The second question which arose was: what is the mission of the church and where does this building fit into that mission? The professed mission of the church is to save the lost, to extend hope to the hopeless and help to the helpless, to lift up the hands that hang down and to strengthen the palsied knees. But this building bore no relationship to any of those things; it was not built for the lost but for the saved; it offered neither hope nor help because it was a place of words. Each room was built to talk in. The whole building was a network of microphones and speakers, to carry the hollow sounds of empty words. There were no rooms to work in, or eat in, except the room with kitchen facilities; but these too were most assuredly not built with helping the lost or needy in mind, but rather for the convenience of the saved. There was no place to play in, laugh in, or cry in (except the nursery), and even it was equipped with speakers so that even the children could not escape the words. A monument to talk, a palace of words. If those who are hopeless or poverty stricken could be helped by words, this establishment would be a veritable panacea of cures, but unfortunately they cannot.

My third question was: why is this new building being built, what advantage does it have over its predecessor? I was overwhelmed by one fact obvious to any unbiased observer: there was not one single thing that could be done in the new building that could not be done in the old one! They were amazingly alike in one respect: they were both built to serve the selfish needs of the builders only. The new building would only seat more of the builders more comfortably, and more pride could be taken in its appearance. I also discovered that it was being built as proof to the builders that they were accomplishing something, that their labors were not in vain. It was physical proof of their success. Every time they saw a drunk, a hippie, an ex-convict, or some destitute soul that they had no contact with, no relationship to, they could drive by and see that building which proved their rightness and eased their troubled minds. It was a fortress to shield them from the world, to protect their faith. Within its walls they found shelter and balm for their fears, because their God was there. It was their opium, their consolation; their faith was there, and their hope.

My last question was: where does this young mother - whose whole life was being torn apart, who needed help so desperately - where did she fit into this cathedral of words? She did not! Neither do the countless multitudes of seekers just like herself who pass by our word palaces every day. No, they never did fit, and I don't guess they ever will. After all, what could they possibly contribute to our next building!

The words of the Prophets  
are written on the subway walls  
and tenement halls; and echo  
in the wells of silence.

## And God Smiled

John Tucker

And God said:

"Let there be a nation,

Let it grow

from a thirteen colony seed  
into a giant fifty state tree.

Let it be peopled by all the colors  
of Noah's descendants,  
with the wisest of these  
leading the rest.

Let there be freedom  
and harmony among them.

Let the leaders be led by My Word,  
so that their decisions  
will be made wisely,  
and with love. "

And so it was.

And God smiled.

And the nation grew and spread its  
ways and thoughts  
to other nations,  
so that they too might benefit.

And the years became decades,  
and the decades centuries,  
and the people learned  
from one another.

And God smiled,

But inside the nation was unrest:

A yellow man spat upon a red man,  
a white man upon a black.

And this grew, and they were divided:  
white with white,  
black with black,  
yellow with yellow,  
red with red.

And some grew more powerful  
than others,  
and repressed them.

And God's smile weakened.

And the other nations saw this  
and followed the same steps.

And unrest grew among all the nations,  
and suspicion followed.

One nation fought with another,  
and this grew,  
and wars were made.

And these nations became divided.  
And God smiled wanly.

The people in the largest nation sought  
ways to forget these things.

So they made drinks  
from barley and corn,  
drinks with which they could  
benumb their minds.

The wisest of the leaders saw this  
and disapproved.

They passed laws to stop the people  
from following this path,  
for it was not God's way.

But the people cried out,  
"We want this!"

The leaders became fearful  
of losing their elections and so  
gave the liquor back to the people.  
So that they might be happy again;  
and they were.

And God's smile waned.

Soon, other things were found that  
could help them be happy:  
weeds!

Weeds that could dull the mind,  
sharpen the mind.

Weeds that could make  
beautiful colors in the mind.

Weeds that could make  
the smallest of men  
seem like the greatest.  
And the people rejoiced.

But the leaders found fault with this  
too, saying that  
the weeds were harmful -  
not only to body,  
but to spirit also.

The people cried out:

"We want this,  
for never have we known  
such peace. "

And the leaders again grew afraid  
and let the people have their way.  
And God frowned.

And the nation was filled with  
false happiness;  
they had parties,  
and sinned greatly.

And this grew.

And God cried, "STOP!"

And the whole world stood still.

"I have come to judge your deeds. "

And the leaders of the nation  
came forth and said,

"We have grown from the seed  
to the tree.

We have spread our branches  
to other nations,  
and they have followed us.

We are not afraid to be judged;  
we have followed your Word. "

And the Lord God Almighty smiled -  
sadly. ¶

## Happiness Is

Betty Denison

Happiness is...

A smile from a stranger,  
A compliment from a friend,  
A flower from a child.

Happiness is...

Smiling at a stranger,  
Complimenting a friend,  
Giving a flower to a child.

Happiness is...

Finding a quiet corner,  
Thinking,  
Talking to God.

Happiness is...

Mingling with friends,  
Singing joyfully,  
Conversing with others.

Happiness is...

Living this life.

Happiness is...

Going to our Maker. ¶

## Note to New Readers

Since we must make every effort to keep publication costs down, we do not reply to letters unless there is some good reason to do so. Those who request INTEGRITY are simply added to the mailing list.

In many cases correspondents ask about subscription costs and back issues, promising to send any amount of remuneration we ask. We do not ask for any, but we do hope some of our readers will have enough sympathy for our work to help us with the ever-increasing expenses. We have had numerous warnings from other publishers that we cannot continue this way. This remains to be seen.

We have received a few contributions each month, ranging from \$100 to \$1. We have never received enough to pay for that month's issue. Our deficits are taken care of by the board members, who are not exceptionally prosperous. Needless to say, we are particularly grateful to all who have helped us.

We have sent back issues upon request, but the time has come when we must limit some numbers to those who have special need for them. We have no plans for reprinting any. Frankly, we underestimated the demand.

Some teachers are using INTEGRITY for group discussions and have asked about sending them bundles. We will either do this or send copies directly to names submitted.

If we have neglected any of you in any way, please let us know. We all have made errors - including the computer, which inexplicably dropped some names from the list (and some of them may not have been recovered).

Yes, we do mail to foreign countries, and we already have several foreign readers on our list. We receive requests from abroad monthly.