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Readers' Response

If you haven't already, you'll soon be receiving a letter from Board member Elton Higgs asking that you consider supporting *Integrity* with a financial contribution.

We depend on your generosity to keep this journal going! Then, too, your contribution ensures that we can continue to send *Integrity* to those on a fixed income, to students, and to libraries.

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

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INTEGRITY, a journal published bimonthly by an independent nonprofit corporation, is intended to be a ministry of reconciliation which utilizes the varied talents of a large community of believers. These believers, united in faith but divergent in opinions, seek to accurately reveal God to both the church and the world so that all may become one as He is one. Accordingly, it should not be assumed that the views expressed by individual authors necessarily represent the opinions of either the editors or the Board as a whole.

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How Does This Apply?

What does this have to do with me?" I started asking that question of my Sunday School teachers when I was ten years old. It was my childish way of asking what we adults continue to pursue: how do Christ's teachings apply to our lives in practical ways?

The authors of this issue of *Integrity* have written articles which respond to that old question in the light of these thought-provoking teachings:

"For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh . . ."

"And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

" . . . not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

" . . . those who have ears to hear, let them listen!"

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said to you."

"Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray."

These scriptures are given thoughtful response in the following essays and testimonies. We hope you are as encouraged by them as we are, so that we all "may lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, as (we) bear fruit in every good work and as (we) grow in the knowledge of God"(Col.1:9b,10).

Diane G. H. Kilmer
Co-editor

Don't Call Me Generation X!

NATHAN K. GREEN

I am 23, and without my consent, am placed under the heading of Generation X. My generation, from what I've been told, cares for nothing and stands for nothing. The god of the generation before us was money, and our god is pleasure. Everything is nothing, and nothing is what everything is about. Our lives and the world around us are worthless. The things that surround us are there for our immediate pleasure and nothing else. Seize the moment, live it to the fullest; soon, all else will be over. With the older generations as role models, we have ceased to believe in hell, they say; a loving god could not create such a horrible place. And yet, in following our elders' path, we have taken that next step; for without the presence of hell, there is no longer a consequence to our actions. With no consequence, there is also no place for reward; with nothing to live in fear of, there is no longer anything to live for. A loving god could not exist, for what deity would support such one-sided chaos?

It's a scary stance to see a generation take, yet it is not Generation X alone. Those beliefs are not my generation's, they are the world's. Generation X, then, is not a generation, it is a belief. It is not contained within a particular age bracket, it is found at every age and at every level in life. Generation X is nothing but an excuse. It's an excuse for the condition of this world, the condition of our lives, and the sorry way in which most Christians give back those lives to the God who saved them for us.

I am 23, and by choice belong to that which I claim to be the Joshua Generation. My generation stands for everything for which Jesus died on Calvary. We believe in

God as Deity, Father, and Friend. We believe in the boundless blessing of his grace, and that this world and all the material things contained within it are meaningless; our lives, though, are not. Our lives do not belong to us for worldly pleasure or waste, but for joy and service in the Lord Jesus Christ. We are made in his image, and we are special!

My generation sees the great sickness in the world and wishes to cure it with the words of Jesus just like the generations before us, but we also see a great sickness within the Body itself, and we shall not pretend that it does not exist. Denominational division will not paralyze Christ's Body during *this* generation. In believing in heaven, we also believe in hell. We respect the power of the Devil, but we will not cower nor ignore him. We have not forgotten that we are at war; not a war in the human realms, but a war of the spiritual nature. When our Lord returns, our victory will be complete, but until that day comes we shall resist the Prince of this world and

Denominational division will not paralyze Christ's Body during *this* generation.

we will take back as much as we can. We will stand and we will stand, opposed to the chaos of this land, because our God is a God of boldness and not one of timidity.

For some, *my* generation's stance is just as scary as Generation X's. We challenge the status quo and the balancing acts that the churches of this world have developed over

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the centuries. Our religion is not tradition—it is a living, breathing organism that must be embraced, and lived, and exalted. The Joshua Generation is not made up of people of a certain age, but of a certain heart. And in so being it, too, is not a generation at all, but a belief. We don't search for excuses, but for answers; and we live only to serve the Father.

Nathan K. Green, a student at David Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee, edits the Student Life Ministry section of the school paper.

What If He Became Flesh and Dwelt Among Us?

ALINE EDSON

If Jesus came to our world today, what would he do? If he woke up in the morning where we are, what would he think? How would he spend his time today? What would his priorities be? We know from the record that he would spend his time with people: they're all that count on into eternity. But how? Where? Would he stand up to read in our assemblies? Teach on the hillside? In the city auditorium?

The looks of things have changed, but basic human nature and needs have not changed one iota since Adam walked in the Garden. So the essentials are still the same. Scripture says Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And humanity hasn't changed.

We need to ponder exactly what he would do in our world because we are his body divinely designated to do his work in whatever time span we find ourselves. Would he be interested in politics? Would he vote? We know he would pay taxes because he did. And he

This is our call—but only if we can all learn to serve and stand together, can this world be taken back and the lives of countless millions be saved.

This is what I would have my Generation stand for, and this is what I would rather we be called.

taught subjection to governing bodies—even the corrupt Roman government. How would he conduct himself in controversy? As a sheep to the slaughter, opening not his mouth? Or with a whip? Or both, as the situation demanded? Would he consider the Internet worthwhile in his work? Would he continue his one-on-one ministry in this complex, ever-expanding world?

If his followers in every place and every time period conducted themselves as he would if he were at that time and place, then he would be everywhere all the time—in body as well as spirit. Let's work through the superficial changes in times and places and concentrate on the things that haven't, and won't, change: namely, Jesus and human need.

Although it would take some effort to imagine Jesus walking our city streets, reading our daily headlines, it might be a very enlightening exercise. The world is still saying, "Sirs, we would see Jesus." It's up to us to give them that opportunity.

Missing the Power of the Sunday Gathering

KAY KENDALL

It was another horrible Sunday morning. My little sister lay dying from a rare and aggressive kidney cancer that had spread to her brain and bones. Initially prompted to believe that a craniotomy might net her "12-14 good months" more, she had been required by relentless reality to acknowledge that hospice care meant "no more tests, no more treatments, no 911, no medical hope." Admittedly, God could intervene and work an undeniably mighty miracle and heal her dramatically and award her a stunning life testimony. We prayed that he would. But so far the downward course was steady and increasingly unmanageable. Even direct IV morphine was not enough to stop the pain. It had been over a week since she could sit up in the wheelchair even for twenty minutes. It had been four days since she could sit up in bed and eat her cereal or brush her teeth. It had been seven weeks since she had been home, waiting.

On so many days she had been so faithful—consoling her older spiritual mentors, challenging her younger, wayward friends, (did I mention her own tender age of 38?). She had gathered in the late night prayers of friends far and near to ward off fear and gain strength for the new day. She had taken care to clear her conscience and make restitution in the community. She had listened eagerly to favorite cousins read Job, and Romans, and I John, and *Hind's Feet on High Places*. She had valiantly planned who should receive classic books, old clothes, tapes of songs and sermons, her beloved piano (it had been newly repaired and tuned with money sent from grateful friends). She had struggled to write, and then to just dictate thank-you notes to nurses and short letters

to friends. She had fought to increase her endurance up out of bed to work toward her real goal—getting to church some Sunday. But it seemed that just as all the obvious obstacles were encountered and solved, new adversities loomed to thwart her heart's desire. The rib pain and shortness of breath had made us cancel the wheelchair van and plans to worship with her beloved church.

And so it was yet another horrible Sunday. Her physical condition was diminishing; my exhaustion level accelerating. Her anxious, angry expressions were leaking from her eyes and my "powerless" feelings were overtaking my energy. Her commands were reasonable enough, but my compassion was meager. Within a few hours, we had both settled back into a more familiar routine—lunch, visitors, drinks of juice, watching the Olympics, sensitive feelings.

As I recounted my awful morning with a good out-of-state friend (she sent waves of affection and healing over the phone with her simple, "Can I do anything for you, my friend?"), I added that although my sister was complaining about severe pain at her IV site, no nurse had called me back yet to confer and counsel. Then I expanded, "But I'm not that worried about it because she never complains about it when the preacher or the friend or the cousin is here to talk to her." Her swift response was, "Well, I imagine that we have generally far underestimated the power of human interaction . . ." and in her next breath she concluded, ". . . which is why corporate worship is so important."

I bowed my head as my heart leapt with the resounding "Yes!" I had missed the corporate worship on this

Aline Edson, who has completed full careers in both teaching and civil service and raised four children, lives in Kerrville, Texas, and attends the Sydney Baker Church of Christ.

Sunday, and on the last Sunday. And Suser had missed it on the last eleven Sundays. So when we came to the late afternoon and flicked on

that “second best” cassette tape—it was nice, it was informative, it was encouraging. We were grateful. But it was not like really being there.

Kay Kendall attends the Troy Church of Christ in Troy, Michigan, works as a home care nurse, and is an *Integrity* board member. Her sister, Susan Rose Gamme, attended Berkley Christian Church in Berkley, Michigan. Both attended Ozark Bible College, Joplin, Missouri, a decade apart. Three days after this essay was penned, Susan died in her home, surrounded by family and church friends. Kay says her sister’s “graduation to glory” was very much like a home birth.

“Ears to Hear and Eyes to See” Readiness

NEAL GRIFFIN

Jesus indicated that some did not have eyes to see nor ears to hear. They did not have attitudes of readiness. They were not concerned with what God wanted. They were so weighted down with the baggage of tradition and worldly wisdom that their ears were waxed shut.

Jesus is saying here that there is something other than brilliance and worldly wisdom that is required in order to understand what God wants. *It is what God wants that matters.* And herein lies the source of all the confusion and strife among brethren. We are prone to rely on our intellectual prowess to uncover the secrets of the kingdom, which secrets have been kept since the beginning but are now being made known. In a word, we are burdened with the wisdom of this world. We would prefer to rely on a human-made hermeneutic because it is more convenient. It allows us to prove that OUR conclusions are truth. It confirms that we are smart thinkers, all the while failing to acknowledge that God has a hermeneutic. Yes! He has a very simple hermeneutic.

When we read Romans 12:1-2 we see how beautifully God has revealed his very own hermeneutic. The Holy Spirit records here that we are to be “changed inside by letting our mind be made new again, then

you can determine what is good, pleasing, and perfect—what God wants” (S.E.V.). This is too simple to be misunderstood. Our knowing what God wants is predicated upon a new birth—a renewal of the mind. And in the very next verse he makes a frontal attack on those who do not have it:

Through God’s gracious love which has been given to me, I am telling each one of you, don’t think you are better than you really are. Instead, be modest in the way you think. God distributed a measure of faith to each person.

These verses, in clear language, tell us what our attitudes should be and how we should think in order to know what God wants. If we wish to know what God wants we will not think too highly of ourselves. We will allow ourselves to be changed inside, *then* we can know what God wants. This same thought is expressed in Ephesians 3:16ff:

I pray that God will use his Spirit to give you power from the riches of his glory to make the person inside of you strong. Then, through your believing in Christ, he will live in your hearts. You will have your roots and foundation in love. Then you and all the

holy people will be able to completely understand the meaning of Christ’s love—how wide it is, how long it is, how high it is, and how deep it is. It goes beyond knowing, but you will know it! Then you will be filled with the totality of God. Glory to God! He is able to do so much more than we can even think of or ask for. God uses the power that is working in us.

This is God’s hermeneutic. Do we have the readiness of heart to receive it, or is it too simplistic for us thinkers? It appears to me that if we will appeal to God, with a true desire to know what he wants, he will provide us with the understanding in every matter that troubles us. Please think on these things. I believe them to be true to the Word.

Neal Griffin is a retired school teacher who lives in Helotes, Texas. He has been an active member in the Church of Christ for more than 40 years.

God Strengthens the Powerless

MICHELLE BENNETT

My daughter Chelsea had been gone for several weeks on her annual summer visit to her father’s house. As I looked back over this period of time, I realized that a new person was about to pick her up. Something had changed inside me, and here is how it happened.

My daughter’s step-mother had picked Chelsea up on the seventh of July. Chelsea’s birthday was July 10th, and I spoke to her that morning. But the next time I called, the number that I was supposed to be able to reach her at had been disconnected, leaving me with no way to contact my daughter. She was to be gone for five more weeks and all I could see ahead was five long weeks of not being able to talk to Chelsea! I started praying that God would supernaturally open the phone lines and allow me to talk to my 6-year-old daughter.

This first time of praying for a supernatural intervention I was joined in prayer by some brothers and sisters in Christ at my church. Nothing happened. And every time I saw a person with whom I had prayed, I had to tell them “No, God hasn’t done it yet.” My faith was being tested.

A couple of days later while driving my car, I prayed again for intervention and questioned God about why he was allowing this to happen to me. Then he spoke to my heart:

“Didn’t you give her over to me?”

“Yes,” I responded, feeling ashamed for doubting.

“Don’t you trust her in my care?”
“Yes...but I would trust a lot better if you had her physically in your hand.”

Then he responded, *“Is there anything too difficult for me?”*

Startled at the mixture of harshness and sternness in his words, I answered, “No.” After a few more minutes, I said, “But this isn’t fair and I’m very upset with you, God.” Then I felt the loving presence of my Father as he laughed at my simplicity. The next moment I remembered that Jesus’ death was also not fair.

Several days later I was praying again, asking God to arrange for me to talk to Chelsea. Now my prayers were not for fear of her safety or well-being, but simply because I was hurting so much from not being able to talk to my daughter. At my

Tuesday prayer group, while the women and I were earnestly praying that I get to speak to Chelsea, the Lord spoke again: "Now do you understand how important his (my ex-husband's) soul is to me that I would allow you to go through this much pain for his salvation? She (Chelsea) is being my light there."

His tone sounded as if he were weeping with me and feeling the heartache of a mother missing her child. I was filled with awe at his capacity to love the soul of a man who has brought so much grief to so many people. Then the flesh of myself said, "Are you sure he's that important?" I got no response for, of course, I knew in my heart that he was.

A few more days later I was praying and praising God in my home late at night and casually asking God to let me talk to Chelsea, when I heard: "Instead of praying against her mission all the time, why don't you pray to strengthen it?"

Suddenly it was like God let me in on the big picture. Of course, I knew she was doing a work there for the Lord. Why hadn't I thought of helping before? I was so caught up in my own personal pity party that my blinders kept me from seeing God's plan.

I immediately began praying for legions of ministering angels to surround Chelsea and go before her in anything she was doing. I prayed for an extra amount of wisdom and discernment beyond her years.

Then I heard an excited, "Now pray for his soul."

I stopped dead in my tracks. I had prayed for his salvation ever since our divorce three years ago, but to actually pray for his soul? I don't know exactly what the difference is, but there must be something,

because I could not bring myself to do it. To pray for someone's soul seemed too personal or too intimate for me to do for someone who I really didn't want to even like. . . much less care for. Instead, I called a good friend of mine, who prayed for my ex-husband's soul and prayed for strength for Chelsea, and I felt very obedient.

The next Sunday some members of my church were praying for people in our group and they started praying for me. There were no prophecies and no healing hands for me like there had been with the others in the group, only the words, "I believe God is saying you know why you are experiencing these things."

I immediately felt the conviction that my friend had prayed for my ex-husband's soul, *but I had not!* It was important that I pray for his soul out of *my own mouth*. I cried out, "Lord, I don't know how; I don't have the words. Lord, please help." As soon as I asked for help, the words were there.

Yes, it was as personal and intimate as I had feared, but I felt the comfort of the Holy Spirit. The important thing is that *I was obedient*. This time, however, I didn't feel smugly obedient but, instead, I felt relief caused by doing what I knew I was supposed to do. As soon as the prayer was completed, my Father blessed me with laughter—the first laughter I had had since I had talked to Chelsea three long weeks before!

I did get to speak to Chelsea again one week before I was to pick her up and she was doing fine. And now that she's back home everything appears to be the same again, but it's not. I've changed. I understand more deeply what it means to obey God, and this knowledge has strengthened my trust in him.

Bending the Twig

LAQUITA AND ELTON HIGGS

Bringing up children in the Lord requires persistent prayer by parents and extended family. We think it's important to submit even the little things to God in prayer; right now we're praying earnestly about potty training! On a more serious note, we have a friend who says that if she had only one prayer for her children, it would be that they remain teachable. Think about that; it is a profound idea.

A few years ago another friend advised us to pray that our wayward daughter would know that she is loved. A most valuable prayer, for if a child truly believes that he or she is loved by God and by family and friends, then poor self-esteem, a problem we hear a lot about these days, would be much less likely to occur.

Pray that your children will be good soil for the Word planted within them, that they will internalize the truths that you are teaching them. Pray that they will be honest and have a generous spirit, that they will make good choices in life, especially that they choose good companions. Pray about their schooling, that their education will enrich their life in the Lord, and not destroy it. The list could go on. There's so much to pray for.

Teaching our children to pray, and to enjoy prayer time, can be a challenge. We sometimes vary our mealtime prayers by using a rhyming, memorized prayer. If the children are old enough, the set prayer could be followed by sentence prayers from each member of the family. We sometimes use the old favorite, "God is great; God is good; now we thank Him for our food," but we also like to use verses that Elton writes. After saying them a few times, the children know them. You might try writing your

own, but here's one of Elton's that we've used for years:

Thank you, Lord, for all that's good,
For sunshine, rain, and food.
May all your blessings, fair and free,
Make love and goodness grow in me.

Ideas Exchange

•Several readers have asked how they can obtain the Karyn Henley "Five Little Ladybugs" video or cassette tape which we mentioned in an earlier article. The address: Karyn Henley Resources, P. O. Box 40269, Nashville, TN 37204-0269. Phone: (615) 385-9073.

•Recently Joyce Gaskin from Beaumont, Texas, sent us *Gifted Hands* (Harper paperback, \$5.99), the autobiography of Dr. Benjamin Carson, who grew up in the inner city of Detroit with his brother and his divorced mother, Sonya. At one point, Carson was at the bottom of his class and was beginning to believe the taunts of his classmates that he was a "dummy." Sonya, though she had only a third-grade education, started her sons on a program of reading that turned their lives around. Today, Ben Carson is an internationally famous pediatric neurosurgeon at Johns Hopkins University, often taking on cases that are considered hopeless. He prays before every surgery, and he humbly gives God, and his mother, the credit for his success. Sonya's faith and determination are an example for any parent who has bewailed the difficulty of teaching a child to be responsible; Sonya repeatedly insisted that her sons do better work and that they were answerable to both God and man. As a black man, Carson is a role model for young African-American

Michelle Bennett attends Abilene Christian University as a student and is also employed by ACU. She is part of both the Abilene Mission Church and Minter Lane Church of Christ fellowships.

males, but his story should motivate any young person. We found the book to be an absorbing story and a true inspiration. Highly recommended for anyone, but especially for parents or teenagers.

•Do you know about the Mr. Doughnut Man videotapes for children? Rob Evans, who writes much of the music, is Mr. Doughnut, whose name comes from his song, "Life without Jesus is like a doughnut: [without Jesus] there's a hole in the middle of your heart." Produced by Integrity Music (good name!), the Mr. Doughnut series uses engaging music and lively action by Mr. Doughnut, Duncan (get it?) the puppet, and the children in the Doughnut Repair Club.

Their address is P.O. Box 851622, Mobile, AL 36685-1622. Each video teaches one Bible story and various lessons, such as

(in "At the Zoo") obedience to parents and thoughtfulness toward others. The "All-Stars," which centers on a baseball game, teaches trust in the Lord and deals with the feelings of a child whose parents are going through a divorce. The series is targeted for children aged 2 through 8, and our two-year-old loves Mr. Doughnut—she first became interested in prayer through observing Mr. Doughnut pray.

The videos teach a joyous, trusting relationship with the Lord. Highly recommended.

We welcome (and need!) more input from our readers, as this column is meant to be an avenue for the sharing of ideas about training our children. (By the way, thanks to those who have e-mailed us!) Contact us at 9 Adams Lane; Dearborn, Michigan 48120, or "Ehiggs@umich.edu" by e-mail.

Come to the Lake Geneva Encampment

HENRIETTA C. PALMER

The 39th Annual Lake Geneva Family Encampment, sponsored by the Churches of Christ (a cappella) August 5-9, was a memorable week for our family. The setting for this special event was the beautiful Lake Geneva (Wisconsin) campus of George Williams College, an affiliate of Aurora College.

The theme for the encampment this year was "Christ In Us." Speakers included Tony Ash (Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas), Bob Hendren (Florence, Alabama), Gayle Napier (David Lipscomb University, Nashville, Tennessee), Vernon Boyd (Southfield, Michigan) and Don Crittenden (Bloomington, Illinois). The messages, singing, and fellowship were uplifting and wonderful.

The Lake Geneva Encampment is a great vacation for families! Activities are planned for the children each morning and evening while adults assemble in a lovely, air-conditioned lodge for their sessions. Special activities, devotionals, and lodging are available for teens. All meals are served in the central dining room. Afternoons are unscheduled to provide time for golfing, swimming, boating, shopping, and other leisure activities. Plan to join us next summer! The 1997 Lake Geneva Encampment is scheduled for August 4-8. The theme is: "Feeding the Hungry Heart." For information about reservations and housing deposit, please contact Helen Plummer, 15 Elm, Park Forest, IL 60466 or call her at (708) 747-2289. We hope to see you there next year!

Coming Up: Restoration Forum 1996!

NOVEMBER 10-12 MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Theme: Back to the Future: Reconsidering the Founding Principles of the Restoration Movement

Sunday Evening:

Opening worship (led by "In His Name")
"One Christ: Yesterday, Today, & Forever"
Marshall Leggett, President, Milligan College

Monday:

•"The First Century Gospel in the 21st Century: The 'Plan of Salvation' in the Church Today"
Robert Hooper, David Lipscomb University;
Dean Mills, Person to Person Ministries, Hillsboro, Ohio
•"A Bible-Based Movement in a Postmodern World: The Place of Scripture in the Church Today"
Johnny Pressley, Cincinnati Bible Seminary;
Tom Olbricht, Pepperdine University
•"Liberty in Matters of Opinion: Sorting Out Faith and Opinion in the Church Today"
Larry James, Central Dallas Ministries, Dallas, Texas ;
David Erickson, First Christian Church, Council Bluffs, Iowa

Tuesday:

•"A Non-Denominational Movement in a Post-Denominational Culture: Our Non-Sectarian Heritage in the Church Today"
Monroe Hawley, Southside Church of Christ, Milwaukee, Wisconsin ;
Earl Grice, Minnesota Bible College
•"First Century Christianity in the 21st Century: What Still Must Be Restored in the Church Today?"
Rod Huron, North American Christian Convention, Cincinnati, Ohio;
Kent Smith, Abilene Christian University
Closing Service: "One Hope: Proclaiming the Good News of a Glorious Future"
Marvin Phillips, Garnett Church of Christ, Tulsa, Oklahoma

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:

Registration is \$20/person, \$30/couple. Checks should be made out to "Restoration Forum" and mailed to: Southside Church of Christ, P.O. Box 21816, Milwaukee, WI 53221. For more information write Southside or call (414) 281-8667 or FAX (414) 827-0171 or e-mail: RestForum@aol.com. ACCOMMODATIONS: Call Quality Hotel—Airport (414) 481-4471 before October 10, 1996 to get the reduced Forum rate of \$69 per night, single or double occupancy. Limited housing in local Christian homes is available on a first-come/first-served basis.

Celebrate Walter Scott's Birth and Legacy!

PETER M. MORGAN

Congregations in the North American Stone-Campbell Movement are invited by the Movement's national archival center, the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, to celebrate the 200 year legacy of founder Walter Scott.

Scott was born in Moffatt, Dumfriesshire County, Scotland on October 31, 1796. After his education at the University of Edinburgh, he emigrated to America. He was soon allied with Thomas and Alexander Campbell in advancing the reformation.

Scott's distinctive contribution to that reformation is in helping the church discover the New Testament message of evangelism and how to effectively reach to the world with that message.

He gave our movement a plan of salvation, his five-finger exercise. He had children use their fingers to learn the plan and then take it home to lure their parents to his preaching. On the thumb we learn we must begin with 1) faith. On the fingers we learn that we must 2) repent and 3) be baptized, thus receiving from God 4) the remission of sins and 5) the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

Scott also fully gave of himself by devoting his energy and his gift for powerful preaching to the movement. For three years, 1827-1830, he poured out cyclonic energy as an itinerant evangelist in the Western Reserve in northeastern Ohio. Scott often preached three times a day: in homes, in court houses, in barns, out of doors, and in church buildings. In all of the association of churches of the Western Reserve in 1826 there had been 34 baptisms. When Scott completed this ministry there were 3,000 baptisms in three years. Historian D. Newell

Williams remarked to an audience celebrating the Scott Bicentennial that it is highly probable that many in that room are persons of faith because the ministry of Walter Scott had converted one of their ancestors or someone who influenced a member of their family.

The Disciples of Christ Historical Society is announcing two ways to celebrate and strengthen Walter Scott's legacy. First is a prayer leaflet for use on Sunday services, November 3. Walter Scott was born on All-Saints Eve, October 31, 1796. This worship resource can help the church celebrate Walter Scott as well as others who have died in the faith.

A second opportunity is the Walter Scott Bicentennial Honor Roll of Preachers. Stone-Campbell history can be told as a story of great preachers, from Walter Scott to Fred Craddock. Most of our personal stories include preachers who have brought us to faith in Jesus Christ or who have significantly enriched our faith. The honor roll is a tribute or a way to say thank you to those preachers who have blessed our lives. Participants support the witness of history by contributing to the Historical Society in honor of preachers from history, one's past, a teacher of preaching or one's current preacher. A certificate will be sent to living honorees.

To participate in the Walter Scott Bicentennial celebration, contact the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 1101 19th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37212-2196.

A \$2.00 postage and handling fee for the prayer leaflet is needed. Brochures on the Honor Roll of Preachers are free.

Book Review: *The Death of Truth*,

DENNIS MCCALLUM, EDITOR, (MINNEAPOLIS: BETHANY HOUSE PUBLISHERS, 1996), 288 PP.

REVIEWED BY TERRY A. FERGUSON

We live in a "postmodern" world. This may be a startling statement for many, even many in the church, who are still trying to figure out the "modern" world. The modern world viewed reality as a giant machine that has been understood almost completely by the power of the scientific enterprise. Such a world can be controlled by science and technology.

To a great extent this view of the world still influences much of Western culture, so it is not often easy to see the impact of the "postmodern" view with its growing influence in many areas of our lives. At the heart of "postmodern" thinking is: truth, any truth, and most especially God's truth, does not exist, at least not in any absolute, objective, or universal sense. From such a viewpoint, these comments make sense: "All religions and lifestyles are equally valid," "My opinion is as good as yours and, as a matter of fact, opinion can matter as much as evidence," "Reality is all in the mind of the beholder," or "The only sin is to be intolerant of someone else's views."

A group of Christian scholars, seeing the need to apologetically address concerns of society, decided to address the issue of postmodernism in a compilation of essays entitled *The Death of Truth*. They state the purpose of the book *The Death of Truth* is to bring "postmodernism and its impact on today's society within the reach of people who have never studied it before" (p. 9). If the church is going to make an impact on its world, it is necessary that it be fully equipped not only with the Gospel message of Jesus Christ, but also with an adequate under-

standing of the culture in which it intends to bring the liberating message that Jesus is the truth. These authors address many of the important areas of postmodernism and offer helpful critiques of its methodology and movement from a Christian perspective.

This group of scholarly contributors have one or more of the following in common:

- 1) They are members of the Xenos Christian Fellowship, a church located in Columbus, Ohio.
- 2) They are part of the Crossroads Project which is the apologetics ministry of the Xenos Christian Fellowship.
- 3) They have attended or are currently teaching at Ohio State University. It was out of the efforts of some of the contributors, during their early years at OSU, that the Xenos Christian Fellowship was born.
- 4) Many of the contributors also have attended Ashland Theological Seminary in Ohio.

Looking Inside

The opening four chapters of *The Death of Truth* set the stage for the heart of the book, chapters 5-13. The author of Chapter 1 explains that postmodernism has the potential of completely changing Western culture as we now know it. The second chapter helpfully reviews the four key beliefs of modernism: human nature, free will (autonomy), a view of reason (epistemology), and a view of progress. Chapter 3 considers these four key beliefs from the postmodern perspective and emphasizes three of

postmodernism's hallmarks: relativism, sociology of knowledge, and language or linguistics. The fourth chapter considers the two main camps of postmodernism—skeptical postmodernists and affirmative postmodernists.

The heart of the book, chapters 5-13, looks at a number of specific areas in which the postmodern perspective is having a tremendous impact. The areas which are covered in these chapters are: health care, literature, education, history, psychotherapy, law, science, and religion.

Since postmodernism is a completely eclectic movement, it is hard to pin down one particular group and say this is the center of postmodernism. Consequently, each chapter will view each of these areas from within its own particular discipline.

The remaining two chapters give a Christian response to postmodernism. Chapter Fourteen looks at the positive aspects of postmodernism and addresses its special complaints. The final chapter gives some practical ideas for communicating with the postmoderns with whom the reader will

come in contact in her or his various areas of life.

Charts are included throughout which are exceptionally helpful and clear. A very useful glossary is also provided. One improvement I would suggest is a good, substantial bibliography.

I recommend *The Death of Truth* as an important, introductory tool toward better understanding the postmodern world. It would be excellent for both individual study and Sunday School classes. The Xenos Christian Fellowship can be contacted for more information via the World Wide Web at <http://www.crossrds.org> or by e-mail at crossroads@office.xenos.org. A free group study guide for *The Death of Truth* can be downloaded from the Web site, as well as other free articles and essays related to postmodernism and other apologetics issues.

I think the contributing authors of *The Death of Truth* should be appreciated and thanked for their example of what the church can truly be and how the church can respond with the message of Jesus Christ to our postmodern world.

Terry A. Ferguson holds graduate degrees from Lincoln Christian Seminary and Calvin Theological Seminary. He ministers to the University Christian Church in East Lansing, Michigan.

Did you know that we pray for you, dear readers, each time we as a Board meet? We pray for God's guidance in making *Integrity* useful to you in your spiritual walk.

Please keep us in your prayers as well as we strive to do God's will through the ministry of this journal.

Readers' Response

In regard to the "Is Baptism Necessary for Salvation?" article, I'm disgusted that the Restoration churches and papers are unable or unwilling to leave the First Principles of The Christian Doctrine as is enjoined in Hebrews 5:11-6:2!

Coy Allen
Illinois

Are we making baptism a stumbling block—a buggaboo?! Is Satan playing games with our heads and hearts? Who, on receiving God's Word as we have it, could possibly wish not to receive his baptism? In about fifty-eight years of close communion with believers, I've not met an honest lover or seeker who did not wish to receive his baptism.

Kathy Wyler
Texas

In the prison ministry I encounter a doctrine preached by volunteers of a cult-like church that one cannot be saved until they are baptized and speak in tongues. Both of these doctrines fly in the face of grace as a free gift of God. The inmates are often very confused by this doctrine by the so-called "Jesus Only" people. Since baptism in some jails is impossible, they are told that they better hope for a release before they die, otherwise they go to hell.

Most prisons do have provisions for baptism, but not on demand. When someone makes a commitment to the Lord I certainly tell them of the necessity of baptism, and to get their name on the list to be immersed at the next baptism. The prison chaplains schedule these events. I have been preaching in prisons and working with inmates about 15 years, and I have seen many men and women inmates bap-

tized every year. Teaching what the scriptures say on this, and telling them that they are going to hell unless they are baptized, regardless of their commitment, are two different doctrines. We need continued articles like "Is Baptism Necessary for Salvation?" which overcome the fear of investigating traditions and doctrines that we have set in stone over the years. Keep up the good work.

Bob Zerphey
Maryland

I was reminded of the "Lunenburg Letter" controversy in 1837 when Alexander Campbell was forced to defend his contention that there were Christians "in all Protestant parties." I tend to agree with his defense which included, in part, this statement: "There is no occasion, then, for making immersion, on a profession of the faith, absolutely essential to a Christian, though it may be greatly essential to his sanctification and comfort." As far as I know, that belief never diminished the zeal with which Campbell advocated baptism by immersion as the scriptural response to believing the gospel. Obviously, the issue today is still one of unity and fellowship. The Church of Christ makes this issue a test of fellowship. There are views other than our own which are just as scriptural and logical to those who hold them as ours are to us.

Larry Dotson
Tennessee

Thank you so very much for printing the article "A Girl Called Brown Eyes." I was moved, moved, moved! I appreciate *Integrity* very much.

Robert Leon Gibson
Santa Ana, CA