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ARE WE SILENTLY KILLING THE CHURCH?

Let us face some facts. The church is a community of believers. A community consists of people who deliberately have things in common. And this involves communication. In fact, "community," "communion," "communication," and "common" all come from the same root.

The King James Version renders Heb. 13:16: "But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Although the word "communicate" is used here in the old sense of sharing one's goods, it may be true today that the need for sharing one's thoughts is greater than that of sharing his goods. The number of really poor people in the average church is small in comparison with those who are emotionally starved because of a lack of meaningful communication with other members of the body. In fact, because of this failure to communicate, some so-called churches may not be communions at all.

Several years ago R.L. Schanck made a study of "Elm Hollow," a rural community in which the norms of the dominant church prohibited card playing, smoking, and drinking. He discovered through interviews and questionnaires that almost everyone in "Elm Hollow" held to the norms of the church. Yet during his stay he played cards and drank hard cider with many people—though always with doors locked and blinds drawn! He learned that, although few actually believed in the norms of the church, almost everyone believed that everyone else believed in them! Each person thought he was

virtually alone in rejecting the church's standards. This is a classic illustration of breakdown in communication. It is easy to imagine how much happier everyone would have been if that community had been a real community.

One reason for the problem at "Elm Hollow" is obvious. Fear of group hostility is very common when people deviate from the church's standards. In our time, when people may be excommunicated for very slight doctrinal deviations, a certain amount of reticence may be expected. But has not excommunication already taken place when people cease to communicate?

Whenever one cannot share his new discoveries with his fellows, community has been lost; and there is really no point in maintaining an organization based upon pretense. Since all hypocrites are liars, they are hardly the ones on whom we should depend to promote the truth. It is a tragedy that in some communions one is held in higher regard for concealing his convictions than for revealing them. We know of preachers who have been asked to preach things they did not believe—for the sake of peace! It is hard for us to understand that sort of thinking.

But there is another aspect of this fear of group hostility that bothers us. Although the New Testament teaches us to confess our sins, such confession is not very common. We may freely teach that all of us are sinners, but rarely do our church services concretely reflect this doctrine. Maybe we just don't sin much any more; but it is more likely that we are afraid to let others know

what we really are. Can we have communion without confession?

Since the church is "the pillar and bulwark of the truth"—and truth fundamentally means "non-concealment"—deliberate avoidance of communication hardly adorns our calling. If the Christian does not speak his mind, regardless of the consequences, he will help perpetuate a situation that threatens to destroy the church by robbing it of its true nature. The church is essentially a communion in which freedom of speech of every

kind is openly encouraged. We must learn to forgive as Christ forgave us, so that other sinners may trust in our forgiveness and find purpose in confession. We must also have the "wisdom from above" which is always "open to reason" (Jas. 3:17), so that others will not despair of sharing their thoughts with us. This approach could be painful, but the blessings of true fellowship will far outweigh whatever pains the process of communication may entail.

—HGL.

I MUST CARE

PERRY C. COTHAM

*There's a whole new way of living;
Pepsi helps supply the drive.*

We may doubt that "Pepsi helps supply the drive," but not the fact that for many "there is a whole new way of living," or, in the words of Bob Dylan, "the times they are a-changin'." One does not have to be greatly advanced in years to grasp the impact and significance of change. I believe many of today's young American adults feel a real pinch and even frustration in the midst of change.

Much of this change—especially that in music, dress and hair style—is trivial and of little consequence. Our main concern should be with those changes which significantly affect our own lives and those of others in our community and world.

Of particular importance is religious

change among young Christians. It is a most encouraging sign that young people are seeking to make the Christian faith uniquely their own rather than something bequeathed by parents. We are now much slower in condemning others and in defending the righteousness of our group on every possible position. We now realize there are more ways to measure the nature of a person's commitment to Christ than how often he enters the doors of a church meetinghouse and there are more ways to measure the true strength of a congregation than by how expensive their building is or how much they pay their minister. But the one change that is slowly but surely taking place—a change that I welcome and plead with you to make more complete—is the realization that being a disciple of Christ involves an acceptance of social consciousness and responsibilities.

The world in which we live is plagued by age-old problems of poverty, ignorance, famine, and war as well as being complicated by some relatively new crises of nuclear weaponry, overpopulation, and ecological imbalance. We cannot afford to use our religion as a means of escapism to forget these problems. Institutional Christianity must cease providing a comfortable pew and a comfortable creed—being a religion of easy answers for complex problems—and become a motivating force for man's involvement in the physical and spiritual dilemmas of his fellowman. Many of those who are concerned about modern complexities are ambivalent about involvement because of a lack of knowledge and understanding. I, too, share a feeling of inadequacy and ignorance.

I don't know what it's like to go to bed each night in fear that someone may break in before I awaken, to be cold in the winter because of insufficient heat, or to watch my children fight off rats in dilapidated apartment buildings where I am forced to pay exorbitant rent, or to see children eat plaster because they are hungry. I've never lived in the heart of urban slums. So I don't know, but I do care.

I've never known what it was like to be discriminated against because of the color of my skin, to be denied entrance to colleges, churches, and places of public entertainment. I've never known what it was like to be an invisible man, to be stereotyped and forgotten as a second class citizen in a land that claims equal opportunity. But I do care.

I don't know what it's like to go to bed hungry each night, to sleep in the streets, or to live in a country where human life is robbed of its dignity and value. You see, I've never lived in India or Pakistan or China. And while I don't know, I must care.

I don't know how it feels to fight on the battle lines for a cause I neither understand nor believe in. I've never been to Viet Nam. War is not our choice, yet we keep fighting. To date our country has expended 45,000 young men in combat, another 10,000 in related circumstances, and \$120 billion, not to mention the incalculable emotional price we will continue to pay for our involvement there. How much more will Viet Nam cost us? I don't know, but I must care.

I don't know what it is like to fight for literal survival in a battle against drug addiction, or against alcoholism. I don't fully understand the effects upon my fellowmen of such problems and challenges as pornography, sex perversion, accelerated crime, sexual permissiveness, water and air pollution, undesired pregnancies, a four day work week, and the dehumanizing forces operative in an industrial society. But as a Christian, I must care.

Finally, I see a world without a redeeming knowledge of God and his Son. A world confused in search for moral guidelines in perplexing situations, searching for meaning to the mystery of life. Can the kind of religion we now practice be stripped of its cultural and social limitations, its defense of the status quo, and be communicated as a meaningful alternative way of life to millions living in sin and without hope. I don't know, but I do care.

The expansion of the Christian social conscience I am urging does not aim to denigrate the importance of sound creed or doctrine. It does not mean to de-emphasize the cardinal tenets upon which the Christian faith is based. Rather, this evolving change is simply a recognition that there is no way to serve God except by serving our fellowmen. Now, more practically, what can we do?

First, we should be willing to attempt a full understanding of the plight of our fellowman. If, like the ostrich that hides his head in the sand, we refuse to acknowledge that such problems exist, or if we refuse to see if we are responsible for some part of them, we will have missed the meaning of Christ's example of involvement. We must use our opportunities to learn the customs, traditions, religions, languages, values, and ambitions of our neighbors at home and abroad.

Secondly, because seeing is not enough, we must extend Christian love and concern. In the words of A. Davies Powell, "the world is too dangerous for anything but the truth, too small for anything but brotherhood." Are we willing to say to the Chinese, to the Japanese, to the Indian, to the African, to the black American, to the Russian, "I don't mind that you're different. Your customs, practices, country and skin may be different, but that doesn't matter. In the sight of God you are my brother and in his name I want to understand and care about you." "We must learn to live together as brothers," writes Martin Luther King, "or perish together as fools." Remember that love either finds equality or makes it.

Thirdly, we should hope. Defining hope is difficult. I remember once hearing that a pessimist is a person looking forward to World War III and an optimist is a person looking forward to World War IV. Of course, real faith is made of sterner stuff. In the musical "South Pacific" Mary Martin sang a song with the words, "I'm stuck like a dope, on a thing called hope, and I can't get it out of my heart." A sign seen recently on the campus of the University of Texas said "hope is never having to say you're tired." Hope may seem old fashioned, but it has

been a preserving agent in the darkest hours of the church's history and in the history of our nation.

Finally, we must be willing to work and sacrifice. The problems this generation will face can never be solved by our willful blindness, complacency, nor by apathy and indifference. There is nothing worse than doing nothing when something needs to be done. Our biggest temptation is to allow lip service to commitment suffice for real sacrifice and effort. Because our talents are so diverse, I could not begin to tell you in what service or direction you should channel your efforts. A Christian cannot answer every voice of despair or accept every new opportunity for service that comes his way. The people with whom you work and the place of your service should reflect your own unique professional training, knowledge, time and opportunities, and your psychological make-up. But let us not each hastily judge the other when he decides wherein God can best use his talents and sacrifice. Thus, we need not stumble blindly about for lack of immediate and complete answers to the vast complexities of this century. We do not know—but we can act—now, in our own manner, in our own place, in our very own community.

Can the crises of sex morality, poverty, ignorance, overpopulation, racial hatred, famine, and conflicting political ideologies be resolved where all may humbly live in peace and security? I don't know—but as a Christian, it is imperative that I care. For if I don't care, then who will care? If I do not act here, then where will I act? If I do not act now, then when shall I act? In the words of a recent inaugural address, "all will not be finished in the first hundred days, nor will it be finished in the first thousand days, nor even perhaps in our lifetime—but let us begin."

CHRIST

Is Proclaimed in

ROCK MUSIC

ALLEN HOLDEN, Jr.

The recent attention given to Christ in the field of rock music may be surprising to many Christians who have considered the two incompatible, but it is the author's belief that this attention should be a cause for rejoicing. Some recent examples of this are *Jesus Christ Superstar*, "Put Your Hand in the Hand," "One Toke Over the Line," and "Fire and Rain." In addition to these, the story of Joseph is told in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

Jesus Christ Superstar was number one on the national album charts for quite a while, and is a gold record. It was reviewed in *Mission*,¹ *Christian Century*,² *Christianity Today*³ and *Christianity and Crisis*,⁴ and has been used as a basis for a number of sermons. It is also being performed as a "rock opera." *Superstar*'s greatest success is in successfully translating the message of the "Gospels" into the language of today's youth, and in expressing this message in their medium of communication,⁵ rock. Roy Bowen Ward says,

The message of the early church was translated and phrased so that the hearers could understand and so they found

the message worth choosing. This translating and phrasing took place not only in terms of what was quoted, etc., but also in terms of the structure of the message itself.⁶

One can compare *Superstar* to a "paraphrase" translation of the Bible, which attempts to translate "not word by word, but rather, thought by thought."⁷ It is imaginative in that it goes beyond the text in an attempt to present the thoughts of the characters, even though what is presented is mere speculation. Judas' thoughts are postulated, and the entire opera has "Christ seen through the eyes of Judas."⁸ He takes a very worldly approach to his appraisal of the Man who refused to knuckle down to anybody's standards except God's.

*Everytime I look at you I don't understand
Why you let the things you did get so out of hand
You'd have managed better if you'd had it planned
Why'd you choose such a backward time and such a strange land?
If you'd come today you would have reached a whole nation
Israel in 4 BC had no mass communication*

One is reminded of a poem by Emma Schwartz:

You might have known You would end up on a cross, Jesus
You identified with the wrong people . . .
Really—a smart man, such as You,
Should have known better!
Yes, You sure botched it;
Paid for it with Your life.⁹

Judas shares her objection to his associates, in that he feels that letting Mary Magdalene, a whore in the rock opera, be identified with him is "inconsistent." Judas is also upset about the way Christ views himself:

*Jesus! You've started to believe the things they say of you
You really do believe this talk of God is true*

In the character of Judas, the doubts and questions of the composer and many young people are expressed—was he God? Some strong points in this double album are Herod's taunting of Jesus to perform a miracle for him (Luke 23:8f) and the crucifixion, as well as the 39 lashes immediately preceding it, which is convincingly portrayed. The narrative terminates with the burial, leaving the question of His resurrection unanswered. *Superstar* asks some other pertinent questions¹⁰ which many of today's youth are asking:

*Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ
Who are you? What have you sacrificed?
Jesus Christ, Superstar
Do you think you're what they say you are?*

The current interest in Christ among rock musicians is not limited to *Superstar*; "Put Your Hand in the Hand" by Ocean is excellent in its invitation to join Jesus and be transformed:

*Put your hand in the hand of the man who stilled the water
Put your hand in the hand of the man who calmed the sea
Take a look at yourself and you can look at others differently
By putting your hand in the hand of the Man from Galilee*

*Every time I look into the holy book I want to tremble
When I read about the part where the Carpenter cleared the temple
And the buyers and the sellers were no different fellas
Than what I profess to be
And it causes me shame to know we're not the people we should be*

That this song is being listened to is attested to by the fact that it was at the top of the national best-seller lists in April and May.

"One Toke Over the Line" by Brewer and Shipley was a top 10 single in the spring of 1971. It is not very specific, but it is the author's opinion that it is a description of conversion. They mention that all that they've been through really opened their eyes:

*And now I'm one toke over the line
sweet Jesus
One toke over the line
Sitting downtown in a railroad station
. . .
Waiting for the train to take me home
sweet Mary
Hopin' that the train is on time*

"The train" could be a reference to Jesus' second coming, and "sweet Mary" to Jesus' mother, but these are conjecture at best; that attention is being drawn to Jesus cannot be denied.

"Fire and Rain" contains an appeal to Christ for help.

*Won't you look down upon me Jesus
You've got to help me make a stand
You've just got to see me through another day
My body's aching and my time is at hand
And I won't make it any other way*

Some Christian young people, in times of temptation, have used this song as an appeal for help. It is by James Taylor, and was very popular late in 1970.

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat is by Andrew Webber and Tim Rice, who were responsible for *Superstar*, and is just now becoming popular, even though it was written in 1967. It follows the Biblical narrative very closely, and is an excellent device for encouraging discussion on Joseph and his temptations, as well as his deliverance from them. The description of Potiphar's wife and her attempts to seduce Joseph are presented uniquely.

Joseph's looks and handsome figure had attracted her attention.

Every morning she would beckon, "Come and lie with me, love."

Joseph wanted to resist her, till one day she proved too eager.

Joseph cried in vain, "Please stop, I don't believe in free love."

In adapting the message to the audience, Paul quoted Pseudo-Epimenides and Aratus when speaking to the Athenian "philosophical audience"¹¹ (Acts 17). Preachers today quote both scholars and poets frequently in attempts to get the message into terms that will reach their audience; Jesus himself used hyperbole, metaphor and allegory in his teaching. It would seem only logical that persons attempting to convey the message of a relevant Savior would quote from the "philosophers" and spokesmen of the young, the writers of rock music, when speaking to these young people.

In appraising the current revival phenomenon, the very least that can be said is "that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice" (Phil. 1:18). The nature of these recent songs also indicates a new interest in the Bible and Christ¹² on the part of youth, a searching on their part, and this is a time when Christians can be of great assistance.

1 Roy Bowen Ward, ". . . Fully Man," *Mission*, IV/10 (April, 1971), pp. 3-7.

2 Gordon Clanton, "Superstar Is Dead," *Christian Century* (Jan. 6, 1971).

3 Cheryl A. Forbes, "'Superstar': Haunting Questions," *Christianity Today* (Dec. 4, 1970).

4 Myron B. Bloy, Jr., "Superstar and the New Saxons," *Christianity and Crisis* (Dec. 28, 1970).

5 Few will deny that rock musicians have been a mouthpiece of young people, including such names as Dylan, the Beatles, James Taylor and Motown's writers, or that today's youth listen to what their rock spokesmen say.

6 Roy Bowen Ward, "Communicating the Message," *Mission*, I/1, pp. 9-13.

7 Kenneth N. Taylor, *Living Gospels*, Pyramid Books, New York, 1966, p. 10. See also the Introduction to J.B. Phillips, *The New Testament in Modern English*.

8 Roy Bowen Ward, ". . . Fully Man," *Mission*, IV/10, p. 3 (quoting Andrew Webber, composer).

9 Emma Schwartz, "You Might Have Known," in *Go*, II/5 (March, 1969).

10 "Superstar is 'just asking questions.' But they are the right questions." Roy Bowen Ward, *art. cit.*, p. 3.

11 Roy Bowen Ward, "Communicating the Message," *Mission*, I/1, p. 10.

12 These songs are only a sampling of the most recent rock songs that have dealt with religious themes; others include "Amazing Grace" by Judy Collins, "My Sweet Lord" by George Harrison, "Revolution in My Soul" by the Rievers, "Jesus is a Soul Man" by Lawrence Reynolds, "Spirit in the Sky" by Norman Greenbaum, "Turn Turn Turn" by the Byrds, and many others.

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL COMMUNITY

DON HAYMES

. . . and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

—Daniel 7:13-14

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.

—Matthew 25:31

In these texts we find the great hope of primitive Christianity: the impending return of the Son of Man, who will bring justice and mercy to the quick and the dead. It is summed up in an ancient, now-obscure word, "eschatology," which is derived from the Greek *eschaton* and has to do with the doctrine of the Last Days, the Last Things, the Day of Judgment, the End of the World. Such a doctrine bespeaks, to say the least, a mode of thought no longer fashionable today. Without question, these passages provide valuable and vital insight into the psychology of the primitive Christian community; as such, they are also essential to an understanding of the problem of Christianity in our time.

It is much more simple to explain what these passages *meant* than it is to define the implications of that meaning for today. We have no contemporary terminology which expresses the anxiety and hope of the world out of which these documents came. For this there is no better witness than the anguished attempts of some prominent modern theologians to find that terminology.

We must, instead, rely on the ancient words. We must try to penetrate the corroding influence of centuries of tradition that has hidden their meanings from us. We must also attempt to penetrate the cloud of prejudices and presuppositions that so often obscures the search for truth, allowing "what we have always believed" to masquerade as reality.

As an Old Testament document, Daniel 7 is unique; it stands, really, outside the world view of most of the Old Testament canon. It belongs, rather, to the tradition of Jewish apocalyptic—of which the intertestamental books designated as I Enoch and IV Ezra, as well as the New Testament Revelation to St. John, are very much a part. Most of this material was composed in the period between the last of the canonical prophets and the birth of Jesus. In much of this era the Jews were undergoing a struggle for survival as a people, which served in turn as an impetus to renewed messianic hope. The Old Testament prophets had proclaimed God's judgment, but only, as Rudolf Bultmann has observed, "within history";¹ the witness of

Daniel and the intertestamental prophets is to a judgment *beyond* history, in which God is proclaimed as Victor over all human dominions and the spiritual Powers of Darkness, while a "Son of Man" descends in the clouds of heaven to rule over a faithful multitude and proclaim the salvation of Israel.

A brief glimpse of the Similitudes of I Enoch, written possibly as early as 150 B.C., may be informative:

And at that hour that Son of Man was named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits, and his name before the Head of Days. Yea, before the sun and the signs were created, before the stars of the heaven were made, His name was named before the Lord of Spirits. He shall be a staff to the righteous whereon to stay themselves and not fall, and he shall be the light of the Gentiles, and the hope of those who are troubled of heart . . . And the wisdom of the Lord of Spirits hath revealed him to the holy and righteous . . . For in his name they are saved . . . And he sat on the throne of his glory, and the sum of judgment was given unto the Son of Man, and he caused the sinners to pass away and be destroyed from off the face of the earth, and those who have led the world astray . . .²

It is this heritage which colours, in a fascinating fashion, many of the utterances of Jesus, especially as they are recorded in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew. As interpreted by these authors, Jesus leaves no doubt that the End of the Age is near. Identifying himself as the "Son of Man" in Mark 8:34-9:1, he told the multitudes that he would come "in the glory of his Father with the holy angels," adding that "there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Kingdom of God come with power." The language of Matthew 16, which records the same speech, is even more explicit:

Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.³

In Mark 13 and Matthew 24, Jesus predicts the destruction of Jerusalem, relying heavily on the language of Daniel—in fact, quoting Daniel directly—and then, again in the language of Daniel, he heralds the *immediate* return of the Son of Man:

Immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken; then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then all of the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; and he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.⁴

THE IMMINENT COMING

With this background of sayings attributed to Jesus himself, it is not at all surprising to find Paul, in his early letters, proclaiming an imminent Second Coming and, in the same context, dealing with the complex of problems which such preaching had already caused. I Thessalonians 4:13-5:11 is no exception to this pattern. Paul finds himself confronted, first of all, by the anxiety of the Christian community in Thessalonica for its brothers and sisters who had died: Had these souls missed, by physical death, the glorious return of Christ for which they had lived in hope? No, indeed, Paul answers in Chapter 4, for "the dead in Christ will rise first; then we who are alive [note that *we*], who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air . . ."

This sense of expectancy, of urgency, continues in Chapter 5, as Paul echoes Jesus with a warning: ". . . the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When people say, 'There is peace and security,'

then sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape." Drawing on the same gnostic symbols of Light and Darkness later to be appropriated by the writer of the Gospel of John, he calls the Christians "sons of light." "You are not in darkness," he says, "for that day to surprise you like a thief."

EARLY DISAPPOINTMENT

As time passed and the Son of Man did not return, the apostolic preachers became hard-pressed to maintain that early enthusiasm. There is not a little bitterness in the second letter written in the name of Peter:

First of all, you must understand this, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own passions and saying, 'Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things have continued as they were from the day of creation.' They deliberately ignore this fact, that by the word of God heavens existed long ago, and an earth formed out of water and by means of water, through which the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist have been stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.⁵

"But do not ignore this one fact," the writer adds, quoting the sixtieth Psalm, "that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."⁶ There is a wistfulness in this, an earnest attempt to overcome grave disappointment; it is as if a great one-act play had been restaged in midperformance, so that a succession of actors continue to improvise new, and worse, material, and the final curtain never comes down. In these few, bitter sentences are sown the seeds of the tragic state of Christianity today.

A POST-CHRISTIAN CHURCH

In our time, many now have spoken of "the death of God"; Gabriel Vahanian describes our culture as "the post-Christian era." However much we may wish to disagree with these conclusions, we cannot dismiss the symptoms they describe. For it is not the world but rather the church that is endemically post-Christian.

Many people today, in and out of the church, would call the preaching of Jesus "other-worldly," charging that it called men to "pie in the sky." It was anything but this. For any utterance of Jesus that proclaims the world to come also calls his followers to live and serve him fully in *this* world. Witness the prologue to a passage quoted earlier:

If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life? For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay every man for what he has done. Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.⁷

It is this radical demand of the Gospel that the church of today does not know; but without it, there would have been no primitive Christian community. It is this call to discipleship, to life and witness in the midst of the world, to the hope of the Son of Man, that gives real, concrete meaning to the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount:

Blessed are you poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God. Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed are you

when men hate you, and when they exclude you and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets. But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger. Woe to you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep. Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.⁸

The contrasts are unfortunately obvious. What Jesus proposed was a brilliant interim-ethic which was to free man from the imprisonment of his own nature—that very nature which had cursed him to a wretched, hopeless existence ever since those dark, primeval moments in the Garden. Man could, Jesus said, be liberated from the curse of things. He could hope for the new age, which had already dawned.

But man has never believed it. He buys insurance policies and saves for his old age. He spends the vigour of his youth in grasping for wealth that becomes sand in his mouth. He is supported in all this by the religion of the churches, which no less desire to fatten themselves and perpetuate their institutions. “We all expect to die in bed,” observes Robert Barrett, “and not for years yet.”⁹

Jesus did not found a sect; his apostles did not campaign in behalf of an institution; they did not establish a ritual. The community that this teaching created was best described by Paul, in 1 Corinthians 12, as a Body—a single, functioning organism composed of many parts, many gifts of the Spirit, open to the leading of the Spirit, seeking to find its Lord in life. As Robert Strom has pointed out, this was no “band of pious seekers after truth” huddling together in some sort of artificial sanctity. Christianity was not a religion in the sense anyone

had ever known. For Jesus, as Mr. Strom says,

left the sacred haunts of religion and walked where he saw human suffering. He will ever bypass that personal piety which ignores the need of the earthy. Only as we are involved with the blind, lame, deaf, poor and dying shall we discover the Christ in our time.¹⁰

THE GREAT GULF

Alas, the community became a church; the organism became an organization; Christianity became a religion. The Gospel has not lost its power, but we have lost the Gospel. The Body is fragmented into 300 sects struggling more against one another than against the evil that rules the world. “You are the salt of the earth,” Jesus told his disciples; but, as he feared, the salt has lost its savour; the church, rather than being in the world but not of it, is of the world but not in it. Where now we end our prayers with “in the end, if we are found faithful, give us a home in heaven with thee,” the early Christians prayed “Marana tha—Come, Lord Jesus!”¹¹ In the gulf between those two statements is the distance between religion and Christ. It is for this that we might propose a non-religious Christianity to replace the post-Christian religion of the churches.

“It is not some religious act that makes a Christian what he is,” wrote Dietrich Bonhoeffer from his Nazi prison cell, “but participation in the suffering of God in the life of the world.”¹² This is the life to which Christ calls men; it is in this life and it alone that we find meaning in the Eucharist we celebrate today—for only as we experience the suffering of Christ in the world do we truly relate to that broken bread and poured-out wine, and only as we discern his Body in the world do we find a sense of true

Communion. It is this life that revives our dead symbols.

With this in mind we may turn to Matt. 25, perhaps the strongest eschatological witness in the New Testament. The Son of Man divides the “sheep” from the “goats” and then addresses them separately, outlining in detail what made the Difference. And what was it? Instrumental music? Church government? Denominationalism? Not quite:

I was hungry and you gave me good, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me . . . as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.¹³

Which may give us an idea of the road ahead, if we are to recover the spirit of the eschatological community.

- 1 Rudolf Bultmann, *History and Eschatology* (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 28.
- 2 *The New Testament Background: Selected Documents*, edited by C.K. Barrett (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), pp. 252-55.
- 3 Matthew 16:28 RSV.
- 4 Matthew 24:29-31 RSV.
- 5 II Peter 3:3-7.
- 6 II Peter 3:8.
- 7 Matthew 16:24-28.
- 8 Luke 6:20-26.
- 9 Robert Barrett, “Are You Going Skiing This Weekend?” in *An Uncertain Sound . . .*, December 1967, p. 1.
- 10 Robert Strom, “The Church’s Mission in an Urbanized World,” in *United Church Herald*, undated.
- 11 1 Corinthians 16:22, Revelation 22:20, Didache 10:7.
- 12 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, edited by Eberhard Bethge, translated by Reginald H. Fuller (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953), p. 166.
- 13 Matthew 25:35-40.

reviews

THOUGHTS ON UNITY, edited by Stanley Paregien (Mission Messenger, 139 Signal Hill Drive, St. Louis, Mo. 63121), 321 pp., \$5.95.

This book reminds me of Samuel Johnson’s comparison of a woman’s preaching with a dog standing on his hind legs: one is surprised, not so

much that it is done well, but that it is done at all. However, the book is done well. Although its nature obviates agreement with everything said in it, I was surprised at how much I could agree with. And although I have digested a good many lectures and essays on unity, I was delighted at the new challenges to my thinking.

The book is a collection of several different viewpoints on the causes and cures of division within the Restoration Movement. Paregien has brought together—in what is probably the only forum where they *would* be brought together—18 different spokesmen for diverse positions, including: Jimmy Allen, Arthur W. Atkinson, Jr., Dave Bradford, Harvey C. Bream, Jr., Grayson H. Ensign, Leroy Garrett, Perry E. Gresham, Lavern Houtz, Vernon W. Hurst, Ferrell Jenkins, W. Carl Ketcherside, Thomas A. Langford, F.L. Lemley, Ronald E. Osborn, Erskine E. Scates, Jr., Robert W. Shaw, Gene Shelburne, and Carl Herbert Stem. These writers are of high caliber and manifest commendable sobriety, tolerance, and uniform desire for unity. There is surprisingly little repetition—and considerable variety in approach.

The editor has wisely refrained from labeling the contributors according to their party positions. Unless one is particularly well informed, he will not be aware of the segments to which they all belong. Thus reader prejudice is effectively reduced.

Since Thomas Campbell's historic "Declaration and Address" needs wider circulation among the readers for whom this book is intended, I am somewhat disappointed that Paregien did not carry out his intention to include it in an appendix. But perhaps I am too greedy; we easily get our money's worth without it. The appendices do include listings of some 80 Christian colleges, 84 magazines, and recommended reading.

This is the sort of book that you will want to pass on to your friends, and you can do so with little fear of offending. After all, they will identify with some writers, and profit from the others. Copies may be ordered from the publisher.

—Hoy Ledbetter.

GLOBAL VILLAGE, a magazine of concern; edited by Roger Mannon; Fulcrum, Inc., 1971; 77 pp., \$1.25; paperback.

It would be difficult to read each article in *Global Village* without doing some serious thinking about man's misuse of the environment. The mag-

azine's content is not intended for entertainment nor for light reading.

Careful scrutinizers may note several spelling and grammatical errors, but none except the most cynical would consider such as significant as what each author has to say.

There is variety—from an article on the Restoration Movement by Don Reece to one about Population Control by the editor, Roger Mannon. There is continuity—shown by each writer's concern for truth, regardless of the topic under consideration. Mostly, there is intensity—as indicated by the nature of the subjects covered.

Recommended reading for all who care about tomorrow. Mailing address: Fulcrum, Inc., Route 1, Riner, Virginia 24149.

—Dean Thoroman.

MARANATHA Free Paper; edited by Marty Hooper; published monthly by Bakersfield JESUS People; newsprint; \$3/year.

An imaginative and freshly creative journal made its debut last month. The paper is another attempt to reach youth with Jesus in place of junkies; to bring peace instead of pessimism; to proclaim freedom and truth as replacements for fear and trauma.

Bob Beam provides provocative art work for *Maranatha*, in terms of cartoons with a message as well as eye-catching window dressing for other items in the paper.

Since all the articles are *for* youth and nearly all are written *by* youth, the paper ought to fulfill its purposes quite handily. It is easy to predict that a growing readership will develop with this publication.

Don't expect to agree with all that you read in *Maranatha*—particularly if you're past 40 and have a rather conservative background. When youth speaks freely, the message seldom fails to jar those who communicate in comfortable clichés.

What does *Maranatha* mean? "Come Lord Jesus." Interested? Write Box 6232, Bakersfield, California 93306.

—Dean Thoroman.

Letters

THE SPOTLIGHT ON ELKINS . . .

You placed me on your mailing list when you started publication of *Integrity* and I have read every issue, but I would like to correct any views you might have. I do not endorse your publication. I am saddened each issue seeing you are becoming bolder in your liberal views.

David Elkins put himself up as an authority. The elders at Inglewood withdrew their fellowship from Pat Boone, but their wisdom is not as great as David Elkins. Who is David Elkins? Your ranks are not as great as you may think. We still have brethren who love staying within the bounds of the Bible teaching. His remarks were "We sing beyond the Sacred Page We seek thee Lord." II John 9-11, Gal. 1:6-9. David is not even an angel!

Please print the other side if you would like to live up to the name of your publication.

CECIL CORKREN

Wayne, Michigan

To David Elkins on *Church Renewal*: True—and in the process, we also "status-quo" our young right out of the church. Thank Heavens there are others like you, *thinking*.

MRS. E.F. HUFF

Seymour, Texas

I have just finished reading the May 1971 issue of *Integrity* and have found it to be delightfully refreshing. I especially enjoyed David Elkins' article on "Church Renewal." I am relieved to find there are others who feel there is something more to being a Christian than belonging to an institutional church.

PHILIP E. BATES

Birmingham, Alabama

I thank our Lord for a breath of fresh air! David Elkins' article on church renewal should be required reading for all church leaders.

How *exciting* to discover that what so many leaders view or treat as a "threat" to the "stability" of their church group is in reality the *answer*. Praise God, we have discovered that when our group is truly led by the Spirit of God, as it has

been this past year, renewal comes naturally! And it's not threatening *anything* but complacency.

For too many years we have taught that Jesus arose from the tomb; but we've acted as though He's still safely tucked away! Praise God that the tomb *is* empty and that Jesus lives!

LANCE ANDERSON

Weott, California

. . . AND THOROMAN

In your May, 1971 issue of *Integrity*, Dean Thoroman's article "Dangers of Legalism" was one of the most ambiguous pieces of journalism? I have read in some time.

Where are these people who are "mote picking and gnat straining?" Who are these brethren with "judgmental attitudes," advocating a "strict adherence to code-keeping" which binds where God has not bound? What specific New Testament doctrine are they unlawfully binding upon people today?

There is quite a difference between legalism, which is the disposition to make laws and liberalism, which is the disposition to disregard law. One seeks to bind where God has not bound and the other seeks to loose where God has bound!

The Pharisees of Jesus' day were not legalists when they demanded of the people to keep the law of Moses under which they lived. In fact, Jesus told his disciples to obey the Pharisees (Matt. 23:1-3). Their problem was that they were trying to bind upon the people laws they themselves were not willing to obey.

Brother Thoroman, be more specific! Just what were you trying to say?

J. WILLIAM HARTLINE

Savannah, Georgia

The enclosed [contribution] is an expression of thanks to Dean Thoroman for the wonderful article, "Dangers of Legalism."

Would you mind if I pointed out a disagreement in one of your footnotes? Under "A Fear of Fellowship" there was a poem that you listed as unpublished. The poem "Friendship" by Dinah Maria Mulock Craik is in the book *Best Loved Poems of the American People*. The book that I have was copyright 1936 by Doubleday and Company, Inc., and the poem is on page 43.

LA RITA MILLER

Santa Ana, California

EDITOR'S NOTE: Because the June issue was delayed so long while we waited for new printing equipment to arrive, we have decided to combine the June and July numbers. We do not like to disappoint anyone, but it is encouraging to know that readers really miss *INTEGRITY* when it does not appear on time. Your prayers, encouragement, and financial support are very important to us. We thank you—and we thank God!

OBSERVATIONS ON "CHURCH RENEWAL"

MIKE WILSON

It seems wise to point out at the outset that I have no personal axe to grind, witch to hunt, or desire to re-establish the odious Spanish Inquisition. Nothing said in this paper should be taken as a personal insult to anyone, although I intend to examine critically David Elkins' recent article, "Church Renewal." I deeply appreciate all the good David has done. He is a friend (by association), a relative (by marriage), and a brother (by the new birth); and I love him. However, that love does not preempt the need for logic and doctrine.

In the first place, I am unable to locate the term *church renewal*, as used by David, in the New Testament. I read of the impossibility to "renew to repentance" the once enlightened imbibers of the heavenly gift (Heb. 6:4-6); that the Ephesians were "to be renewed in the spirit" of their minds (Eph. 4:23); that one is to be "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. 3:10); that a Christian is to undergo "the renewing of the mind" (Rom.

12:1-2); that his "inner nature is being renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16); that a man is saved by grace through "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Tit. 3:5); but I read nothing in the Sacred Text about *church renewal*. The New Testament nowhere conceives of church renewal, whereas "renewing, renewed and/or renew" are of New Testament origin. Trench comments on some pertinent terms: *Anakainosis* [renewing] occurs [in the N.T.] only twice — once in connexion with [regeneration] (Tit. 3:5), and again at Rom. 12:2; but we have the verb *anakainoo* [renewed], which also is exclusively a N.T. form, at 2 Cor. 4:16; Col. 3:10; and the more classical *anakainizo* [renew], Heb. 6:6, from which the nouns, frequent in the Greek Fathers . . . are more immediately drawn; we have also *ananeo* [renewed] at Eph. 4:23; all in similar uses.¹

The noun "renewal" is not found, either emerged or submerged, in the New Cove-

nant. The term *church renewal* is therefore incongruous.

David implied that the "free-as-the-wind Christian" can't tell where he came from or where he is going. I quote: "Jesus said that everyone born of the Spirit is like the wind: you can't tell where it came from and you can't tell where it is going." At this point he complains that "we regiment the behavior of Christians into a predictable pattern." I deny that we do any such thing; but I give God the reins to direct his people in any way he desires, and we can be certain this directing will be according to his word (Jn. 12:48) and not of a confusing nature (1 Cor. 14:33). If involvement with the Lord's Spirit is subjective and unpredictable, I am perplexed as to why God gave us divine directives and predictions in his word at all!

David then addressed the church—with Paul Tournier's term, "the official church"—as a body of inquisitors which "squelches, stomps, and stops" the "free-as-the-wind Christian dead." It is not uncommon in certain journals to read harsh accusations and allegations against those for whom Christ died, calling them witch hunters, inquisitors, and other diabolical verbal innuendoes. This anachronistic terminology is not new in religious papers or religious musings. J.W. McGarvey was aware of such terminology in 1898, when he wrote:

When a preacher . . . becomes crooked in his teaching, and others criticize him until public opinion frowns upon him, he nearly always cries out that he is persecuted; that the ecclesiastic thumb-screws are being applied to him; and all the instruments of torture once used in the Spanish Inquisition become familiar to him. He cries out for freedom of thought and liberty of speech; and if the church he has scandalized undertakes to put him away, he is at once proclaimed a martyr by a whole host of fellows as crooked as he.²

I am a little confused as to why some breth-

ren, who have been wisely disciplined, feel they have been deeply wronged when accused (maybe convicted in some cases) of propagating false doctrine and illogical thinking, and then militantly oppose the Lord's saved. Many who feel they are being burned at the stake—or would be if their views were known—are to some degree declaring war on the church for which Christ died and castigate and defame many in that heavenly host. What right has *anyone* to burn another at the stake, or to crucify another upon a verbal cross?

David's statements raised some questions:

(1) How do we seek God in an intimate personal way? David said, "Even though we sing 'Beyond the Sacred Page I seek Thee, Lord'—woe unto the man who actually seeks God in such an intimate, personal way." Can we come to know God beyond, and in addition to, his word? If so, why do we have his word to instruct us about him? Why are we not left to ourselves to find God whenever and wherever we are so persuaded? If God can be known beyond the Sacred Page, there is no need for the Sacred Page.

(2) How do we know if we have found God? David says a double woe will be pronounced by the congregation upon the man who comes back reporting that he has "actually found Him." Where did he have to go, and what is meant by such reporting? Have not Christians actually found God? David refers to Pat Boone as one who "has found God in a way he never believed possible." Where did Pat find God beyond the Sacred Page? It may be true, I'm sad to say, that "many are assailing his motives and assassinating his character," but what justification can one have if he assails the motives of others and assassinates their character by accusing them of being "witch hunters," etc.? David would call many in the church *Jezebellians*, because we "kill the prophets [Pat Boone?] and Spirit-filled men that God sends to us!"

(3) David quotes Paul Tournier: "... the official church always resists these far-reaching spiritual adventures and only afterwards perceives that it has been saved by those whom it has persecuted." Is Pat, along with the other "persecuted," going to save the church?

(4) What are the confines of the Spirit's working? David says, "The Spirit is not confined to working only within the perimeter of their [church leaders] theological understanding." How can he or any finite being know the boundaries of the Spirit's workings? The Sacred Page tells man all he needs to know that "pertains to life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3), and it does not reveal the Spir-

it's working boundaries. Is a subjective knowledge of such workings essential to salvation or godliness?

(5) If the Spirit is moving inconspicuously in hundreds of churches, how do we know this? Does David have some peculiar insight into the Spirit's inconspicuous movements? Where are these churches, and what are the manifestations of this spiritual movement?

We have too many questions and not enough answers. We look forward to future answers. I can't accept as my "Firm Foundation of God" mere conjecture, subjective experiences or possibilities. I can only accept "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

1 R.C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament* (Marshallton, Delaware: The National Foundation for Christian Education), p. 61. See also W.E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Westwood, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1966), pp. 278-9; Kenneth S. Wuest, *Studies in the Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1945), pp. 89-95.

2 J. W. McGarvey, *Biblical Criticism* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1956), p. 246.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The foregoing arguments would eliminate such venerable institutions as *personal work, gospel meetings, invitation songs, Sunday schools, placing membership, located preachers, dedication services, and baptisteries*—since not one of these is mentioned in the Bible!

The word "renewal" does appear twice in the RSV. It is in fact the only rendering of *anakainosis* given by Arndt and Gingrich.

A clue to the difference between David and Mike may be found in Mike's reference to brethren being accused of propagating "illogical thinking." This seems to go a step

beyond J.S. Whale's claim that "it is a moral duty to be intelligent."

David's article provoked quite a bit of reader response, mostly favorable. Those who disagreed with him obviously did so because they felt he was too sympathetic with the charismatic movement. Without the implication of encouraging the pneumatics, we doubt that anyone would really be opposed to church renewal.

Incidentally, the August issue of *Mission* will include an interview with Pat Boone. In it he will discuss his relationship with the Inglewood church. Don't miss it.

"Even My Hands and My Head, Lord"

NOEL E. LEMON

When Jesus wanted to wash Peter's feet and said, "If I do not wash your feet then you cannot be my disciple," he was not so much talking about the washing of feet as about the act of serving. In reference to the whole scene, Jesus was giving an object lesson in humility and servitude.

What a contrast between Christ's point of view and the one we are accustomed to. "If you won't let me serve you in this small way, you can have no part of me." I know of several men who have been ostracized from their church because they would not serve as some deemed they should, but never, never have I heard of someone being ostracized because he would not be served. Peter almost was. But when he realized what an awful mistake he had made, he repented and asked to be served in even greater ways. I'm quite sure Peter didn't know the fullness of his request when he said, "Then wash, not just my feet, but my hands and my head, also." To him, the washing about which Jesus spoke was the reality. At this point he was not aware of the simile which Christ was drawing between the washing of feet and the act of serving. To Christ, the act of serving was the reality.

One thing for sure, however, Peter was honest about his feelings for Jesus. If the mere act of Jesus washing his feet would enhance their fellowship, then he would be washed all over for even greater effect. How like Peter we are. Our love for the Lord and our desire to serve him is so great and so sincere that we would strain to obey any command if there was the slightest chance it might bring us closer to him. At the same time, as did Peter, we might miss the real act which he has designed for our reconciliation.

Jesus was not interested in cleansing Peter's feet nor his hands nor his head, but he was interested in presenting a totally new concept of living—that of becoming great by becoming small. This concept was foreign to Peter's nature as much as it is to ours. It was actually humiliating for Peter to allow his Lord to wash his feet. But if it pleased Jesus to do so, he would allow it. He was willing to surrender that much of his pride and self-sufficiency to Jesus. Even beyond that, if it was a physical act of obedience that would accomplish the Lord's will and merit his approval, he would surrender with a flourish . . . "even my hands and my head, Lord."

It was not the washing, the act of obedience, but the new attitude which Christ wanted his disciples to have and which brought about this coveted relationship. It required a spiritual change. There are two aspects of this spiritual change which we should note. Let me deal with them in reverse order, since the latter is more familiar to us. When Jesus finally made his point clear, it was this: As you have seen me, your teacher, become your servant, so you must become each others servant. Unlike the kings and rich men of the world, whose idea of greatness meant having slaves and servants under them, Jesus' approach to greatness was to become the willing servant of others. This was the heavenly way to greatness. It reminds us of something our Lord said at another time: "Strive to enter the strait gate . . ." So contrary to our human way of thinking is this concept of "greatness by servitude" that putting it into practice is virtually impossible. Even more so for the rich and powerful than for the poor and

weak. Could this be the strait gate he was talking about?

Again Jesus said, "I came to this world to judge, so that the blind should see and those who see should become blind." What possible wisdom could there be in that? None, as far as men are concerned, but Paul tells us that, "God in his wisdom made it impossible for men to know him by means of their own wisdom" (1 Cor. 1:21). The concepts of "greatness by servitude" and of "sight-filled blindness" are two of God's ways of keeping his kingdom and his Spirit hidden from the world while revealing them in such a real way to those who believe.

Though the lesson of servitude was one that Peter needed badly, as do we, there was one just as important, if not more so, which had to supercede it. He had to become humble before the Lord. Peter was willing to serve Jesus, and would even go to death with him, but he was not willing to be served by him. Peter would gladly have washed Jesus' feet, but to have his feet washed by Jesus made him uncomfortable. He held Jesus in such esteem that he couldn't imagine such a thing. It's strange that Peter, hearing Jesus teach about "going the second mile," and "returning good for evil," seeing him constantly helping, comforting and healing others, would be so startled now that Jesus wanted to be his servant also. Washing Peter's feet was only a small service which Christ wanted to do for him, but it was a service which, if not allowed, would sever their relationship. This is the number one lesson that must be learned from this episode.

Christ came to serve, not to be served. Even though Peter would have gladly done anything Jesus asked of him, even to become the servant to his contemporaries, his service would have meant nothing. It would have been service out of duty and likely grudgingly given. This is all Peter was capable of doing, and it's all we are capable of doing. However, if Peter could become

humble enough to allow Jesus to do for him, even that which he could have done for himself, he would have taken the first step toward being the kind of servant Jesus could use. It was a mistake for Peter to assume so high an attitude about himself that he couldn't allow Jesus to do anything for him.

In our do-it-yourself religion, we are not at all unlike Peter. We are making the same mistake he did. When we feel we must perform our righteous deeds and draw a line somewhere way out of our reach, as to how many must be performed or we'll lose our souls, we are building our own pedestal too high. How vain we are. Jesus said, "If I cannot serve you [wash your feet], you cannot be my disciple." If we are not willing to surrender and allow Jesus to take charge of our lives, producing the fruits of the Spirit, we, like Peter, are saying to the Lord, "You shall never, at any time, wash my feet." If our pride and self-esteem are so valuable to us that we won't let him become an active force in our lives, to us he is still dead and we are not his disciples.

Paul was a man with great zeal to do God's will. He did everything he could to earn God's favor, but he tells us in his letter to the Philippians that all this self-righteous obedience to the law he counted as loss for the sake of a righteousness so much more valuable . . . that given by God through faith in Jesus Christ. It was no longer a righteousness of obedience or of selfish servitude, but a surrendering self, so that Jesus might serve in him. The more we surrender to Jesus, the more he is able to serve. The more he is able to serve in us, the better servants we become.

Dear Jesus, help me to surrender so that you may live in me. As Peter, I bid you to serve not only my feet, by leading me where I should go, but my hands, that I will always do what you want me to do, and my head also, that my thoughts may always be pure and of praising you. Thank you, Jesus. I love you. Amen.

How To Rear a Nonsectarian VIP

PAMELA KEMP

The church is in trouble. Few would disagree that our age demands church leaders who will produce no "uncertain sound" amid the thousands of competing voices demanding our allegiance. Perhaps your child will be one of those leaders of the future. You can begin to point him in that direction even now by following ten simple guides.

1. Implant in the child's mind the concept of unquestioning loyalty to the Church of Christ. The following formula is recommended: loyalty to the Church of Christ = loyalty to Christ.

Pitfall: Children ask lots of questions. Since the child's entire future hinges upon this dogma, never permit it to be questioned.

2. Teach the child to locate key verses on all major doctrines: the organization of the church, vocal music, five elements of worship, five stages of salvation, etc.

Pitfall: The context of certain key verses on these doctrines may prove problematic. The child might accidentally read the second half of Acts 2:38, or verse 18, preceding Ephesians 5:19.

This pitfall may be avoided in one of two ways. The parent may simply emphasize the key verse often enough that even if the child were to read the context his mind would be so keenly focused on the key verse that the context would not daunt him. Or the parent may choose to give the child each key verse written on a small card or printed in a Church of Christ topical digest for soul-winners, preferably as a program of Scripture memorization.

3. Focus his mind on the vital issues. Whom can the church fellowship? Is Baptist immersion acceptable? Is the Catholic Church the Beast? Is it Biblical to have a fellowship hall, an air conditioner, or a cross

in the church building? How can we best correct the Mormons, Catholics, Methodists, Jehovah's Witnesses, one cuppers, charismatics?

Pitfall: Lest the child become sidetracked by minor issues of the day such as the Christian and war, racial problems, drugs, communicating to subcultural groups, etc., the family is urged not to allow him to read a daily newspaper. Or better still, apply guidepost four.

4. Teach the youngster to compartmentalize his faith. His mind should divide all issues into a dichotomy — the religious, the secular. This compartmentalization will prevent the embarrassing attempt of applying Christianity to contemporary problems.

Pitfall: No parent need fear that the child will discover the New Testament's emphasis on relevant faith if the parent properly inculcates in the child the idea that the New Testament Christians were concerned with doctrine, not with society and its problems. And, anyway, they describe life in a foreign country a long time ago.

5. This compartmentalization must extend further. The child must be taught to distinguish sectarians from nonsectarians. The well-indoctrinated youngster will quickly locate an individual's pigeonhole.

John Bacon, Methodist—sectarian

Bob Jones, Baptist—sectarian

Paula Smith, Church of Christ (noninstrumental)—nonsectarian

Cliff Douglas, Episcopalian—sectarian

Mike Baker, Church of Christ (noninstrumental)—nonsectarian

Pitfall: Some Christian Churches call themselves Church of Christ. The child must be aware of this danger. To assist his classification parents may provide a list of all true

Churches of Christ in the city.

6. The books and magazines the youngster reads helps mold his mind. Therefore, along with Dr. Seuss he should also be introduced to the classics of Church of Christ literature.

Pitfall: Lest the child become discriminating in his choice of literature, do not allow him to read works which reflect contradictory viewpoints. He might even discover in his reading that the Bible contains several types of literature and, hence, cannot be read from a single perspective.

7. Give the child a solid basis on which to make moral and doctrinal decisions. Since Jesus lived in a foreign country a long time ago, it is no longer practical to ask, "What would Jesus do?" A modern corollary is recommended: "What would the brethren do?"

Pitfall: The youngster must understand precisely who constitutes a brother. Otherwise, he might evaluate his actions by the opinions of nonbrethren.

8. Since the child will be judged by the vocabulary he uses, the wise parent teaches him key vocabulary words, such as:

the faith	personal work
the Word	Scriptural
the truth	the church
salvation	apostasy
conversion	fellowship
righteousness	inspiration
revelation	providence
temptation	restoration

Technical terms should be included:

liberal	conservative
cottage meeting	the work
faithful brethren	the Lord's Day
obey the Gospel	erring brethren
sound	denominational error

Such terms are the Christian version of "supercalifragilisticexpialidocious." If he says them loud enough he'll always sound precocious.

Pitfall: The youngster may never develop Biblical concepts for all of his terms, but that is of little importance. He may not

communicate to nonChristians, but at least he will have the satisfaction of knowing that any lack of communication is not his fault since he always uses the correct word.

9. Develop in the child the attitude that anyone who disagrees with the Church of Christ's interpretation of scripture is wrong. The reasoning goes like this: anyone can interpret the Bible correctly if he sincerely seeks for truth; Bob Miller interprets scripture differently; therefore, Bob Miller cannot be a sincere truthseeker; since he is not a sincere truthseeker, he has brought upon himself a just condemnation.

Pitfall: Some day the child may learn that Bob Miller did his doctorate on the passage in question, researching extensively and using original sources. If the preacher at the youngster's home congregation barely passed his exams, cannot read Greek, or, worse still, cannot even manage subject-verb agreement in English sermons, the child may begin to question the church's infallibility doctrine.

10. When he graduates from high school, the adolescent should promptly enter a Christian college. The parent is advised to select the college since the immature teen might ignorantly choose a college on the basis of academic standards, accreditation, or other extraneous factors.

At the proper Christian college, the adolescent should blossom into adulthood in an atmosphere of sound teaching and sound discipline.

The struggle is over. You've done your part. Now remains for you the joy of seeing your young adult bravely step in to fill the leadership breach, presenting with confidence a clarion call to Christ's nonsectarian church.

Pitfall: By this stage in your adolescent's life there should be little need for worry that he will go astray. However, if in spite of all your efforts to steer him in the right path, he does rebel, remember: even David reared an Absalom.

Yet There Is Life

TOM WHEELER

Winter kills the autumn color,
Stills spouts of spring and air;
Sky, metallic, pale, and pure; only treetwigs
Crushed with weight of ice

Tremble: still:
Yet life emerges: whisper: brown earth
Bleeding breath secretly from all her pores.

Graves yawn, span the gulf of man's fear;
Open the length of man's weakness;
Swallow all that let themselves be swallowed
up in nothing;
Stillness: inevitable invisibility: seeming
death;
Yet life erupts, surrounds, transforms,
The things we took for dead.

Sky dims to merely neon
And all the wildwind wasted seems,
Subdued to banner-rustling over chill car
lots.

Yet spite of forces all conspired to kill
Life streams in currents of the wind,
Seeds and moments of tomorrow's birth:
borne:
Cherished: praised.

Sun is stopped by rooftops. Ground below
is stiff with ice.

My mind is darkened, so. I lose myself,
lose brothers,
See my mind shattered on the cold blade of
loneliness . . .

Yet there is life, as in flocks of birds
regathering at dusk,

My mind regains its peace—and—sound of
wings

As brothers, sisters, nestling in the shining
Spirit.

Tumble: scream of childspirit escaping
Like air from pierced balloons; eyes turn,
dark to me,
I turn, and lie, and hide, and die.

Yet when a small child smiles at me
My life returns — I am filled with pain of
understanding
And, I know, the Lord will pour out joy to
fill the wound.

This deathly city: skull of buildings
Smashed now: brick kills trees: kills men:
kills me:

No breath has ever been on these
sarcophagal gray streets,
Or hope will ever be. Pale death, in eyes full
wide of fear, creeps on,
Yet life emerges: people melt in love,
Warmth that wakens or could rouse
A million hearts grown deaf to voices crying
hate.

And here, a wreck, in death and shame,
There seems no final hope at all;
Yet life expresses triumph when
A child who yesterday seemed filled with
hate
Softens, sighs, and clasps my hand.

For out of hatred there is birth of beauty;
Sure as love—and tears give way to dancing,
For the Lord returns to us when we turn
our faces

Toward his sun and world. Sorrow never is
as strong as joy

—Dead the crumbling buildings,
Dead the putrid sky—

But God made men to love, and live and
never die.