

INTEGRITY, a journal published by a 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 accurately to 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.

pluralistic diversity, and the movement began to divide.

In addition to tracing the development of the unity and restoration plea which led to the Stone-Campbell movement, the authors tell the stories of three other restoration traditions — Martin Luther, the Anabaptists, and the Holiness/Pentecostal advocates. These three histories have much in common with our movement, as well as important differences and emphases, which we would do well to consider.

By seeing the great line of Christians who have gone before us and influenced us, and by noting the differences between our movement and other restoration movements, we are able to sharpen our understanding and commitment to be a disciple of Christ today.

Bruce serves as co-editor of *Integrity* with his wife Diane. They live in Lansing, Michigan and serve with the University Christian Church.

July/August 1988

Integrity

**Editorials: The Family Tree
Mentors**

Blameless Hearts in Any Culture — Part II
Kathy Allen

Living the Legacy
Shaun Casey

Intercepted Correspondence

Green But Growing
Hoy Ledbetter

Readers' Response

Book Review:
Discovering Our Roots: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ

July-Aug. 1988
Vol. 18, No. 4

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The Family Tree

I grew up in "the North," was raised to respect all races, hold sympathetic support for the Civil Rights movement, and am deliberately raising my own children in an integrated neighborhood. So imagine my chagrin to learn that my Virginia ancestors had owned slaves. There in front of me were the documents found in a county courthouse by my dad while he was pursuing information on the family tree.

Two things keep haunting me about those old wills. In one, the slaveowner — my ancestor — willed a young Negro girl to be his daughter's property, but the slave girl's increase was to be divided among his sons. The cold referral to the slave girl's children as her "increase" and the children's pitiless dispersment made me grieve.

The second thing that continues to bother me is, in reading a biographical sketch about this ancestor of mine, I learned that he was known as a Christian in the community. He had even dedicated a portion of his land to God, had built a chapel on it and held worship services regularly.

The existence of Christian slaveowners in America is not new information. But seeing it in my own family tree got me thinking. Two hundred years from now, what will my descendents know about *my* Christian life? My ancestor, known for Christian dedication, seemed insensitive to the true humanity of the people he considered his property. Couldn't I, too, be susceptible to such insensitivity? To what am I calloused? With what basic Christian principles have I compromised? What evil is incorporated into my every day life that I accept as normal? How can I discern sin to which I am oblivious?

While I know I can never be perfect here on earth, I also believe that I don't have to have the historical perspective of my descendents to see the sin in my life. Didn't Jesus explain that part of the Holy Spirit's work is to "convict the world of guilt in regard to sin" and "when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth"? (John 16:8a, 13).

The slaveowner's documents caused me to renew my prayer for God to give me the wisdom (this is a lifetime project) to discern those ways in my life that do not glorify Him. And now I keep listening for the Holy Spirit's guidance: in God's written

(Continued on page 55)

Blameless Hearts in Any Culture — Part II

KATHY ALLEN

In a previous article, various observations were made regarding if, and how, the church is being influenced by the U.S. culture. Having spent the past seven years in the third-world culture of Latin America, it has been interesting to see some fairly dramatic changes in the moral and social structure of the U.S. Those changes interest us most as they affect the body of Christ.

Is it possible to live a Christ-like life within the context of our present culture? Do the guidelines of our culture determine our Christian walk? To what extent are we influenced by our culture? What place, if any, does culture play in the expression of a spirit-controlled life?

Webster defines culture as: ". . .the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group." However, if our goal is to live "in the world and not of the world," how much of our behavior should be affected or dictated by the beliefs, forms, and traits of our society?

The confusion over "cultural vs. foundational" is not new to the church. Various times during scripture, especially in Paul's writings, such issues are addressed. The purpose here, however, is not to discuss each aspect of our culture and determine whether or not the Christian and the church should participate in or be affected by it. Rather, it is the premise of this writer that the Lord does not look at His bride through the veil of cultural mores; rather that He looks at the heart.

We are reminded in Proverbs 4:23. . . "Guard your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life." Any issue, then, which affects my life, both now and for eternity, is an issue of the heart.

Many of the current issues which face our society stem from our culture's preoccupation with self. At no other time in the history of the United States has so much time, effort and

money been spent in the blatant exaltation of self. Any believer who has forsaken all to follow the Saviour can probably quote several scriptures which caution against the seductions of the world, as well as those which encourage us to deny ourselves and live only for Him. Countless times we are reminded about the dangers of exalting self and seeking after that which characterizes the "carnal man." Despite those warnings, it appears that in many cases the church has fallen prey to special programs which encourage members to focus on self, using "Christian" terminology to justify the gratification of the "lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life."

Christians are encouraged to improve their self-images, attend personal growth seminars, wear the right fashions and colors, pursue intellectual and academic excellence, and become financially "successful." Obviously, such programs are not "wrong" in and of themselves. The danger lies in our difficulty in keeping our eyes on Jesus and our hearts in eternity when so much of our time is being spent looking at ourselves and trying to figure out how to fit in, or even compete with those around us. Paul suggests that our Christian walk is not to be one of conformity to the world, but rather one that reflects a transformation in our lives. That transformation comes about, not by focusing on ourselves, reading the right books, wearing the right clothes, or making the right amount of money. It comes as our minds are renewed. (Rom. 12:2)

Renewed Minds

One trend which seems to have crept into the church is the attempt to "renew" our minds through using the same methods and techniques which the world uses. The Word, however, stresses a different method. Ephesians 1:17ff encourages us to pray that ". . .the Father of

glory might give [us] the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of [our] hearts being enlightened; that [we] might know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power”

While the pursuit of knowledge is valuable, enriching our awareness of the world and its inhabitants and enabling us to apply what we learn to our daily lives, it should not be an end in itself. Though some are more challenged than others by the opportunities to nurture and expand their intellectual strengths, we are all nevertheless bombarded from birth with information which we must “learn” in order to live. The acquisition of that information begins taking place in the home, but as social exposure and awareness increases, it soon has no boundaries. For a time, we learn without conscious effort on our part until that moment of enlightenment when we realize that we can “choose” to acquire knowledge. At that point, the degree to which we pursue intellectual and academic stimulation largely depends on heredity, opportunity, example and encouragement.

The intellect is as much a part of our “godly image” as any other part of our being, and we are responsible before our Maker to use our intellectual capacities as wise stewards. Some suggest that the pursuit of academia and knowledge is not in any way related to the spiritual man and is therefore a waste of time.

While Paul does address the issue of exalting knowledge, as was the case with the Gnostics, he also reminds us that there is a pursuit of knowledge which results in spiritual growth and prevents us from being barren and unfruitful. (2 Peter 1:5-8)

He goes on to say that adding a certain type of knowledge to our lives can even give us the proper sense of “vision” which we need to keep from stumbling. It is not our intent at this point to study the various uses and definitions of the word “knowledge” as it is used in scripture. Our focus, rather, is to reevaluate the emphasis we as Christians have allowed our society to place on how and why we should seek to know more. The issue, then, seems to be not whether knowledge is to be pursued, but rather for what purpose.

Our culture has encouraged us to value knowledge and learning, not as it relates to the transformation and renewing of our minds with a view toward eternity, but rather as a means to exalt the learner as well as to provide him with the resources needed to be “successful” within his culture. This is not unique to U.S. culture, but may be seen in other cultures which provide resources for “higher learning”, i.e. receiving instruction beyond the ordinary life experiences of existence and survival.

Any pursuit of knowledge which exalts itself against the knowledge of God must not only be avoided, but even “cast down” according to 2 Cor. 10:5. If our desire for knowledge and understanding does not allow us to “bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of

Christ,” then perhaps we have allowed ourselves to move beyond the area of developing our God-given abilities, and into the area of exalting learning and the learner.

Our concern comes as we see the exaltation of the learner and the preoccupation with amassing material goods being manifest in the church. Have we allowed what we experience in the business world to affect the value we place on brothers and sisters within the church? That is, the more educated a person is, the more “qualified” he becomes to be heard and respected. Although it is true that the Lord raises up and equips those in the church which should hold positions of respect and authority, it does not appear that He uses the addition of certain initials behind a person’s name as criteria for those positions. . . .and neither should we. Paul’s admonition in 2 Cor. 5:12-21 reminds us that we are to regard no one according to the flesh. We must be careful not to regard one another by any standard other than the word of God.

Materialism

A similar issue arises as we begin to esteem one another and ourselves on the basis of our financial achievements. Today’s emphasis on intellect and prosperity has led to a dangerous distortion of focus in the church. Fewer and fewer high school graduates are entering those fields which have been considered “serving professions,” while more and more are choosing a profession on the basis of potential salary. This is also true of our Christian young people. It is true that the Lord uses His servants in all walks of life, but it is also true that the area of our lives which consumes the majority of our time and effort should be selected on some basis other than projected financial success.

If indeed all areas of our lives belong to the Lord and all that we do is designed to bring honor and glory to His name, then how is it that society has convinced us that the best way to bring honor and glory to Him is by making more money? While the Lord often blesses Christians with material possessions which are

to be administered to help spread the gospel, our lives should not be wrapped up in the same snare of credit, stress, physical ailments, and family disintegration which can result when our eyes turn from our calling and become focused on fitting in or even competing with those in the world.

Our society is a very materialistic one. . . . many things which we feel are only “needs” would be considered extravagances in most other cultures of the world. We spend the majority of our waking hours acquiring and spending money. This phenomenon is not new. . . .it’s just not as “subtle” as it used to be. Since the apostle Paul, by his example, reminds us to be content in “whatsoever state” we find ourselves, it becomes easy for Christians to take a stand for their specific financial condition, and subsequently make a case for or against wealth.

However, if we look again at Proverbs 4:23, we are reminded that the issue is not wealth or personal belongings, but the heart. If we have indeed surrendered “all” to Jesus, if He is the Lord of our lives, then all of our material possessions and resources are His. . . .to acquire and to dispose of as He sees fit. That removes a lot of pressure from us. We no longer have to agonize over decisions about how much to give to “church,” how much to spend for leisure, how much to put aside or invest for future security. Our concern then becomes learning how to best use God’s resources in such a way as to bring honor and glory to Him. When our hearts are seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness, we no longer have to sacrifice health, family and other relationships in an effort to obtain money. Likewise, when we recognize that we are merely stewards of our Father’s goods, we will seek to use and invest them wisely. We will also be freed from the pressures which society places on us to “keep up with the Joneses.” We can live fulfilling and productive lives without living up to someone else’s standard of happiness.

The early church had “all things in common.” Is our reluctance to adopt such a policy really due to a “cultural” issue, or do we fear what would be revealed in our hearts if we could no longer hold on to our own “things”?

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Perhaps a simple, but fairly accurate, way to determine where our hearts lie would be to honestly answer the question: "What do I presently own that I could not willingly give up if the Lord actually called me to 'leave my nets' and follow Him?" Unfortunately, many Christians feel that that is a hypothetical question. It is not. Our Saviour has called us to deny ourselves, and we have committed to do that if we have truly come to Him in faith.

If we have been "converted" to a church, then perhaps we can justify living life for ourselves, and only "sacrificing" that which is convenient or comfortable for us. However, when we enter into a marriage contract as the Bride of Christ, we bring everything we own, as well as who we are, into that relationship and lay it all at His feet. And He gives it all back to us to use in exchange for our hearts. It's comforting to know that if my heart is truly His, all the other pieces will be in proper order.

An Eternal Vision

Jeremiah 17:10 tells us that the Lord searches the heart, tests the mind, and gives to every man according to his ways. Knowing this should lead us to protect our hearts from those influences which would offer us a counterfeit of affluence rather than the abundant life we are offered in Christ Jesus. If our hearts are His, we can live Christ-like lives in the midst of changing "customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits."

We have not attempted to discuss and analyze each possible cultural influence on the church. Rather we have hopefully opened our eyes to the fact that the same changes which characterize the culture in which we live have the potential to distract us — robbing our hearts, turning our eyes away from the Lord, as we focus on self-gratification, pleasure, materialism, intellectualism, etc. We have been instructed to live in the world, interact with those around us, and even fit into society's norms without losing sight of the fact that we are merely pilgrims and sojourners. Most of what the world holds dear is only temporary. Therefore, we must guard our hearts so that we do not allow our culture to convince us that our

time, energy and material possessions should be used to seek temporary happiness or pleasure.

Christian brothers and sisters in other parts of the world often find it much easier to have a single purpose in life; that is, to glorify the Father. They live with very few personal belongings, eating less in an entire day than North Americans eat in one meal. They long for the Lord's return, understanding the concept of "strangers and pilgrims" in a way that most of us will never realize. The affluence and opportunities afforded in our society should be viewed as blessings from the hand of the Lord, but they can become hindrances to developing the simple, child-like faith of one who has nothing else to trust in.

Visiting or living in another culture can cause us to reevaluate our priorities in a way that may not otherwise happen. As we are exposed to humanity without the "finery" afforded us in our culture, we are often forced to drop our preconceived ideas of what the church is and what it means to be a follower of Christ. We see, perhaps for the first time, that most of what we spend our time doing is actually of no value when seen from an eternal perspective.

We are challenged to desire a fresh vision — one which is pure, not clouded by what our culture deems worthwhile. Our "measuring rod" which determines how we must live and walk within an ever-changing culture can only be the unchangeable word of God. We must pray that the Lord enable us to protect our hearts from an entanglement in anything that does not ultimately serve an eternal purpose.

And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all. . . so that *He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father* at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. (1 Thes. 3:12, 13)

Kathy, a graduate of Pepperdine University, is beginning her eighth year in Guatemala with her husband Averill and their three sons. While Averill serves as director for the Inter-American School in Quezaltenango, both Kathy and Averill provide spiritual leadership in several activities throughout the community.

Living the Legacy

SHAUN CASEY

Almost twelve years ago I sat dumbfounded in Roberson Chapel on the campus of Abilene Christian University, in Abilene, Texas. My mind was racing as I watched the hundred or so students file out of class at the end of LeMoine Lewis's first lecture in his Ancient Church History course. Now I can count on the fingers of one hand the number of times I have been mesmerized by a speaker, and LeMoine blitzed me that day as few have since. Two things he said started a chain of events in my life which has yet to stop. First, he said there was a history of the Church to be studied just as one would study Texas history, or European history. The second assertion was as gripping as the first. He maintained that everyone present was playing a role in the history of today's church.

Certainly those affirmations are not so radical in the broadest realms of Christendom. Yet the particular corner of the church where I grew up was not very comfortable with such ideas. The church building where I attended as a child had a cornerstone, not unlike countless dozens I have seen on other Churches of Christ. It read: The church of Christ, founded A.D. 33, Building erected 1958. LeMoine used to say that the Churches of Christ held the historical long jump record.

So there I sat, nineteen years old, listening to this remarkable man with the Ph.D. from Harvard in Church History who toiled for more than thirty years planting powerful seeds in the minds of fundamentalist youths in west Texas. In my case the seed led to Harvard Divinity School and a life of study and ministry. It was a path heavily traveled by earlier generations of "LeMoine's boys."

My guess is that most every fundamentalist sect in America has a LeMoine or two. They labor under tremendous political and ecclesiastical pressure. They struggle to maintain their integrity and sometimes their very faith. For LeMoine it meant supporting the Young Democrats, fighting for faculty benefits like

medical insurance and the right to enroll in Social Security, and most important of all, sending his brightest students to the best graduate schools in the country. None of these were attractive causes at the time. The payoff, at least in part, for LeMoine and no doubt the others like him, was that his former students now dot the faculties of the great theological schools of our country—names which are familiar to many readers. It is a remarkable legacy that this man left behind.

LeMoine died late last year. His dream of a college bible faculty at his beloved Abilene Christian filled with the best of his former students may have died with him. I do not know. The Swaggerts and the Bakkers represent the grotesque caricatures which are all too common in this country where fundamentalists have come into great wealth. The Churches of Christ are not exempt from the ravages of conspicuous consumption. We build large temples out of envy of our wealthier Southern Baptist rivals. Like many, we do not fill them with the best scholars within our tradition.

There is a certain melancholia now that LeMoine is gone. He was a touchstone for many of us who left west Texas for bigger and better things, but who remember the debt which we owe to our roots. In many ways he was the history of the Church. His dramatic and graphic lecture style which opened so many eyes to greater truths and introduced us to the likes of Ignatius, Augustine, Luther, and countless others cannot be replaced. He motivated generations of students to further their quests for knowledge. The sadness comes in the realization that the dreams and the voice that spoke them are no longer. Certainly his portrait may one day hang in the halls of a multi-million dollar bible building currently under construction at Abilene Christian University. But it is doubtful that his legacy lives in the hearts of many in that town.

The good news is the awareness that LeMoine shared with his students that the history of the

Church is dynamic and that one should never despair even in the face of long odds. The heroes and heroines of the faith are those who move beyond the horizons of the infancy of their beliefs. It is a message of hope for many in the Church, wherever they are.

So, while many people feel the loss of mentors, such as I currently do, the real meaning

Editorial

The Family Tree

(Continued from page 50)

Word; in prayer; and by paying attention to the counsel of other Christians such as the authors in this *Integrity* issue.

History books record that as early as the 17th century, the Quakers, well-known for practicing silent "listening to God" times during their gatherings, became convicted against slave ownership and freed their slaves long before the Emancipation Proclamation required it. In the middle of all the good and evil of this late 20th century, it seems to me that the Christian heritage I bequeath to my children will depend on how well I listen and obey.

Diane G.H. Kilmer
Co-Editor

Mentors

When I read Shaun Casey's tribute to LeMoine Lewis, my mind went back to the first Bible course I had at Abilene Christian College after transferring there from Michigan Christian College.

I remember sitting in my seat on several occasions with the rest of the class after the dismissal bell had rung, still almost seeing and hearing the events that were being described by the story-teller professor. Students, usually restless two or three minutes before the bell in

of the life of a mentor is in how the pupil uses that legacy in the service of the catholic Church.

Shaun, a minister in the Churches of Christ over the last six years, is a graduate of Harvard Divinity School. He is a member of the Brookline Church of Christ, and is presently attending Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.

other classes, did not even notice that both the dismissal bell and the bell announcing the beginning of the next class had already rung.

The events of the church throughout the ages were made alive to me that year. And with this beginning of an understanding of church history, I began to see myself, the Church of Christ, and the church in a new perspective. I began to appreciate Justin, Augustine, and Luther as well as Campbell, Stone, and Scott. The history of the church would always be a rich source of inspiration, wisdom, and understanding for me, thanks to the gentle, loving, dynamic, dramatic scholar who gave his life to teaching about those who gave their life for the church—the church of which we are a part.

I am grateful to God for the opportunity to be taught by LeMoine Lewis in that first Bible class at ACC, which, after so many years, is still blessing my life.

As we think back over the people who have made a definite, significant and positive impact on our lives, let's thank them not only with words, but by helping someone else in the way they helped us.

Bruce Kilmer
Co-Editor

Intercepted Correspondence

The following "Intercepted Correspondence" is a continuation of a feature we began in the January/February 1988 issue. These letters are *Integrity's* version of C.S. Lewis' *Screwtape Letters* and more recently Os Guinness' *Gravedigger files*.

To refresh your memory, we have an imaginary setting where Bruce accidentally comes across these letters in his computer class. Bruce thought he should share these letters with the rest of us, to warn us of what may be going on under our very noses. The nefarious teacher Apollyon continues his instructions to the young devil Ichabod.

Dear Ichabod,

From every indication, you are learning to appraise your situation and lay the groundwork for a meaningful assault on the Enemy's flock at Broad Way Church of Christ. May Belial bless you!

Concerning your living an exemplary life, please re-read my words and note that the precise instructions called for this extraordinary provision "at least for the present." When it is propitious, we shall grant various exceptions; but for now, you must control your fleshly desires! It is essential that you build a reputation above reproach in order to reach a position of prominence and respect—the better to come crashing to earth and bring others down with you when it best serves our ends. The "saints" at Broad Way might not be readily deluded if you were to live in your normal manner now. And you must climb high in order to fall far. Always keep the ultimate objective in mind, and dismiss temporary inconveniences.

One of our Enemy's own disciples has cited "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" as three prime sources of trouble for his followers. That was true nineteen hundred years ago; it is true today. The pages of history will show how often we have brought some of

the Enemy's generals to heel by one or another of these lusts.

Let us start your real encroachment with the third item, the "pride of life". The most simple method of instituting your attack is to learn to flatter with essentially-true-but-slightly-exaggerated statements. Subtly hint to the preacher that you never heard a better sermon on a given topic than last Sunday's on "Resist the Devil"!* At the same time, urge hand-picked "little old ladies" to speak in flattering terms of his preaching. And let the elders and deacons in on the matter, remembering that the man who is elevated highest has the farthest to fall.

You have nothing to lose by using this technique with other church leaders, or with the people themselves. A little flattery here, a few compliments there, and you can set up a large segment of the members for a fall.

The management position we secured for you is ideally suited for our purposes. You will have an unlimited expense account on which to draw any necessary funds beyond your salary. You must rigidly tithe your salary to the church treasury, give well beyond this amount, and let these facts leak out "accidentally." This will impress many.

Next Friday night when you bowl, you will have a 300 game. You have only to hit the head pin with each ball; we'll take care of the rest. Should you accomplish your objective twelve times in one game, you will be the first in your league to have a perfect game. And should you have thirty-six "pocket hits" — imagine the prestige this would give you in a sports-mad society! We could certainly utilize the achievement to advantage when your picture is released on the news wires and appears in every major newspaper. A substantial cash award, and offers of all sorts would be automatic. Both men and women, young and old alike, will hold you in great respect. But even one 300 game in Topeka should accomplish marvelous things, particularly at Broad Way.

He who walks in integrity walks securely.

Prov. 10:9

In reference to the aberrant televangelists, we have worked hard both to elevate them, and to bring them down. The results, as you observed, have been marvelous. But you are not involved directly in those situations. Your mission at Broad Way is to be observant of those who *relish* the scandal. Note them well; they will be useful tools in broadcasting future scandals we plan to bring about.

Indeed, I suggest that you select one of the more vocal individuals from the 'relishers' and try your hand at starting a juicy morsel of gossip to incite jealousy between two people whose friendship is more tenuous and superficial than they realize. Make sure the "facts" of your morsel are possible, (they need not be true, of course), and certainly of such nature that jealousy is the normal human reaction. Mix "fact" with opportunity, and contrive an apparently sound basis for scandal. You will be amazed how readily and widely believed your message is. Then compare your original version to the returning reports, and you will grasp the potential of this effective ruse.

I shall be eagerly awaiting your response and report of progress.

Yours in the glory of Belial,

Uncle Apollyon

*Yes, I was there and heard it. Confound him, it *was* good, from the Enemy's perspective.

Dear Uncle Apollyon,

Thanks very much for your excellent advice in the last letter. And thanks especially for the help on my bowling! Imagine my amusement when some on the opposing team commented that they would "sell their souls" for a perfect game. They may have a chance sooner than they think. The publicity and admiration I received for my feat was entertaining, but I was amazed at how people gushed (and envied) over such

a trivial matter. I mean, I could have understood it if I had successfully fomented a gang war or enabled a drug lord to escape prosecution — but for a 300 score in bowling? It was especially satisfying to see how it puffed up my teammates with pride and made them spend almost an entire Bible class the next Sunday discussing their standing in the league. Dare we hope that worship services might be cancelled if the championship playoffs are held on Sunday night?

Yes, I recognize the great power of the "pride of life," even though the lusts "of the flesh" and "of the eye" are a lot more fun to work with. That's because the latter two are much more palpable than the first; but by the same token, they are more easily spotted and challenged than the pride of life. In fact, it seems to me that the more people are aware of their vulnerability to the inordinate indulgence of their appetites, the less likely they are to succumb to pride. Am I right in thinking that it's the ones who think themselves free of the "grubbier" sins (e.g., sexual misconduct, gluttony, open mistreatment of others) who are most likely to find satisfaction in whatever image of virtue they are able to maintain?

I've been on the lookout, as you suggested, for opportunities to use flattery as an insidious reinforcer of both pride and envy. How's this for a potent thrust: "Brother Smoothtongue [an elder], that was an inspiring talk last Sunday on our missions program. To be honest, I'd rather listen to you than to the preacher. I do wish they would let you speak more often." Or this: "Sister Snugrug, I think Sister Outreach must have been sniping at you last Wednesday in class when she said that we ought to be willing to give more than money to the poor. And after the thousands you contribute to charity!" Both people to whom these comments were made were deliciously torn between self-satisfaction and resentment at those who didn't appreciate them. How am I doing, Unc?

With the minister himself, I have not had much success so far. He's only in his thirties, but if something isn't done he's going to become one of those really tough nuts for us to crack. He spends an inordinate amount of time in prayer (how one can spend more than thirty

seconds at that deadly activity—especially alone—I'll never understand); he perceives the real nature of the threat we pose, and he knows how to use the power of the Word and of the Enemy's Spirit against us; and he assesses himself rather accurately, even sometimes confessing his weaknesses to the congregation. The only opening I see right now is his zeal itself; he tends to get impatient with the apathy and the preoccupation with comfort in his brothers and sisters. I shall try to encourage him to rely on his own persuasiveness or his own virtue to overcome the "hard hearts" in his congregation.

And finally, as to the "game" of gossip: subtle misconceptions are the more easily spread

Green But Growing

HOY LEDBETTER

We were in a large, used-book store which was having its annual sale, and my arms were full of bargains. I noticed that one of my companions, a preacher slightly to the west of middle age, had both hands in his pockets. When I expressed my surprise at his sales resistance, he replied that he already had all the books he would ever need and did not plan to buy any more. Recalling some comments I had heard about his preaching, I was tempted to suggest that he had quit too soon, but prudence took charge, and I changed the subject.

There are various ways of interpreting my friend's statement. One possibility is that he had found a wiser use for his money than to spend it on books which he would never be able to read. But I could not resist a more negative view. I was convinced that he had reached a point where he was willing to stop growing in a very important part of his life. This unpleasant discovery bothered me so much that I made a firm resolution to never let that happen to me.

because the people in this church don't really know each other very well. They're so busy with their careers, their personal hobbies, and even with "church work" that they don't make the effort to really be in touch with each other at a spiritual level. Consequently, they don't offer one another the edification and the mutual assessment that would forestall some of the half-truths that I have promulgated about particular fellow-Christians. I feel like Shakespeare's mischief-making imp, Puck: "Lord, what fools these mortals be!"

Impishly yours,

Ichabod

Such resolutions are not easy to keep. The advancing years may bring such an accumulation of distraction and discouragement, frustration and fatigue, failure and defeat that we just surrender to tired blood. I know that temptation. But I also know that while I may never be much of a preacher, I can perhaps be a little better than I am now. And there seems to be plenty of room for growth, even at this late hour.

The conviction that I must keep growing is taking me to Atlanta soon to participate in a workshop on preaching at Emory. You will have a different opportunity. But I hope that you will use yours, too, and that with mutual encouragement and God's help we will all keep growing. The alternative is not pleasant to contemplate.

Hoy, founding editor and Editor-in-Chief of *Integrity* for 15 years, presently serves First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Albany, Georgia.

Readers' Response

Dear Bruce and Diane,

I am writing in response to two articles by Don Crawford in the January/February and March/April issues of *Integrity* on the relationship of feelings and facts and on the necessity of being skeptical about purported spiritual phenomena. I would be glad to hear some further comment from the author as to whether the troubling inferences I drew from his articles represent what he intended to convey.

In his desire to advocate a needful respect for the intelligent content and integrity of Christian faith and commitment, it seems to me that he has given support to the idea that a personal experience of the power of God within us is neither a necessary nor an upbuilding part of our being children of God. Although he speaks of the grace of God in our salvation, the tone of his articles comes very close to the arid "biblical" rationalism which says that all we need of the Spirit and power of God within us is transmitted by our intellectual contact with the Bible. I certainly have no quarrel with the idea that God and His truth exist objectively (a term which probably makes sense only in a fallen human context) and quite independently of our feelings or perceptions. But I have trouble with Brother Crawford's statement that there is "a great chasm between a god who is known to be alive because 'he lives in my heart' and a God who is known to be alive because in history He got up from the dead and lives again . . ." (*Integrity*, Jan./Feb. 1988, p. 11). Granted that the facts of God's existence, love, and power undergird and validate my experience of them, rather than the reverse; but is it not equally important to affirm that God marries fact and experience, and that sometimes when our intellect is faltering, our experience of God reminds us of what is *true*? If so, there can hardly be a "great chasm" between the two kinds of perception. A Christian marriage relationship seems to me a quite accurate analogy

to the relationship of fact and experience in Christian faith: a husband and wife are held together sometimes when feeling fails them (or wanders elsewhere) by a commitment of mind and will; but surely a true marriage is reinforced much of the time by the emotional satisfaction the two partners have in each other's company.

I speak on these matters as one who, I suspect, has a temperamental affinity with Brother Crawford. I, too, tend to be hard-headed, skeptical, and common-sensible. I, too, am appalled by the uncritical acceptance in our society of spectacular preachers and amorphous but soothing "spiritual" experiences. On the other hand, my own faith is continually tested and challenged by the "objective" spirit of the worldly wise who say that *all* claims to supernatural phenomena are to be disregarded. It seems to me that a problem at least equally as grave as a lack of dependence on critical intelligence is the failure to realize that we are locked in a battle of transcendent powers, and that if we do not consciously recognize and use the power of God, we will be overcome by the power of the Adversary. The only way to defeat the "Prince of the powers of the air" is to experience the power of God, as well as believing in it. I would be more comfortable with Brother Crawford's two articles if I saw in them more cognizance of this dimension of our relationship to God and to the world. My feelings cannot overcome the Devil nor validate my salvation; but if God has done that for me (which, glory to His name, He *has!*) and I don't feel it as a part of my relationship with Him, then something is wrong. My father is my father, whether or not I have an emotional experience of Him; but if I am to have any deep satisfaction in that relationship, and if others are to see any significance in what I tell them of God's love, surely the facts should be expected to be reinforced by emotion.

I offer these comments by way of encouraging a discussion. I hope both Brother Crawford and others will respond.

Sincerely,

Elton D. Higgs

We passed Elton's letter on to Don, and were happy to receive his response:

I appreciate Elton Higg's comments and don't really disagree with any of them. There are a few things I would say in order to clarify the situation in which Christendom finds itself at the end of the 20th century.

First, there are many contexts in which we must distinguish between style and content; between the expression of our faith and the reason for our faith; between walking in the Spirit and discriminating between alternative faith claims; between the joy of knowing Christ and the intellectual quest of knowing whether a man named Jesus really is the Christ. If we do not make these distinctions as we enter into a discussion, we face the very grave danger of turning a biblical "both/and" into an "either/or," which is the methodology which has led to every major heresy in the history of Christendom. So, clarity as to what we are discussing is essential before we leap pell-mell into the discussion.

Second, my personal style and taste is much more in line with the primitive Baptists' stomping and shouting than it is with the sterile respectability of a metropolitan First Methodist Church. I feel much more affinity with those who know not much about why they believe, but who clearly believe with all their heart, than I do with those who have heavy doctrinal discussions in a tone which suggests that they never felt anything about what they believe. But, ah. . . there you see that "either/or" choice being sneaked in again with us hardly noticing. In spite of my personal taste for a heartfelt, heart-expressed faith, I also know that I would not be a Christian today if I was depen-

dent upon finding God's love in my immediate experience because in this fallen world, there are always times that He *seems* not to be there or to care. But I never get far away because I keep bumping into this cross sticking up out of the soil of history, and I just can't explain it away.

Thirdly, and most importantly, we must not react to one extreme by running to another. Kierkegaard in the last century reacted to a sterile rationalism rampant in the Danish church by emphasizing that faith is nothing if it is not chosen, felt, and acted upon. Unfortunately, modern theologians and charismatics alike, embracing His words (but not His situations) to their chests, run about glorifying experience sans reason just as adamantly as did Kierkegaard's community glorify reason sans feeling and commitment. Certainly one cannot be a disciple without a personal relationship with Christ. And the relationship is not knowing things about Christ anymore than my relationship with my wife is knowing things about her, as Elton so rightly points out. But to say a relationship with Christ transcends knowledge about him (and this is true of any personal relationship) in no way says that it circumvents knowledge about Him. Think about it. If I really have a relationship with Gloria, it transcends the fact that I know about her, but it does not mean I know no facts about her. If I couldn't describe her to you, if I knew no details about her, if I couldn't state one objective truth about her, but still claimed to love her with all my heart, you would just consider me a hopeless romantic. At the least you would consider me neurotic, if not psychotic!

Isn't this bonding of personal knowledge and factual knowledge seen in John when he affirmed both that "we love him who first loved us" and "who is the antichrist but he that denies that Christ came in the flesh."

The problem with cold, objective knowledge about the historicity of Christ is not that it is objective, but that it is *ONLY* objective — it never grew past that. Before I can fall in love with a woman or with Christ, I have to ascer-

(Continued on the next page)

tain their existence. To fall in love before discovering their existence is not to be spiritual, it is to be naive and gullible. And it exposes one to grave danger. Check the casualty list of the extremist cults if you don't believe the danger is real.

Fourthly, if we can see this tension between tough-minded and tender-hearted as a "both/and" issue rather than an "either/or" issue, we are prepared to help and to convict people in both categories. For people can have struggles in both intellectual and emotional arenas. And people can use both their own mind and their own impulses and feelings as a way to cop out from the true God, who calls them to come and bow before His truth and have their hearts melt in His presence. He is independent of my knowing Him and it is knowing Him to which He calls me. I thank Him that I do not have to choose between these two.

Don Crawford

Dear Brother,

Please put me on your mailing list. If you have truth, I want to read and accept it. (I read of *Integrity* in *Restoration Review*, Sept. '86, Leroy Garrett.). . . I now know that I am not a Campbellite, but a Somnerite. Well, I believe I'm just a Christian, though these people insist on one exclusive name: Church of Christ. Please put me on your list.

Want to know "the truth and nothing but the TRUTH,"
Ken Traynor
Bristol, Rhode Island

Dear Sir/Madam:

After seeing a copy of Dean Smith's article on Galatians 3:28 (it apparently was the first in a series), I have decided that I would like to subscribe to your publications. . . Thank you for your service!

Sincerely,
Diane L. Goodheart

Dear Editors:

. . . The new "Intercepted Correspondence" feature hits the spot. Keep up the good (i.e., great) work.

Yours in Christ,
Jerry L. Daniel
Westfield, New Jersey

Integrity:

You get better and better. We love the practical and timely contributions by Hoy Ledbetter. Don Crawford's "Christian Skepticism" (March/April) was outstanding. We are much in your debt.

In His Love,
Jim and Gladys Love
Auburn, Georgia

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for the inspiring and very often thought provoking articles you provide. Your little magazine is a "good read!"

Sincerely,

Ann Vick
Springfield, MA

Dear *Integrity*:

Over the years *Integrity* has made an important contribution to my understanding of God's will. I trust this has been true for countless others. . .

It is my hope and prayer that *Integrity* will be able to continue its important contribution to people's lives. I can only say a heartfelt thanks for what it has meant to me.

Godspeed in all your endeavors for the cause of Christ.

Stan Williamson
Shreveport, LA

Book Review:

Discovering Our Roots: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ, by C. Leonard Allen and Richard T. Hughes, ACU Press, Abilene, Texas, 1988, 160 pages.

J. BRUCE KILMER

Elsewhere in this issue, Shaun Casey quotes LeMoine Lewis as saying that the "Churches of Christ hold the historical long jump record." Allen and Hughes go a long way to try to get us to give up our long jumping and realize we have been in a relay race all along. The ideas and goals of the "Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement" rely much on the great Christian leaders and movements who went before us. It is one thesis of this book that an understanding of historical and philosophical factors which influenced Stone and Campbell, and many of the earlier leaders of our movement, will give us a deeper understanding and appreciation of how we have come to where we are and how we can move closer to where we want to be.

The task confronting these authors is not easy. The anti-historical attitude which has marked the American spirit from its beginning has been especially strong among those with a heritage in the Churches of Christ. We have assumed that our roots jump the centuries from the 1st century to the 19th, and lie simply in the New Testament, and that the intervening history has not shaped our beliefs. We "speak where the Bible speaks and are silent where it is silent." History has little or no bearing on our interpretations. These have been our assumptions.

The authors, bit-by-bit, expose the fallacy of this thinking and point us to a rich heritage, rooted in history and tradition. Without this sense of history, the Churches of Christ will not thrive and may not survive as a movement for unity based on the Bible. Allen and Hughes urge us to forge a living tradition which always points beyond itself, never making the preser-

vation and repetition of the past an end in itself. A living tradition possesses the ability "to develop while still maintaining its identity and community."

Beginning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries — the age of Renaissance and Reformation — the authors show us how our roots are a mixture of sacred and profane, apostolic and later history, biblical and cultural. If we fail to recognize this, then we have in essence, in the authors opinion, made ourselves into gods. But by recognizing this, we can admit to our faults and mistakes and open ourselves up to God's grace, in which our weakness is made strong.

The restorationist thought which arose in the age of Reformation is traced by the authors through the Puritans, the Baptists, and the search for new beginnings in the Ameican frontier. Allen and Hughes demonstrate that just as the philosophical thought of the Enlightenment and Supernatural Rationalists, such as John Locke, encouraged the American experiment with democratic government, it also set the stage for the Declaration and Address of Thomas Campbell. Both Thomas and Alexander Campbell would merge the restoration philosophy they had inherited from the Reformed and Puritan tradition with the rationalistic philosophy of the Enlightenment. This bonding would cause serious problems for Churches of Christ, because human reason can never provide a basis of unity on every matter. Campbell himself and many of the early leaders understood this, as is demonstrated in the paraphrased slogan "in essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, love." However, many could not accept unity in a