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

Please put me on your mailing list. A friend of mine introduced me to your magazine, and I appreciate the irenic spirit and the scholarship of your publication.

Dan B. Hodge
Barnwell, S. Carolina

In the July/August issue every writer, as usual, has something very worthwhile to say. I'm still meditating on Dr. Higgs' beautiful and inspiring poem, "Grace and Glory."

Frankie Marie Shanks
Poplar Bluff, MO

We are a very small New Testament Christian church which stands very firm on the belief of the "One Church as God's only ark of salvation." I

do appreciate the articles and look forward to each magazine.

Roberta Michaels
Ottawa, Kansas

I read the July/August 1992 edition of a friend's on vacation and decided I'd like to receive it.

Ruth Noffsinger
Lakewood, Colorado

Thanks for a great magazine. Keep up the good work!

Randy & Mary Pulley
Conway, Arkansas

Integrity

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Martyrdom Or The Daily Grind

The arrival of 1993 is here---with more opportunities for growth and service! I've learned from talking to Christians of all ages that each age has its spiritual challenges, no matter how old a person is or how long they've been a Christian. Recently my own struggle with parenting adolescents has been particularly tough. One day last week the thought did occur to me that any single act of grand martyrdom would be a whole lot easier than this day-by-day challenge to handle whatever each hour brings with the strength of Christ. But not two days later in my devotional reading, J. Oswald Chambers addressed that very idea directly: "It is a great deal better to fulfil the purpose of God in your life by discerning His will than to perform great acts of self-sacrifice."

My purpose right now is to be a steadfast parent. There are benefits to my facing that challenge faithfully, consistently, day-by-day, with Jesus: "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them (John 13:17)." Jesus even promised that by abiding in him, the Vine, and by doing what he commands, my daily actions will bear fruit that lasts, and that's really what I'm looking for---rather than a badge of martyrdom.

Whatever spiritual challenges you face in 1993, may I encourage you, too, to do what you already know to do, to "live up to what we have already attained," as Paul puts it, so that our lives bear much fruit to the glory of God!

* * * * *

The entire *Integrity* Board of Directors wants to thank all of you who have contributed to the expenses of this ministry for 1993. Your financial help with the costs of publication is necessary, and we appreciate your partnership.

We hope you find this issue of *Integrity* thought-provoking and spiritually useful as you live out the walk God has set before you and as you "bear much fruit."

Diane G. H. Kilmer
Co-Editor

Your Daughters Shall Prophecy:

"Female Preachers" in the Early Restoration Movement

C. LEONARD ALLEN

This article is adapted from Allen's new book *Distant Voices: Discovering a Forgotten Past for a Changing Church*, which has just been released by Abilene Christian University Press. It is available through your local bookstore or from the author (ACU, Box 8401, Abilene, TX 79699).

In 1812 a woman named Nancy G. Cram (1776-1815) began a teaching ministry among the Oneida Indians of New York. Though the Indians treated her well, she did not meet with great success. After a short time she moved on to Charleston, New York, where she attended a funeral one day. At the close of the preacher's sermon Cram knelt and led an unscheduled prayer which deeply touched the audience. "Many wept," someone reported, "while an awful sense of eternal things seemed to settle down on the entire audience."

Upon learning that Cram was a preacher, they invited her to hold a revival meeting. Crowds gathered in barns and fields to hear her, and a great revival occurred: "Hundreds were soundly converted from sin, and the moral life of the community greatly increased."

When the new converts wanted to begin a church, Cram, who was not ordained, searched for an ordained Freewill Baptist minister to organize the church and administer the ordinances. Unable to find one, she traveled to Woodstock, Vermont, where she found three ministers associated with Elias Smith's "Christian" movement who were willing to come to Charleston and organize the new church.

The evangelistic success in Charleston launched Cram's highly successful four-year preaching ministry throughout New England. Great crowds attended her revival meetings. In 1814 David Millard, who became a prominent preacher in the New England "Christian" movement, was converted under her preaching. At least seven active

preachers in the "Christian" movement, Millard later recalled, were converted under her influence.

In the fall of 1815 Cram returned to her hometown of Weare, New Hampshire, where, after a sudden and brief illness, she died. She was 39 years old.

Nancy Cram was one of the most successful and well-known of Elias Smith's "female preachers." From the days of James O'Kelly in the 1790s to Smith in the early 1800s, women were quietly appointed to preach in the eastern branch of the restoration movement. Among these "female laborers," as they usually were called, were Cram, Abigail Roberts, Ann Rexford, Sarah Hedges, Clarissa Danforth, and Sally Thompson.

Abigail Roberts (1791-1841) was converted by Nancy Cram, and began a twelve year preaching ministry in 1816. She preached in out-of-the-way places, often every day for weeks at a time. She is reported to have converted hundreds and to have established at least four congregations. Bitter opposition often beset her. In one community a woman told her husband that if he would seize the "female preacher" and gag her then she would tar and feather her.

Roberts not only bore the odium of being a woman but also of being part of Smith's "Christian" movement. In doctrine the "Christians" were labelled heretics; in social standing they were called "trash traps." Like others in the movement, Roberts preached that "party names" were wrong, that creeds usurped Christian freedom, that Christ's followers should be called simply "Christians" and should accept no creed but the Bible.

Elias Smith's restoration movement had begun when he broke with the Baptists about 1803 and established a "Church of Christ" at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, noting that "we agreed to consider ourselves Christians, without the addition of any

unscriptural name." The same year he met Abner Jones, also a former Baptist, and the two became leaders of a loose association of churches calling themselves the Christian Connection.

Protest against all religious tyranny and a call for "gospel liberty" lay at the heart of Smith's reform movement. He launched a crusade for a simplified Christianity, one shorn of all creeds, hierarchical authority, and clergy. "Let us be republicans indeed!" he exhorted. "Venture to be as independent in things of religion, as those which respect the government in which you live."

Smith's iconoclastic message and scorn for social conventions disturbed many people. The guardians of order, orthodoxy, and respectability thought he was "stirring up the people to revolt" and "turning the world upside down."

In 1815 Gilbert McMaster, a Presbyterian minister in New York, published a book attacking Smith and his "female preachers." McMaster found many things about Smith offensive—the rough denunciation of Calvinism, the rejection of classical trinitarianism, the dismissal of creeds, and, not least, the sanction of women as preachers. Smith, he charged, was a "leader in heresy."

McMaster noted that Smith had "engaged a variety of characters in his service, male and female," and that Nancy Cram was one of the most notorious. He wrote that Cram was "abundantly gifted with that spirit of her head, which opposes literature, order, and whatever Christians usually have considered, as of vital importance to the interests of religion." "She never studies," he added, "and compliments her Maker with being the author of her crude invectives."

Many people, McMaster reported with alarm, were falling victim to "the seductive address of the female heralds of *Smithite Christianity*." The very use of women preachers, McMaster charged, revealed "the state of unblushing impudence at which mankind may arrive." Proper citizens should be distressed to see women "abandon the restraints and safety" of the home and become "the strolling associate of men." For such behavior was nothing less than an "outrage against social relations and the order of the church of God."

Many leaders of the established churches shared this view. By the 1830s several denominations had issued "pastoral letters" censuring women who sought public roles and who "so far forget themselves as to itinerate in the character of public lecturers and teachers."

But the conversion experience often emboldened women to step over the boundary lines drawn by social convention and to claim a higher authority. Women began to read scripture for themselves, to listen to the voice of God in their own hearts. And if the divine will as they discerned it ran counter to cultural dictates about woman's sphere or counter to the male authority in their lives, the divine will, they insisted, must take precedence.

Thus some women took the bold step of flouting the wills of their fathers and husbands, and of seeking to instruct and convert their menfolks. They organized their own religious and social reform societies. And sometimes they heeded the call to preach the gospel and evangelize the unconverted. The conversion experience, in short, provided women a generally accepted outlet for challenging male dominance.

Nancy Towle, a young New Hampshire school-teacher, provides a good example. In 1818, at age 22, she was converted under the preaching of Clarissa Danforth and baptized by Elder Moses Howe. Afterward she felt "a longing desire to go 'into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.' In imagination, I was there; and in dreams of the night, I was there, sounding salvation to the thoughtless thousands."

For two years she struggled with this desire, but found no support among family and friends. "Friends became alarmed for me," she wrote. They told her that she was ruining herself. They advised her to put away her Bible and divert her mind from such "melancholy themes." But she could think only of "a world lying in darkness." She said that she tried to blot out such thoughts and reject her call, but found it impossible.

The question as to whether women could preach the gospel, she said, had never been a "controverted point" for her. "I ever believed, that in Christ Jesus they were one, both male and female," she

explained, "and that, according to both the Old and New Testaments, holy women, as well as 'holy men of God,' were wont to speak, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (which amounts to none other...than the preaching of the Gospel)."

Finally, on April 20, 1821, she accepted the call, turning her back on family and friends. "With the fond paternal roof, I now renounce you, once and for all!—and this day, I put my hand to the Gospel Plough, never more to turn again." "O Lord God," she cried, "I appeal to thee, that for thy name's sake, and the Gospel, I make an unreserved sacrifice, this day, of all that nature once was inclined to hold dear!"

With this step, Towle became an aggressive itinerant evangelist—years later she estimated that she had traveled over 10,000 miles in a decade of preaching. Along the way she met and worked with many other women preachers. Regarding such women, she commented: "Those females who have renounced every earthly enjoyment, for the sake of precious souls, I ever esteem the noble part of God's creation."

In her travels Towle preached in many different churches. Some turned her away because they did not allow women to speak. In one town in Pennsylvania some members of a Methodist church asked her to preach in their chapel, but the preachers would not allow it. One said, "'A woman shall not preach there.' The other returned, 'The woman can preach better than the one that does preach there!'" Towle added: "Many high-minded men are aggravated to see a greater congregation to hear a woman, than they could gain themselves. Oh, I pity the people that must be priest-ridden, after this sort!" She ended up preaching in the courthouse to a large audience.

In one place she was told she could not speak because it was "contrary to their rules." "I was astonished," Towle reflected, "that professed Christians can be so much more willing souls shall perish, than that 'the rules of their society' shall be broken."

She worked tirelessly and endured many hardships. "I have sometimes spoken, from six to eight

times a week for months in succession," she wrote, "and seldom less than one hour, sometimes two hours upon the stretch...not infrequently till midnight, and in some instances till the dawn of morning." She also told how she had been "many hundred times penniless" and often in a strange land. "How powerful must be that charm," she reflected, "to engage and to continue for a succession of years, a female in such warfare as this!"

Towle preached wherever a platform was open to her. But she always insisted that "I am still a member of no community...I wish to be free from party spirit, and to love Christians of every order." "I am accountable to no mortal, for my procedure," she proclaimed, "nor hath any human being any control over me."

After fourteen years of full-time itinerant preaching, Towle reflected on the "growing evils" in the world. One of these evils, she said, was the "excluding of female gifts from the Church of God—which I view as an occasion of great provocation, and as one principal means of immense loss to the Church of the Lord Jesus, throughout." Woman has been "taught for ages, to understand herself but a subordinate being—unfit for such an elevated vocation, as a teacher of righteousness—and hence, merely passive in the building of the Lord Jesus. Which is, in exact contrary to the word of God." "I for one," she concluded, "wish to deliver up my life a sacrifice towards remedying these evils, and seal my testimony, as with my blood, in vindication of the rights of woman!"

If "female preachers" were fairly common in the eastern part of the early restoration movement, they were far less so in the western part. One exception was Nancy Mulkey, daughter of "Christian" preacher John Mulkey in Monroe County, Kentucky, who served as an "exhorter" in her father's congregation.

"She would arise with zeal on her countenance and fire in her eyes, and with a pathos that showed the depth of her soul," a chronicler wrote, "and would pour forth an exhortation lasting from five to fifteen minutes, which neither father nor brother

could equal, and which brought tears from every feeling eye. She was remarkable in this respect." Joseph Thomas, who traveled through the region in 1812 and heard her speak, wrote that "I was no little astonished at her flow of speech and consistency of ideas."

The work of "female preachers" and "exhorters," however, soon receded. The predominant cultural model of "true womanhood," which limited woman's role strictly to the domestic sphere,

A Theology of Time:

As It Relates To God's Omnipresence

LARRY FITZGERALD

When we talk of the omnipresence of God, we frequently speak of God existing beyond the limits of length, width and depth. These are the dimensions of Euclidean space. The idea of a God existing beyond these dimensional limits is somewhat difficult to understand. But when it comes to understanding God's omnipresence in terms of time, the concept becomes even more difficult to comprehend.

In our frame of reference, time moves from past to present to future. Yesterday is past. Today is present. Tomorrow is future. A human must live in the present *only*. The human's relationship to the past is to remember it. His or her relationship to the future is to look forward to it with hope. And even if science fiction one day becomes reality and we are able to travel through time, this still would not help us understand the concept of God's omnipresence. Because, if we traveled to the past or future, once we arrived, that point in time would become our "now." To borrow from a recent motion picture, if we traveled to the past and then returned, we would be traveling "back to the future."

With the advent of Einsteinian theory, the idea

became the predominant model in the restoration movement. It remained so throughout the rest of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth.

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of time has become less "fixed." While relativity remains theory (as of today), research has shown that time is elastic. Evidence tends to prove that Professor Albert was correct: "As one approaches the speed of light, time dilates."

God's Omnipresence

I propose that we consider that the omnipresence of God is not limited to the three classical dimensions but extends to time, as well.

The specifics of God's omnipresence are points of debate in the theological world. However, most believers accept the concept that God exists in all places at the same time. To say that God is "omnipresent" is to say that God exists on the moon, the most distant star and on all places of the earth—at the same time. When Christians gather in worship in Texas and in London, if they are worshipping at the same time, then God is still among them both. The biblical evidence bears this out.¹

To say that God's omnipresence includes time is to say that God exists in all times at *the same time*. As God exists both in London and in Los

Angeles at the same time, likewise, God exists in the 6th century B.C., the 1st century A.D. and the 20th century A.D. at the same time.

On the other hand, to propose that God moves from past to present to future, like mankind, is to limit him to the physical. God is spirit and is not limited to anything physical ... including time.

Evidence of this aspect of the omnipresence of God is found in the biblical language. The very name of God is a witness to his omnipresence in time. He told Moses to call him: "I am who I am."² God did not say: "I am who I was." It is interesting that this phrase can be translated both "I am who...I am" or "will be."³

When the Psalmist wrote: "From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God," we see that God's existence "reaches out of the unlimited past into the unlimited future."⁴ From Psalms 90:4 we find a clear statement of "the supra-temporality of God or the omnipresence of God in time."⁵ "For a thousand years in Thy sight are like yesterday when it passes by, or as a watch in the night." This does not imply time passing for God but passing for mankind. To God, it is one period of time — it is "yesterday" or a "night-watch."

Perhaps one of the clearest examples of God being beyond time is found in Jesus' claim to Godly-existence: "Before Abraham was (born), I am."⁶ By this statement Jesus said that he is "beyond and above time."⁷ It is important to note that Jesus does not say: "Before Abraham was (born), I existed" (past tense). Yet this is how some describe the statement. Instead, Jesus said that before Abraham existed (past tense) "I AM" (present tense). In other words: "I am existing in the *NOW* before Abraham existed in the past," says Jesus.

In John's Revelation, God the Father is described as the one "who is" (the Greek form of I AM), "who was" and "who is to come." Here John invents some Greek to get across the omnipresence of God.⁸ While pagans used a form of this statement to describe their gods, they did not use this exact language.⁹ Indeed, God is the one who is (I AM), who was—is, who is to come—is.

Time and Prophecy

The omnipresence of God in time explains the action of prophecy. Since God exists in all times at the same time, he then knows what is going to happen to a person in that person's future because God is existing in that time at the same time he exists in the present of that person. God sometimes exercises his privilege to reveal to that person what is in that person's future. This is prophecy.

God also sometimes chooses to change the course of the future by interfering with what is to come. The scientist would call this "the dilemma of time." Such a dilemma would have enormous consequences if a human should choose to make such changes (with the science fiction ability of time travel). But for the omnipotent God, it is his privilege to change the course of history. Such seems to be the case in the story related to Jonah.

This theology of time does away with the Calvinistic concept of predestination and enforces the concept of foreknowledge. God does not force future salvation. However, God knows what is going to happen because, to God, it is happening in the *NOW*.

This theology of time does away with the concept of a Hadean waiting place. When a person dies, he is no longer bound to time since he is now spirit while time is physical. The dead Christian is transferred to an existence outside of time. There is a future judgement for the physical body since it is still bound to the physical. But the soul exists in a realm where there is no past, present or future.

This concept of time is difficult for many to grasp because we move from past to present to future. Yet, we must understand that God is beyond our ability to completely grasp, except perhaps in that time when we meet him "face to face."

Notes:

1. Jeremiah 23:24; Psalms 139:7-12.
2. Exodus 3:14.

3. See J.F. McLaughlin, *Abingdon Bible Commentary*, Eiselen, Lewis, Downey, eds. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1929) p. 256.
4. Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1989 ed.), vol. 5, p. 50 (third section).
5. *Ibid.*
6. John 8:58.
7. A.M. Hunter, *The Cambridge Bible Commentary, Gospel According to John* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1965) p.93.
8. J.W. Roberts, *The Revelation of John* (Austin,

Texas: Sweet Publishing, 1974), p. 29. And A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1933), vol. 6, pp. 285-286.

9. Robertson, *Ibid.*

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manifest bad fruit. The good fruits Christians should manifest are fruits of the spirit, which are found in Galatians 5:22-23 and include love, joy, peace, etc. They represent the Vine, himself, who displayed them perfectly on earth and they also identify his followers now. The first two fruits, love and joy, are specifically mentioned by Jesus in John 15:9-11. You might want to look up James 3:17-18 for a list of good fruits, as well.

Another thing to keep in mind is that a person who does not bear fruit is taken away. To say that fruit-bearing refers to soul-winning is to say that our very salvation is dependent on a work, namely soul-winning. That is ridiculous (Ephesians 2:8-9)!

It is clear that the fruits we are to bear are the fruits of the Spirit. If we do so, others will be won over by our faithful witness, and also become branches that bear fruit through the perfect Vine, Jesus Christ!

Carl Smith, a graduate of Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia, is an active member of the Northside Christian Church in Roanoke, Virginia, serving as a teacher and member of the Education Committee.

Now That the Election is Over . . .

J. BRUCE KILMER

I voted for Bill Clinton. When admitting that to some of my evangelical friends, I feel like those characters in the Kellogg's Frosted Flakes commercial with their face in the shadows admitting that they still eat Frosted Flakes as if it were some shameful deed.

My daughter and I went to hear Bill Clinton speak in Saginaw, Michigan about two weeks before the election. After the rally was over, we came upon a small group of people holding signs which read: "To Vote for Bill Clinton is to Sin Against God." After watching the partisan crowd laugh and make derogatory comments to this small group, I decided to try to talk to the anti-Clinton group myself. I asked them if we were reading the same Bible. I did not remember reading anything in my Bible that would indicate that voting for Clinton would be a sin. I tried to explain to this group of protesters that I was a Christian, and that I would be voting for Clinton. They told me that a vote for Clinton was a vote for homosexuals in government and abortion on demand. I told them that I thought there were a many moral and compassionate reasons not to vote for Bush (such as his policies toward the poor, his contradictory statements about Iran/Contra and Iraq, etc.). They did not seem interested in talking about whether Clinton or Bush would have more concern and compassion in the way that Jesus demonstrated for the less fortunate. They told me that I ought to read the Bible, and when I responded that I had read it many times, they told me that I had not read it with the Spirit of God! It was at that point that I knew I was wasting my breath. I left feeling embarrassed and saddened about the impression of Christianity they were leaving with others at the rally.

Since the election, it has not gotten any better among many of my Christian friends. They are not as blunt as the sign carriers, but their wringing hands over Clinton's victory makes me wonder if their faith was not a little too tied to Bush,

Reagan, and the last 12 years of Republican victories. Some of their prayers seem almost desperate as they struggle with how God could have allowed such heathen as Clinton to win. Those with such concerns are blinded to the irony that both Clinton and Gore are born-again Baptists while one of Bush's closest friends said of Bush recently, "I'm not sure he has any convictions." The same irony was missed by those Christians who thought Reagan the Christian candidate over Carter. They thought this, despite the fact that Carter was a born-again Baptist, Sunday School teacher, family man who attended church regularly while in the White House and who read his Spanish Bible daily for devotions. Reagan, on the other hand, was a nominal member of the Disciples of Christ, estranged from some of his children, rarely attended church while in the White House, and let his wife's astrologer control his schedule.

Mutual Respect

I can understand why some Christians voted for Bush. They believed certain wrongs, such as abortion and homosexuality, would have been curtailed by a Bush presidency. They believed his economic policies would have improved the country. They knew he had experience in foreign affairs. I can understand those who voted for Bush believing that of the three candidates, Bush would help the most people lead more prosperous and more moral lives. I can understand and respect those Christians for their beliefs, and for their votes based on those beliefs.

What I ask from those who voted for Bush is the same respect for those of us Christians who conscientiously voted for Clinton. Many of us have also thought out and prayed about our vote. We do not agree with all of Clinton's policies, like many who voted for Bush, do not agree with all of Bush's policies. However, we believe that in total,

On Bearing Fruit

CARL SMITH

In John 15, Jesus addresses the subject of bearing fruit. He says his Father is the vinedresser, he is the vine, and his followers are the branches. The vinedresser prunes the branches so that they bear more fruit, as verse 2 tells us. Just what does Jesus mean by "bearing fruit"? I have heard preachers say it means winning souls, fruit being converts. I don't think so.

First of all, the only passage that even associates the two is Proverbs 11:30, and it is a mis-translation in the King James version that causes this confusion. The idea of the word "wins" is to take or draw (to oneself), so as to impart wisdom or to influence someone in a positive way. It is not addressing salvation or evangelism, at least not in a Christian sense.

Secondly, in John 15 the words of Jesus himself discredit the idea of fruit being interpreted as "souls." He said that his followers are branches, not fruit. Therefore, he or she can bear fruit as a branch.

So what is the fruit Jesus is discussing? Remember that in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said you would know false prophets by their fruits, as recorded in Matthew 7:15-18. The fruit, therefore, identifies the tree. If oranges grow on it, you can bet it's an orange tree! False prophets

Clinton's policies will benefit spiritually and materially the most people in the long run. I do not agree with the extremes in the Democratic party, and I am sure many Christians who voted for Bush do not agree with the extremes in the Republican party, but we disagree as to what needs to be emphasized.

Contrary to what some Christian groups seem to indicate, there are other important issues besides abortion and taxes. I was disappointed that the surveys and Congressional voting records I received from Pat Robertson's and James Dobsen's organizations asked questions about abortion and taxes and gave me information on each Congressional representatives' votes on bills regarding abortion and taxes, but did not ask me questions about or give me information about Congressional representatives' votes on such issues as food for the hungry or medical care for the poor — two issues about which Jesus dramatically demonstrated his concern, as can be seen from the miracles recorded in the Gospels.

Darrell L. Bock pointed out in the November 9, 1992 issue of *Christianity Today*, p. 10, that too often the Religious Right (of which he considers himself a member) comes across as arrogant rather than caring. He wrote:

Where are our family values when need exists beyond the womb? Where is the invitation to receive help beyond the condemnation? Our responses to these needs often seem to miss our religion's point and appear to be only efforts to score political points. We are not called to pray for our country, but for the people in it, and for its leaders, all of them.

Important Issues

For some Christians, abortion is the only issue that matters. For them, it does not matter what else a candidate stands for or does, if he or she is against abortion, then that candidate gets their vote. For me there are other "pro-life" issues besides abortion, such as food for the starving in Africa, disarmament, medical care, child abuse, prenatal care, and many others.

Other Christians seem preoccupied with bashing homosexuals. I cannot see Jesus condemning homosexuality in the way many Christians do today. If Jesus were physically present today, I can see him loving the outcasts of 20th century society, without condoning their sin or an abnormal behavior, as he did the publicans and sinners of first century society. I can see him caring for the lepers of our day, people with AIDS. Jesus did very little condemning except for the religious establishment. Today, he would disapprove of those who self-righteously advocate homosexuality as just another life style. But those caught in the grip of sin would feel his love. He expected the world to be sinning and sick and in need. Too many Christians leaders, too many churches, too many Christian radio and television programs, and too many Christian publications spend too much time condemning people and spend too little time demonstrating the unconditional love and acceptance of Jesus. Rarely are conservative Christians accused of condoning sin as Jesus was (Matt. 9:11; 11:19). There is no indication that the criticism caused him to quit eating with sinners and loving them.

Though I sometimes disagree with Bill Clinton or with things in the Democratic Platform, in the long run, I think that his message of concern and inclusiveness will have more impact on helping people and on changing people's wrong actions than all the moralizing and exclusion of people, and all the laws will ever do. I believe what James Wall, editor of the *Christian Century*, said:

People know that there is no absolutist answer from God for every issue we face. That's the refreshing appeal for me in the Democratic campaign. Clinton and Gore have a religious world view that is open and inclusive rather than narrow.

Jesus' Example

I believe what Jesus taught, and what got him killed, was an open and inclusive view toward all human beings. Eating with the publicans and sinners; having lower class, uneducated followers,

many whom were women; healing the sick, including lepers and demon possessed in his ministry; saving not condemning; emphasizing the spirit rather than the law; these were the people and issues of his day about which he showed great concern. And we see from the book of Acts that many of the Apostle Paul's problems were a direct result of his inclusion of the Gentiles. Even though Paul did not accept and spoke out against sinful practices of the Gentiles, Paul could accept the Gentiles, and they could feel his acceptance.

The answer to the problems of our nation and the problems of the world is not the election of Clinton or Bush or the Democrats or the Republicans. Politicians, governments, and laws are not the answer to human needs. All of we Christians can agree to this: that Jesus Christ is the answer!

In Politics, Liberty!

Unfortunately, in many churches differences over doctrinal beliefs are tolerated more than differences in political beliefs. We need unity in diversity for both, so that the church can be what God intended, where the criteria for acceptance is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, Democrat nor Republican, but Jesus' criteria for accepting us.

Many citizens agree that neither Republican nor Democratic programs have been successful in fundamentally changing the problems in today's society. Don Eberly, a former congressional and White House aide, wrote in the December 14, 1992 issue of *Christianity Today*, p. 13:

Evangelical leaders should demand that the term "Christian Right" be expunged from society's vocabulary. This term, which was never chosen by evangelicals, positions the church as a peddler of ideology, rather than a force for

renewal.

National organizations and leaders who presume to speak for all evangelicals should abandon the practice. Talk of "takeover," as though evangelicals have divine mandate to rule, should be stopped. A takeover will occur only when people rise to the top, like Daniel of old, on the basis of wisdom and competence. This will require persuasion, not polarization.

Bill Clinton will probably disappoint me many times during his presidency as George Bush disappointed many Christians who voted for him, but the point of this article is not to convince you that Bill Clinton was a better choice than George Bush. I simply wanted to explain, to those who seem to have no idea of how a Christian could vote for Clinton, why some Christians did so, in hope that some understanding would contribute to more acceptance and dialogue in our churches. We must accept both doctrinal and political differences within our churches, or we will never have the diversity of people and thought that gives our churches strength and that leads to a closer understanding of truth.

This unity in diversity will give us varied and distinct ambassadors for Christ — better able to speak to the needs of the diverse people in our society, and better able to lead more people to the only one who can save the world, Jesus Christ.

Bruce Kilmer grew up in the Churches of Christ (a capella), and has served in the Church of Christ/Christian Church (independent). He has degrees from Abilene Christian University and Wayne State University Law School. He lives in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, where he and his wife co-edit *INTEGRITY*.

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

Let This Mind Be In You

GARY CHRISTY

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5).

It is the "attitude" of Jesus that Paul exhorts us to imitate. Then Paul speaks of Jesus' humanity in the following verses. He writes of Jesus emptying himself of his glory and coming in the "likeness of men."

"Being found in the appearance as a man..." There was no way to look at Jesus and know that this carpenter-teacher was the Holy One of Eternity. Even his beautiful words and his miracles really only suggested that he was a prophet (Mark 8:27, 28). Jesus was so fully human there was no way to tell who he really was—and therefore, God could be ignored. His words could be doubted. He could be reviled and hated. He could be called evil! He could be spit on, bruised, and killed, "even the death of the cross."

The attitude Jesus demonstrates through his submission "for us" is summed up in verse 3 of Philippians 2: "In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself." That is Jesus' example. Think of it. As a man he was sinless, and yet he loved and treated with utmost gentleness very sinful people. He never needed forgiveness and yet he was forgiving, even to those who forced a cruel death on him. He was perfect, and yet he was not ashamed to serve the imperfect: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" (Mark 10:45).

It is difficult to imagine the perfect man treating others as if they were his "equal," but to realize he treated them as if they were *better* than he was is unbelievable! To realize that this "man" is God treating his creation as better than himself is to begin to see how powerful Jesus' humility was. Peter writes:

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

...all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, tenderhearted, courteous, not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing (1 Peter 3:8-9).

It is this mind we are called to have. We are to be like Jesus. We are to esteem others better than ourselves. We are called to be "sons of God," like the unique Son of God.

We further distinguish ourselves from the rest of the world as the sons and daughters of God by living out Jesus' words found in Matthew 5:43-48:

You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

This is the attitude of our Savior. It is to be our attitude. *Let this mind be in you.*

Gary Christy, a public school teacher for 23 years, particularly enjoys working with 5th through 8th graders. He and his wife, Anita, are raising three sons in Franklin, Tennessee.

Intercepted Correspondence

The following "Intercepted Correspondence" is a continuing feature begun in the January/February 1988 issue of *INTEGRITY*. These letters are *INTEGRITY'S* version of C.S. Lewis' *Screwtape Letters* and Os Guinness' *Gravedigger Files* and are written by two different *INTEGRITY* board members.

To refresh your memory and inform new readers, our imaginary setting has Bruce attending Word Perfect computer classes, where he accidentally begins intercepting subversive communication between two devils on his computer screen. The *INTEGRITY* board decides that we must inform Christians everywhere of the destructively evil plots of the nefarious teacher Apollyon and his young student Ichabod by publishing the letters for as long as they can be intercepted.

My dear young Obfuscator,

I am in constant touch with Asphalt, and he is being advised and directed in all counterproductive activities as you suggest. His emphasis will be upon developing the zealots' pride in their humility—a task not quite so difficult, and far more productive, than might be commonly thought. We have had no little success in actualizing what has been sometimes used among Christians as a kind of "sick joke" about some of their number who claim to be the world's most humble people—and they're proud of it! It's hard to find a more erosive trait among them.

Regarding that "sickness" vs. "sin" clash: hit it for all you're worth. I'm ready to claim credit for devising the original ploy here; and, like the aforementioned "humble" Christians, I'm proud of it! The people who fall for this line often fall back on the old shibboleth, "The Devil made me do it!"—and they're absolutely right. There is no satisfaction quite like that of contriving a delusion for the Enemy's adherents—a delusion with a built-in rationalized alibi. Unfortunately, there will always be a certain segment of those people who see past the apparent and realize the ultimate truth. But the simple law of probability draws many of them to our camp. You realize, too, that your so-called "judgment-hounds" are correct in their contention that each individual must answer for his or her own sins. It is in these hearts

that we want to plant an intolerant, unforgiving, "holier-than-thou" spirit. When you can expand that attitude with unmitigated pride, however it may be masked, you have won us another unconscious, unintended disciple. When the Enemy's extension of grace, mercy, peace—all of those extenuating traits which so easily frustrate our efforts—is met in this manner, they often melt into oblivion.

I am pleased to note your enthusiastic approach to the current American political scene. The factors you name are fair samples of the avenues open to our scheming. We have such tight hold on special vested-interest groups, lobbies, vote-exchanging compromises, pork barrels, and lofty-sounding platforms and other self-serving causes that it would be foolish to try to change the present system, regardless of the political party in the White House. I salivate when I think of the ignored astronomical national debt, the glaring widespread examples of shoddy ethics and questionable morals practiced in business and by various governmental figures, the ongoing greed and "nest-feathering" at all levels, the demanded elevation of "privileges" to "rights," denial of corporate irresponsibility, and perhaps above all else, a *laissez-faire* citizenry. Need I say more?

As you return to your more familiar territory, I would welcome an analytical appraisal of the spiritual deterioration of the various members of

Broad Way through whom we have, or have not been able to exert subversive influence on that congregation. What is the latest in the Worship Committee feud—are the "Stick-in-the-Muds" and the "Rip-roarers" still in serious contention? What are recent exploits of that little ingenious puppet of ours, "Scooter" Barton? Whom has he deluded; and has he retained any kind of credibility among the "Saints"—enough to be still useful to us? And is there anything significant to report on Brother Silvertone, or C. Sharp, or in regard to our dear pseudosaint, Sister Snugrug? Is there even the remotest suggestion of a chink in Brother Whitesoul's spiritual armor to be exploited? What I am really suggesting is that our efforts at spiritual seduction are, in the primary sense, assaults upon and through aberrant individuals within the enemy's own body. Never diminish your assaults upon those individuals whose defection can bring about maximum impediments and overt harm to that cause!

Yours for serious seduction of the saints,

Uncle Apollyon

Dear Slickly Seducing Uncle,

Your encouragements for fostering proud humility are noted, and my efforts in that direction are, if I may say so with modesty, bearing fruit. Ancestry in the church is a good field in which to cultivate such feelings. Just the other day I overheard Sister Campstone noting with satisfaction that her forebears had been simple New Testament Christians since the middle of the nineteenth century. She is convinced, of course, that they held to the same narrow version of "the Gospel" as she does, and that her pedigree gives her special authority in defining who the "true" Christians are. She finds it ridiculously easy to embrace at the same time the hardy, rugged values of her ancestors and her own lavishly

comfortable way of life. Being rich and successful makes it easier to glorify and romanticize poverty and hardship. There are not many Jobs in this world, whose character must be tested severely before their full strength becomes apparent; with most, a little plush living will reveal their inner "net worth" quite well. To revise a domestic proverb, "the way to a man's (or woman's) heart is through the pocketbook."

You ask about some of the other members at Broad Way on whom I have reported previously. "Scooter" Barton has scooted right out of our congregation to greener pastures (and another devil's jurisdiction), I'm sorry to say. He was indeed an asset to my own objectives, but his talents have now been turned to a touchy-feely scam in the community from which he stands to make a handsome profit, based on his capacity for charming hypocrisy. He claims to have "outgrown" his previous religious conservatism, now that he understands the universality of the divine nature. No longer hampered by even the appearance of having to worry about sin and redemption, he has now espoused his own profitable brand of New Age philosophy and is peddling it (at a proper price, of course) to the unsuspecting insecure-but-well-heeled citizens of our community. I understand he has quite a following at his new "Church with Many Doors." No doubt he has already figured out which door he will leave from when the poor suckers finally see through him.

Brother Silvertone is still engaging in sonorous addresses to the Almighty. He has not yet had a response from the Almighty, so far as I know, but the members of the congregation are all mighty impressed by his oratory, and that is, of course, what he's really after. I make it a point to keep the compliments coming every time he prays in public. You must admit that he has found an effective defense against God: it's much easier to keep Him at a distance when you talk to Him only in public, and at the same time few people are going to be presumptuous enough to express doubts about the spiritual health of someone who prays so beautifully.

Brother C. Sharp is having trouble with a group of "Rip-roarers" who insist on interjecting spontaneous praise choruses into our Sunday night services. Some of them even raise their hands or clap during such songs! Now C. Sharp has never been known to raise his voice spontaneously or to clap except at sporting events, where excitement and enthusiasm are expected and "proper." He has therefore identified himself firmly with the "Stick-in-the-Muds" in condemning unseemly emotional displays in church. Luckily for us, no one has had the boldness to point out to him that some might find his boisterous laughter in the middle of the music group's rehearsal of a meditative song just as offensive and inappropriate as he finds the peppy songs—and with better reason, at that.

Book Review

Endangered Heritage: An Examination of Church of Christ Doctrine, Walt Yancy (Joplin, Missouri: College Press Publishing Co.) 1991.

Reviewed by GORDON C. BRUNER II

Are members of the Church of Christ the only Christians? Do the Churches of Christ, as a group of congregations with essentially the same doctrine, constitute a denomination? Has the doctrine of the Churches of Christ changed substantially since the time of the Restoration Movement? These and other fascinating questions are tackled by Walt Yancy in his book *Endangered Heritage: An Examination of Church of Christ Doctrine*.

The book begins with the author describing the doubts that he had with the veracity of several key aspects of contemporary Church of Christ doctrine. Those doubts led him to the most intensive Bible study of his life with an attempt to

As to Brother Whitesoul, since it appears that we're not going to lead him astray in any significant way, I've been making quiet remarks that perhaps our congregation should be considering a more stylish and charismatic minister. (Not "charismatic" in any dangerous sense, of course, but just a charmer—maybe a bit like "Scooter" Barton!) Sister Snugrug has picked up on this line (she's on everybody's line) and is spreading the word, with her own distinctive embellishments. We'll see what comes of this tactic.

Well, as they say, "Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof." I hope to have even more hellish things to report next time.

Infernally yours,

Ichabod

be as objective in his interpretation as possible. He also read extensively about the history of the Restoration Movement. His reading was not just what others said about the pioneers of the Movement, but what the pioneers wrote themselves.

A very brief list of doctrinal items characterizing the contemporary Churches of Christ is given. Following that a brief history of the early Restoration Movement is provided along with short biographies of the major personalities associated with the movement. Yancy describes how the Church of Christ began as a separate entity for census purposes in 1906. At that point it was a

splinter group broken off from the main body of the Restoration Movement (the Christian Church). The section concludes with a list of ten major doctrinal issues characterizing the early century movement that the author gleaned from his study.

The next section presents the major doctrinal similarities of the two centuries. While ten similarities are indicated, the only two which receive extended treatment are the essentiality of proper baptism and communion. The author not only points out that these two ordinances were common to both the Restoration Movement and the contemporary church, but he argues that there is scriptural evidence to confirm the traditional positions.

In contrast, the next section discusses in detail the three concepts which have been the major source of problems for the church during this century: 1) that use of instrumental music in worship is a sin; 2) that the Church of Christ is not a denomination; and 3) that only members of the Church of Christ can go to heaven. Not only does Yancy fail to find support for these positions in the writings of the Restoration pioneers but he ultimately draws these conclusions:

1. There are Christians outside the Church of Christ.
2. We have been wrong in our stand against instrumental music in worship.
3. The Churches of Christ constitute a religious denomination, based upon the commonly accepted usage of the word in the English language.

How readers will enjoy and profit from the book probably depends upon their current position on these issues. Conservatives are likely to be surprised by many of the statements made by Restoration leaders which are inconsistent with current doctrine as taught in most congregations. If backed into a corner they can ultimately point out what Campbell, Stone, and others thought is irrelevant. Then, they can fall back on their formula rebuttals of the book's "heretical" conclusions. The most open minded of the conservatives

might privately admit the possibility of truth in these positions but would quickly point out that to embrace these "new" positions could seriously divide the brotherhood and cause it to lose its uniqueness.

Moderates are likely to find the information enlightening and wonder why this information hasn't been more freely discussed in their congregations. They may freely admit after reading the book that things appear to have become more rigid since the early days of the Restoration Movement. However, even if the material leads them to being more open to the possibility of musical instruments in worship, for example, they are also likely to want to continue doing what is safe. Further, as with the conservatives, the inertia of continuing to do things a certain way is probably too strong to resist.

Liberals and former members of the group are likely to applaud the discussion of these issues but feel that the author did not go far enough. All of the many issues stemming from the evolution of the *ekklesia* from being an *organism* to an *organization* were not explored. For example, we are witnessing the growth of a clergy class which has power and authority distinct from the laity.

Elders who operate as simple mentors and shepherds rather than corporate executives are harder to find. It is rare to find ordinary Christians who preach to their congregations as part of their service and not for pay. Unlike the humbler days of the early 19th century, congregations now have considerable material assets. The days of being satisfied with humble meeting houses are long gone. Using contributions primarily for benevolence seem to be a thing of the past.

Here in the closing years of the 20th century we find the Church of Christ moving closer to the ecclesiastical bureaucracy characteristic of Catholicism rather than the people-oriented simplicity of first century and restoration Christianity. Many, if not all, of these issues were written about by the Restoration pioneers yet they were not mentioned in the book. Could it be that ridding the "church" of its growing wealth and power is

a much more difficult task than persuading people to be more open about musical instruments? Examination of those aspects of Church of Christ doctrine will have to wait for another book.

Dr. Gordon C. Bruner II works as an associate professor at Southern Illinois University. Gordon grew up in the Church of Christ and considers himself to be simply a *generic Christian* or a *Christian-at-large*.

Readers' Response

I so enjoy each issue of *Integrity* that I usually read it through the day it comes. I should write a letter of appreciation at that very moment, but I don't. The (July/August) issue was first-rate, beginning with Diane's excellent editorial. I particularly like Jerry Daniel's article on Lewis and Chesterton. In spite of Ray Downen's criticism of "cuteness" I like the "Intercepted Correspondence;" so keep it up.

Charles R. Gresham
Grayson, Kentucky

John W. Loftis
Angola, IN

clarification in the midst of objections, but these are needed correctives to what I see elsewhere. I hope they help bring about a better balance among our people.

From my perspective I hope the goal of unity and the fear of narrowminded dogmatism doesn't keep us from drawing distinctively Christian conclusions on the great moral questions of our day. Too much is at stake.

I just finished reading through the July/August issue of *Integrity*. Let me say that your emphasis on unity is greatly appreciated. Stressing the "dynamic" rather than "static" nature of the church, and highlighting the "movement" aspect of our heritage rather than narrowminded conclusion oriented dogmatism is also greatly appreciated. Reminding us about our Holy Spirit beginnings helps us reevaluate ourselves in light of much of the rationalism of the Campbell/Stone movement. I'm also thankful that you helped us wrestle with how a "mechanical view of baptism and salvation" has "robbed us of fellowship" and "hindered our response to the good news." No doubt much of what you've printed will continue to need further

I need to find out what kind of feedback you get on your two articles refuting baptism as a part of salvation. I certainly agree that the kingdom is bigger than just "us" but it seems to me that the "Jesus is a nice guy" theology has led to the mediocrity of the "Christian witness" in America. Unity at any cost is compromise. I certainly don't want to "keep out" any that God will include, but I can't ignore the whole of His Word and pick a few verses that let me off the hook in calling people to total commitment to Christ.

Steve North
Sault Ste. Marie, MI

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