

Zion's Advocate

"And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day,
for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost;" 1 Nephi 3:187

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Voices

By J. E. Yates

"If any man will hear my voice"
Our Savior still speaks today,
I will come in and sup with him
And will lead him all the way.

Many voices are calling to men,
Whether alone, or in busy marts;
But the Savior's voice is surely known
When we purify our sinful hearts.

God speaks once, yea, twice, perhaps,
But men are slow to hear;
By sin and wrong their ears are dull,
Though the voice of Christ be clear.

True repentance, alone, can cleanse,
And he would have us pure,
Then, Babel voices call in vain,
And our Savior's voice is sure.

I thought to know and verify,
God made true knowledge plain,
For no child of his who seeks to know,
Shall seek his voice in vain.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLES

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Editorial . . .

HOW GOOD IS GOOD ENOUGH?

The constant need for man to improve himself is inevitable while he is in his fallen state. It is as if God intended for man to know his own imperfections and not become stagnate in self-satisfaction. God would that man should strive continually toward a higher level than that which he was before. The whole purpose of this probationary period centers around the hope of reaching the goal of perfection, that man might become like God.

One of the greatest enemies to the Christian is self-satisfaction. When a person reaches a certain level which he considers good enough and no longer strives to improve himself morally or spiritually, he is not a real Christian. He has not obtained the true understanding of the gospel of Christ, that is the revelation of the character of God.

The true Christian is ever attentive in overcoming his own human weaknesses. He strives to replace his humanness with spiritual qualities which he sees in God. The unconverted Christian, on the other hand, seeks the false security in a "once saved, always saved" religion. His capsule of lukewarmness is sufficiently comfortable which is the highest of his aspirations.

The most leading influences of today captivate the unsuspecting masses into paths of quick and easy successes. Religions have updated their doctrine to satisfy the demands of this spoiled and undisciplined generation. In the eyes of the modern evangelists, numbers are more important than quality. Numbers mean suc-

cess — quality is secondary to them.

The leveling off of the true standard of righteousness to accommodate the run-of-the-mill applicant for a quick salvation has been accompanied with a special inducement designed to turn the head of almost any sinner who has momentarily felt the need of religion. A touch of the miraculous has been incorporated creating high excitement to attract and convince the masses.

In years past a strong control on doctrines and practices for appearance sake was maintained by the leaders of religions, but more recently, they have modernized their theologies by throwing open the doors to countless unconventional practices and beliefs. They say they have liberated themselves from the hypocrisies of the older generations, but it appears that they have pulled the blindfold of misunderstanding down a little tighter.

Modern man has tried to compromise the spiritual things of God with his own carnal wills creating shortcuts to his vain goals. He complicates his own vision of truth by insisting that God endorse his misguided version of it. His fantasies have attempted to pull God down to the ways of the stumbling and ever erring human. He does not see the perfectness of God. He does not recognize the strictness and the more full requirement of the Law of God.

The blind leads the blind when the theologian does not teach the full truth concerning the requirements of salvation. When a person's hope is limited

to lesser things, he cannot grow to obtain the greater. If man does not have the true vision of God and His requirements for perfection, he is left to follow the rut of half-truths with which he was indoctrinated. His zeal is a smoldering torch which lacks the oxygen of the true inspiration found in the realization of God.

The hope engendered in the people's minds today through the medium of religion generally inspires a vision of heavenly paradise being only a place of relief and comfort, an escape from the frustrations and pains of this life. The requirement to obtain such a paradise is usually depicted as being minimal. They fail to recognize the need of preparation for paradise, for it is truly a state of being, the result of striving for perfection and enduring to the end through righteous conduct and attitude.

In this life man is able to exercise himself in faith, hope and charity, each a requirement in learning to know God. Faith is the accepting of God as He is without rationalizing or limiting His greatness. Hope is the desire to be like Him, hungering and thirsting after His goodness and promises. Charity is the deep and constant appreciation of God and of all that He has given to man. True faith, hope and charity cannot be realized without consenting and dedicating oneself to obeying God's commandments fully.

Through obeying God's commandments man is able to overcome the flesh. His carnality becomes less and less, and his spirituality becomes more and more. His desires for goodness crowds out the lust of the flesh. He loses interest in the things of this world; profanity and lewdness are ugly to him. Things pertaining to God and Christ are his first interests and he always seeks to retain the favor of God through constant prayer and repentance.

The person who desires eternal life through obedience to God's commandments looks steadfastly to the righteousness and holiness of God. He embraces the sureness and purity of God's word, looking to that promised goal of eternal life.

Eternal life is not a form of godliness in mundane things, nor is it the thrill of experiencing the miraculous and the unexplainable. Eternal life is knowing God. It is a here and now experience and condition. It is the reaching above the things of this world to God Himself through the Spirit of God. This is all made possible through the Son of God, Jesus Christ, for he has manifested the holy will of God to man. Let us follow in the straight and narrow way to life eternal.

RLS

1980 REFERENDUM VOTE

Bill #1, General Church Budget, 228 yes, 129 no.

Bill #2, August Ministers' Conference Commencement Date, 325 yes, 28 no.

The above two bills carried by a favorable majority.

For the apostles,

Robert H. Jensen, secretary pro tem.

TO THE EDITOR

Dear Roland,

It is so good to see the Zion's Advocate looking alive and well. I'm sorry that I haven't donated much over the years. We all have a tendency to think ourselves somewhat less than eloquent in our manner of writing, and so don't make an effort to support our church paper. I hope that you are able to use these two articles. They both appealed to my thought patterns.

Although our church does not condone child abuse, experts say that children recover more quickly from physical abuse than from verbal abuse. Little minds are so sensitive and innocent, and don't forget easily the things said by their parents in anger. I know that we don't need printed prayers, either, but this one "got to me where I live."

We all do what we want to do, regardless of the excuses we make to ourselves and others. Actually, I've found it easier on the conscience to do what I should do. I don't like that guilty feeling that comes from knowing that I've let somebody down in not fulfilling my Christian duty.

Your sister in Christ,
Becky Downs

A PRAYER FOR CROSS MOTHERS

Oh God, I was so cross to the children today. Forgive me. I was discouraged and tired - and I took it out on them. Forgive my bad temper, my impatience and, most of all, my yelling. I am so ashamed as I think of it.

I want to kneel down by the side of their beds, wake them up and ask them to forgive me. But I can't.

They wouldn't understand. I must go on living with the memory of this awful day, my unjust tirades.

Hours later, I can still see the fear in their eyes as they scurried around trying to appease me, thinking my anger and manical raving was their fault.

Oh God, the pathetic helplessness of children! Their innocence before the awful monster - the enraged adult.

And how forgiving they are, hugging me so fervently at bedtime, kissing me goodnight.

All I can do is straighten a cover, touch a small head burrowed in a pillow and hope with all my heart that they will forgive me.

Lord, in failing these little ones, whom you have put in my keeping, I am failing you. Please let your infinite patience and goodness replenish me for tomorrow.

Marjorie Holmes

A man who does not learn to live while he is getting a living, is a poorer man after his wealth is won, than he was before.

A STUDY ON CHURCHES

First of all, we will look at the definition of the word "church." According to the complete and unabridged Webster's dictionary, it is derived from the Greek words "kyriake" (supply house), "kyriakos" (belonging to the Lord) and "kyros" (supreme power). Definition #1: An edifice consecrated to worship, specifically for Christian worship. Definition #2: The organized body of Christians in any particular district, city, state, or country; as the "church" at Ephesus.

According to James Strong's Greek dictionary of the New Testament, the word "church" is translated from the word "ekklesia," meaning; a calling out, a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation: assembly.

Different people have different understandings of the word "church." For instance, you may use the word "church" in a sentence, and one person will think of a building, another person will think of an organization, such as the Catholic's, the Mormons, or the Lutheran's, and another person might think of all Christians in general.

We learn, however, from reading certain scriptures, that it is the Lord's desire that all Christians be united in their faith, and that they all come to a meeting of the minds and a union of the Spirit. Eph. chap. 4; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13; Eph. 2:16; 1 Cor. 10:17; 1 Cor. 12:20, 27; 1 Cor. 1:10

Why then, are there so many different understandings of the word "church" among Christians? It is my hope, through the aid of the Holy Spirit, that all those who read this article, may come to a common understanding of the word "church." In Paul's first epistle to the Corinthian's, chap. 2:9, 10, he tells us that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Now, then, we know that it is through the Holy Spirit, that we are able to learn the truth of all things pertaining to the Lord. Let us go on then, and learn the answer to the question at the beginning of this paragraph. 1 Cor. 2:12-17:

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

"But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

"For who hath know the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." The reason then, for the vast differences of opinions, is that some Christians still have the "spirit of the world" dwelling within.

Let us go to Heb. 2:11, 12; "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.

"Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto thee." The cross reference from this last scripture, will take you to Psalms 22:22, 25. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee."

"My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him."

We find from the scripture in Hebrews and in Psalms, that the words "church" and "congregation" are synonymous. According to James Strong's Hebrew dictionary of the Bible, the word "congregation," comes from the Hebrew word "qahal" which means; assembly, company, or multitude. In Eph. 1:23 and Col. 1:24, it clearly states that the "church" is the body of Christ. In 1 Cor. 12:12, 20, 27 and Rom. 12:5 and 1 Cor. 10:17, we learn that Christ's people, or the members, make up the body. In Eph. 1:22, Col. 1:18, Eph. 4:15 and 5:23, it states that Christ is the head over the church. Therefore, the "church" is, without a doubt, the company or multitude of Christians with Christ at their head. We have established the fact that the word "congregation" used in the Old Testament, and the word "church" used in the New Testament, have the same meaning. Therefore, it is logical to assume that the word "church" used in the New Testament, did not at any time refer to a building or a structure that is built with hands.

The next question, then, is this: If the "church" is the people, which people make up the "church," the Catholic's, Protestant's, or all Christian's in general? If we can now cease to think as the "world" thinks, and begin to think with our spiritual minds, we can find the answer to this question. In the Book of Mormon, we find that, as the Lord thinks, there are only two churches in existence, His and Satan's. 1 Nephi 3:220, 221, "And he said unto me, Behold, there are save two churches only: The one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the other is the church of the devil;" Nephi goes on to state in verse 222, that "whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God, belongeth to that great church, which is the mother of abominations;"

These scripture's then, divide all churches into two different categories. All churches who don't belong to Christ, belong to the devil, and so it is with individual people. There is an accurate description of the devil's churches in 1 Nephi 7:50 "For the time

speedily shall come, that all churches which are built up to get gain, and all those who are built up to get power over the flesh, and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity:" In the previous scripture (49), he states that, the "kingdom of the devil" shall be built among the children of men, "which kingdom is established among them which are in the flesh:" In 1 Nephi 3:224-228, we find that the devil's church is among the Gentile's. From these scriptures, we can establish the fact that Christ's church is relatively small, not very wealthy, and unpopular in the eyes of the world.

Now then, we have narrowed the gap considerably. We know that all churches which are wealthy and popular in the eyes of the world belong to satan, but does that mean that all other churches are Christ's? Maybe we can best answer this question by establishing the reasons why Christ's church is so small in number. First of all, in 1 Nephi 3:228, it states that Christ's church is small because of the wickedness of the devil's church. The devil's church is far more appealing in a "worldly" sense, and more people are attracted to it. Secondly doctrine's which are contrary to Christ's doctrine are introduced into churches in such a way that they sway even the very elect. (Mat. 24:24; Eph. 4:14; Heb. 13, 8, 9; 1 Jn.4:1; Col. 2:4, 8)

It's because of these strange doctrines and false teachers talked about in the above scripture's, that the "strait gate and narrow way" to everlasting life is so hard for Christians to find. (3 Nephi 6:26; Mat. 7:14)

Let us now talk about Christ's doctrine as it's established in the Book of Mormon and in the Bible. 2 Nephi 13:23-32: "For, for this cause have they been shewn unto me, that ye might know the gate by which ye should enter.

"For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water: and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire, and by the Holy Ghost.

"And then are ye in this strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life; yea, ye have entered in by the gate; ye have done according to the commandments of the Father and the Son;

"And ye have received the Holy Ghost, which witnesseth of the Father and the Son, unto the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that if ye enter in by the way, ye should receive.

"And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this strait and narrow path, I would ask, if all is done?

"Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far, save it were by the word of Christ, with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save;

"Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men.

"Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.

"And now behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven, whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God.

"And now behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen." There is also another account of this doctrine, by Christ himself, in 3 Nephi, pages 634 and 635. Some of the places in the Bible that you find Christ's doctrine specified are: Acts 2:38; Heb. 6:1-2; Mat. 28:19; Mark 16:15, 16; Luke 24:47. In 3 Nephi 5:42, Christ states: "And whoso shall declare more or less than this, and establish it for my doctrine, the same cometh of evil, . . ." Therefore, only the churches who teach repentance, faith, baptism, laying on of hands, resurrection and eternal judgment would be Christ's. Now there are churches who teach some of these principles and leave others out and there are churches who teach that there are other steps besides these that are necessary to take in order to enter into the "kingdom of God." But we know that anything "more or less" than these six steps "cometh of evil."

Let us now delve into the controversial subject of baptism, and the proper method by which it is done. First of all, Webster's dictionary states that the word "baptism" is derived from the word "baptismos" (Greek) which means; that which is dipped. The word "baptize" comes from the Greek word "baptizein," which means to dip under water. Smith's Bible Dictionary, prepared by William Smith L. D., states that the word "baptism," properly and literally means immersion." James Strong's Greek dictionary of the New Testament states that the word "baptize" is derived from the Greek word "baptizo" which means to make whelmed (i. e. fully wet). The word "baptizo," is a derivative of the Greek word "bapto" which means to cover wholly with a fluid. In the Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 5:21-26, Christ states that the power to baptize is given by him, and that baptism is to be done by immersion, in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Some scriptures in the Bible that indicate that baptism was done by immersion are: Acts 8:36-39; Mat. 3:16; John 3:23; Mark 1:5, 9; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12. Therefore we can conclude that baptism by immersion, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, by someone having the authority from God, is the only proper method of baptism.

The next thing to consider is the laying on of hands, spoken of in Heb. 6:2. We find from Acts 8:14-17, that the laying on of hands was necessary, following baptism, in order to receive the Holy Ghost. Also Acts 19:6, indicates the same thing. The Book of Mormon reference to this subject is Moroni 2:2.

By coming to realize that the "laying on of hands," by someone in authority, is the correct way to receive

the gift of the Holy Ghost, the obvious question is: "Who has the authority?" This is another controversial subject in churches today, therefore, I will delve into this area very carefully, so as not to create contention amongst my readers.

Probably the best place to begin would be with the twelve apostles and how and when they received their authority. Their authority was received after Christ was crucified and resurrected. John 20:21-23. "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

"Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." However, the Holy Ghost did not fall upon them at this time; the reason is given in John 16:7.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." The Holy Ghost fell upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:2, 3, 4). The twelve apostles on the American continent also received the authority to give the gift of the Holy Ghost, from Christ himself. (3 Nephi 8:69-71, Moroni chap. 2). We can now agree that the original authority to give the gift of the Holy Ghost has got to come from Christ himself. From here we will go to the manner in which this authority from Christ is handed down from one man to another. 1 Tim. 4:14: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." The word "presbytery" according to James Strong's dictionary of the New Testament, is translated from the Greek word "presbuterion" which means: the order of elders. Some more scriptures concerning the passing on of authority are: Acts 6:1-8; Acts 13:1-3; 2 Tim. 1:6. In the Book of Mormon, Moroni chap. 3: "The manner which the disciples, who were called the elders of the church, ordained priests and teachers.

"After they had prayed unto the Father in the name of Christ, they laid their hands upon them, and said, In the name of Jesus Christ I ordain you to be a priest; (or if he be a teacher;) I ordain you to be a teacher, to preach repentance and remission of sins through Jesus Christ, by the endurance of faith on his name to the end. Amen.

"And after this manner did they ordain priests and teachers, according to the gifts and callings of God unto men; and they ordained them by the power of the Holy Ghost, which was in them." Before we come to any conclusion on this, let us look at the word "prophecy," which is in 1 Tim. 4:14. According to Webster's dictionary, this word means: a foretelling; a prediction; a declaration of something to come. In James Strong's Greek dictionary of the New Testament, the word "prophecy" is translated from the Greek word "prophetia," which means; prediction. This word is derived from the word "prophetes," which means: an

inspired speaker. Therefore, the passing on of authority, must be preceded by an inspirational prediction, after which the elders pray and lay hands on the one who is to receive the authority.

We can now begin to see why the membership in Christ's church is so small in comparison to Satan's. Very few churches teach the receiving of the Holy Ghost in this manner. Let's now talk about the name of Christ's church.

The apostle Paul referred to the membership as the "church of God." (1 Cor. 1:2, Gal. 1:13, 1 Tim 3:5, 1 Th. 2:14, 2 Th. 1:4). In Rom. 16:16, he refers to them as the "churches of Christ." In the Book of Mormon, Christ was asked which name the church should be called by. This was his answer, 3 Nephi 12:17-20; "And the Lord said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Why is it that the people should murmur and dispute because of this thing?

"Have they not read the scriptures, which say, Ye must take upon you the name of Christ, which is my name? for by this name shall ye be called at the last day; and whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day;

"Therefore, whatsoever ye shall do, ye shall do it in my name; therefore ye shall call the church in my name; and ye shall call upon the Father in my name, that he will bless the church for my sake; and how be it my church, save it be called in my name?

"For if a church be called in Moses' name then it be Moses' church; or if it be called in the name of a man, then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name, then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel."

SUMMARY:

The word "church" means, a collective body of people. In reality there are only two churches in existence. One church belongs to Christ, and one belongs to Satan. Satan's church is a worldly church, which is built up to gain wealth and power over the flesh. It is large in number and popular in the eyes of the world. The doctrine's taught in Satan's churches are contrary to the true doctrines of Christ. Christ's church, on the other hand, is small and obscure. The doctrine it teaches for salvation are: repentance, faith, baptism by immersion, and the laying on of hands, by someone in authority, for the gift of the Holy Ghost. The authority to give the Holy Ghost came directly from Christ, and the church is called after His name. I could not properly end this article without pointing out some more very important scriptures: John 10:27-30: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

"My Father, which gave them me, is greater than

all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

"I and my Father are one."

John 6:37, 38, 39: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

"For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

Christ knows all those people who are his and they are drawn to him by God. John 6:44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." For

those people who have not yet come to the knowledge of the truth of Chrst, we can only plant seeds and water those that have already been planted, and then patiently wait for God to give the increase. (1 Cor. 3:6-9) Keep in mind that Christ's people, who have not yet come to the knowledge of the truth may be those who most Christian's pay the least attention to. Remember that Paul persecuted the churches of Christ, Mary Magdalene was a harlot, and Peter, James, and John were simple fishermen.

My prayer is for Israel, that we may be gathered together again, one Nation, One God, and One Truth, forever and ever. In the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen

Raina Wilson

TIMES

Robert H. Jensen
General Church Historian

The decade of 1980 is most likely to see at least as much in fulfillment of prophecy contained in the Scriptures and latter-day revelation, as any since 1830.

In the beginning of 1980 there existed greater national apprehension and anxiety over national and world welfare, security, economy, and social stability than has existed in the lives of most of us, notwithstanding World Wars I and II, the "Bank Holiday" (collapse) of 1929, and the terrible drought of the mid-1930's. We are faced in the 1980's with extremely, rapidly changing economic and social patterns. There is a greater and growing spiritual dilemma in the national mood today. The 1960's and 1970's saw many of the then younger generation reaching out from the "national culture" for something they sought, but could neither define nor find. The frustration is still with us today, though perhaps modified somewhat in its image.

'History is a prologue of the future'.

The cause of loss of confidence in society and freedom in Government and economy, as the cause for all other social ills, can be found in the Scriptures: "... Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2 Corin. 3:17). Without that Spirit in abundance, there can be no true and fully endowed liberty for the people. When the Spirit of the Lord diminishes within the people, they experience a diminishing of liberty and freedom overall. With that liberty - true liberty - comes the enabling blessings that permit growth of faith and belief, true love, confidence, and dedication to the keeping of the Gospel commandments.

It would be difficult in history to number the times that the children of Israel of old, and even to the present, have come under the chastisement of the Almighty God, though they were designated as a "chosen people." So many times were they afflicted to the point

of destitution both temporarily and spiritually, and this necessity in order to bring them back into a remembrance of their God and His love and concern and stored blessings for them. It seems to have always taken that extreme and severe measure by God in order to keep them from falling and staying away from the One who created them and His commandments.

The populations of the world around are today no different in basic nature and trends. They are following the old, old path of falling away from their God. The age of technology with all of its near 'miracles' has brought to a very large portion of the world a temporal or physical comfort and affluency not previously known. It has demanded an increasingly greater amount of time and attention to feed and maintain it. As a result, there has seemingly come to be less and less time and desire for the people to devote to the service of their God. The demand for more time to sustain and promote the "conveniences" and "luxuries" of life, and to use them, has seemingly bred within people an increasing desire "to get away from it all" - from the taxing every-day duties of career or pursuit to capricious carnal cavorting and companionship. Personal comforts and assessed temporal security have eroded the old path of being concerned over one's neighbor. Indeed, a majority as many in a prior time of history, have come to be: "... The people (that) sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." (1 Corin. 10:7; Ex. 32:6). It has produced an impersonal attitude toward the passing masses by one's door step or place of business.

The "good Samaritans" have become more content to let the welfare agencies of Government take care of the less fortunate at home. Abroad, while the religious heritage of helping the less fortunate has somewhat survived, the altered methods of intended assistance have in many cases fostered ill-will. The entitled "Foreign Aid" by the United States has large-

ly contributed to the near state of national financial insolvency. The peoples in all of these recipient countries of unprecedented gifts and grants, with all of their tremendous manpower and womanpower have in the main not been given the privilege of expressing the benefit received by returning their love to this nation through the production of goods and services and sharing their arts and sciences and worship of God.

There is an age-old proverb with monumental accreditation: "When you give a man a loaf of bread, you feed him for a day; when you teach him to plant wheat, you feed him for life." True charity, one of the three virtues in Christian love, not only includes the giving of sustenances, but it also includes the imparting of knowledge and the teaching of skills, thereby enabling the people to in turn help themselves and then others to the extent of their ability. The love of God in our hearts must be a growing thing - our helping others to grow will help ourselves to grow. Life is growth! If we plant a seed in the ground and do not water and cultivate it, it will die. A gift given in such a way that it is only permitted to lie until consumed, can never grow and produce more of its kind.

There are times ahead of us that shall mightily try the souls of mankind. God has always required that His people be tried and proven. With the advancement of the "latter times," the systems of man shall begin to fail as a means of security and provision; indeed, already have. Ensigns are even now full-flung:

a. The week of May 5th the "First Pennsylvania Bank announced that it was to receive a mammoth \$1.5 billion loan package from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and 25 private banks, the largest rescue package ever put together to save an American financial institution from bankruptcy."(*) "Like many other bankers and economists, he (Robert Abboud, Chairman, First National Bank of Chicago -rhj) figured that interest rates had peaked. When rates continued up toward 20%, his bank's profits nosedived \$14 million in the first quarter." (*) Total personal savings account on January 1, 1980 totaled approximately \$538 billion - FDIC had approximately \$5.3 in cash assets to cover them - only .00985%.) (*) Reference: Time magazine, May 12, 1980.

b. Associated Press release from Wash., D. C. "Congress on Friday approved emergency stopgap legislation to keep Social Security checks from bouncing next week, . . . if the debt limit weren't extended by Monday 'some portion' of the \$9.5 billion in checks for June Social Security benefits would not be honored." (Omaha World Herald, 5/31/80)

c. Associated Press release from New York: (Howard) Ruff (author of 'The Upcoming Monetary Collapse,' on the best seller book lists - rhj) prophesies such dismal events as food riots, and he suggests that the well-invested individual will have a store of dehydrated food on hand to keep body and soul together during the eventual collapse." (Council Bluffs, Iowa Nonpareil, 5/29/80)

d. The week of May 25th a large Nebraska bank refused to cash an IRS income tax return check for a young woman who had an account with them - Reason: She didn't have enough funds in her personal account with that bank to cover the check in case the Government Treasury wouldn't have enough money in its accounts to cover it.

e. Etc., etc., etc.

A word of prediction: Do not be surprised if the Saints of God find themselves having to gather together in their localities in the not too far distant future for physical survival, and of necessity begin to think in terms of, 'One large potato is worth a bowl of cereal,' '1/2 bushel of corn is worth one pair of handknit socks,' '3 bushels of wheat are worth a warm sweater.'

The urging of the last several years is repeated, for individuals and groups to search for knowledge of survival methods - natural foods of both garden, forest and field (both production and preservation), early-day crafts and skills for hand-production of clothing, homes, tools, furniture, utensils. Just one example of that type of knowledge: Wheat is a basic food substance from which many preparations can be made; it has been estimated through study and research that 300 lbs. of whole wheat only will sustain one person with the basic food elements for a period of one year (there are 60 lbs. of wheat to one bushel, which equals only 5 bushels per year per person required. From that start, a whole catalog of information can be assembled through study and research. County and State extension offices are brimming with such information. Such a study can be rewarding from both an educational, practical and enjoyable standpoint for both individuals and groups.

The acquisition, preparation and preservation (drying, canning, pickling) of food and the production of clothing and shelter in the second century prior accounted for most of the people's waking hours. Transportation distances were extremely limited. Social life consisted mainly of association with family members and close neighbors. Activities were largely comprised of joint preparation and sharing of food and meals, "bees" for hand-production of homes and barns, clothing, bedding, fabrics for decorative purposes (table cloths, wall hangings, bed-spreads, rugs, etc.), and church worship services and "socials" on Sunday. Most of their individual and group activities were survival and worship oriented - didn't have time for much play or "recreation." One of the most rewarding activities for mortal persons is the producing, use and sharing of items from the labor of their own hands. It was so intended by God (Genesis 1:27-31; 2:15; 3:19).

A word of hope:

"Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way shall fall himself into his own pit; but the upright shall have good things in possession." (Proverb 28:10)

"O fear the Lord, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." (Psalm 34:9-10)

TO SCATTERED MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

When I began these series of articles I emphasized time as an element that had a great deal of importance in the work of the Lord. He is timeless; yet He being the Creator of the universe set in motion all things within a time shared environment - the earth, the stars, the sun, the moon, the sky, the sea and all of the creatures of the earth. There was a time assigned for the creation of man, and a destiny was set for the end of all things, even the end of man. It was for the pleasure of our Lord that all things were made and to this end we all are drawn to worship Him, that we might answer to Him when He shall call.

To the end of His work there is a time set for rest and reward which we can share. To this end the Kingdom of God, the Church of God, the Church of Christ was brought into being; and times - seasons of labor and harvest - have been assigned to the men of God down through the ages to call men to repentance and faith, to preach the acceptable word that should bring about our soul's salvation into the Kingdom - into the very presence of God. For a reading this month please turn to Ecclesiastes, chapter three.

More than once I have pointed to the message that the Scriptures bear of the work of Jesus and His Kingdom. Around Him all things center, the chief corner stone from which all measurement of Godly things start and return. Jesus surrounded Himself with twelve men whom he called Apostles, and to them He gave the power to do great and marvelous deeds and miracles that He thought were good in the work of His Father in Heaven. He gave them specifications of conduct and doctrine with the authority to carry them out to the world. He led them to do the work of the Father after He left them, and gave them a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit that they never forgot. This was to confirm the testimony of the gospel in their hearts until the death of each sealed his voice. Many of them were given the burden of writing these things for our blessing even today. These were the officers of the King who had authority to represent the Kingdom of God in their lifetimes.

As the story in the Bible opens in the Acts of the Apostles, we find these men now beholding the ascension of their Lord into Heaven. As they watched, two angels stood by to minister to them saying, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing into Heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11). What a tremendous promise!

Left alone? Yes in a troubled world that was becoming more hostile to the followers of Jesus day by day. These men now turned to the task that was theirs

- the choosing of one man to take the place of Judas, who had committed suicide after his betrayal of Jesus. After several days of prayer and worship with others, Peter called attention to the need to make a choice. They understood the office of apostle was to be a permanent part of the Church of Christ in their day. They cast lots and by the guidance of the Spirit, the lot, or choice fell upon Matthias. He was then numbered with the eleven apostles.

Not long after this we find that a man named Saul would be called to this same office; he would become known to the whole Christian church as Paul. He would become no less an apostle than any of the first twelve men. He would become the most well read because his ministry would be written in several books of the New Testament Scriptures. Who hasn't read of Paul? He was an apostle with a mission that was to reach all the world. God spoke to Ananias, who was sent to minister to Saul. "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." (Acts 9:15) In time he was ordained, "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." (Acts 13:2-3)

From this time forth we read of the works of Paul as an apostle of the Lord, and Barnabas his companion, also an apostle. This will then make fifteen men whom the Scriptures record as being called to this office within the church. Paul understood the nature of the office; this is apparent in that he in two separate writings identified it with the church. Writing to the Ephesians he wrote, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. (Eph. 4:11, 12).

Writing to the church at Corinth - "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets . . ." (I Cor. 12:27, 28) Paul believed in the apostolic office as a part of the Kingdom of God, or the Church of Christ.

Do you agree with Paul? What can we say to the word of God as a reliable witness of truth? Where are we to find the Kingdom? If we find it, will we find apostles as a part of God's Plan?

Your brother in Christ,
Elder Arthur G. Smith

LETTERS OF OLIVER COWDERY No. 5

To: W. W. Phelps: Dear Brother:

Yours of the 6th ult. is received and published in this number. It contains so many questions that I have though I would let every man answer for himself, as it would occupy a larger space to answer all of them than would be proper to devote at this time. When I look at the world as it is, and view men as they are, I am not much surprised that they oppose the truth, as many perhaps do; and indeed the more I see the less I marvel on this subject. The talk of heavenly communications, angel's visits, and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, now, since the apostles have fallen asleep, and men interpret the word of God without the aid of either the Spirit or angels, is a novel thing among the wise, and a piece of blasphemy among the craft-men. But so it is, and is wisdom that it should be so, because the Holy Spirit does not dwell in unholy temples, nor angels reveal the great work of God to hypocrites.

I am aware that a rehearsal of visions of angels at this day is as inconsistent with a portion of mankind as it formerly was, after all they boast of this wise generation in the knowledge of the truth; but there is a uniformity so complete, that on reflection, one is led to rejoice that it is so.

You will remember to have read in Daniel: "And at that time (the last days) shall Michael stand up, the great prince, who stands for the children of thy people;" and also in Revelations: "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets." Please compare these sayings with that singular expression in Hebrews: "Are they (angels) not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" And then let me ask:

First: Are the angels now in glory, the former prophets and servants of God? Secondly: Are they brethren of those who keep his commandments on earth? And thirdly: Have brethren and fleshly kindred, in the kingdom of God, feeling of respect and condescension enough to speak to each other, though one may be in heaven and the other on the earth? Fourthly: If angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation, will they not minister for those heirs? And fifthly: If they do, will any one know it? Sixthly: Will Michael, the archangel, the great prince, stand up in the last days for Israel? Seventhly: Will he defend them from their enemies? Eighthly: Will he lead them, as they were once led. And ninthly: If so, will he be seen?

These questions I leave without answering, because the reasoning is so plain, and so many might be brought, that, they must be at hand in the heart and mind of every Saint. But to the gospel, and then to the gathering.

The great plan of redemption being prepared before the fall of man, and the salvation of the human family being as precious in the sight of the Lord at one

time or at another, before the Messiah came in the flesh and was crucified, as after the gospel was preached, and many were found obedient to the same. The gospel being the same from the beginning, its ordinances were also unchangeable. Men were commanded to repent and be baptized by water in the name of the Lord, and were then blessed with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit being thus given, men were enabled to look forward to the time of the coming of the Son of Man, and to rejoice in that day, because through the sacrifice they looked for a remission of their sins, and for their redemption.

Not only did the ancient look forward to the time of the coming of the Messiah in the flesh, with delight; but there was another day for which they sought and for which they prayed. Knowing, as they did, that the fall had brought upon them death, and that man was sensual and evil, they longed for a day when the earth might again rest, and appear as in the beginning — when evil might be unknown upon its face, and all creation enjoy one undisturbed peace for a thousand years.

To a remnant of them the gospel was preached by the Messiah in person, but they rejected his voice, though it was raised daily among them. The apostles continued to hold forth the same, after the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, until they would hear it no longer, and then they were commanded to turn to the Gentiles.

In these last days, to fulfill the promises to the ancient prophets, when the Lord is to pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, he has determined to bring to light his gospel, to the Gentiles, that it may go to the house of Israel. This gospel been has perverted, and men have wandered in darkness. That commission given to the apostles at Jerusalem, so easy to be understood, has been hid from the world, because of evil, and the honest have been led by the designing, till there are none to be found who are practicing the ordinances of the gospel, as they were anciently delivered.

But the time has now arrived, in which, according according to his covenants, the Lord will manifest to the faithful that he is the same today and forever, and that the cup of suffering of his people, the house of Israel, is nearly fulfilled; and that the way may be prepared before their face he will bring to the knowledge of the people the gospel as it was preached by his servants on this land, and manifest to the obedient the truth of the same, by the power of the Holy Spirit, for the time is near when his sons and daughters will prophesy, old men dream dreams, and young men see visions, and those who are thus favored will be such as embrace the gospel as it was delivered in old times, and they shall be blessed with signs following.

Further, on the subject of the gathering of Israel. This was perfectly understood by all the ancient prophets. Moses prophesied of the coming of the Messiah,

where he said: The evil will befall you in the latter days: because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.

After all this — after Israel has been restored, and afflicted, and his enemies have also been chastised, the Lord says: "Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people; for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land and to his people."

I will give a further detail of the promises to Israel, hereafter, as rehearsed by the angel.

Accept assurance of my esteem as ever.

O. Cowdery

A TESTIMONY OF BELIEF

For some months I had felt my health failing daily. This was manifested in a shortness of breath, which worsened with the passage of time. Chest pain, which before had come intermittantly, now became continual. Where before, physical exertion was generally needed, now pain was steady and it was increasing in severity, even during inactivity or rest.

Rising from a chair, or walking a few steps was exhausting. Raising my arms above my head, or attempting to, brought pain to my chest and exceeding heaviness in my arms. Pushing a lawn mower, sweeping a floor, ironing a shirt brought pain and extreme disproportionate weariness.

My spirits were chronically low already, because of the family crises that had attended the last five years and were hanging unresolved. More were occurring daily, and still more anticipated on the horizon.

I had prayed for healing, though I felt unworthy, all through this period. But, it must not have been with real faith or else God was testing the roots of my belief. How wonderful had I been immediately able to claim the promise in James concerning prayer for healing: "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much."

I had the sense that I was dying, that my life was slipping away. I wanted to trust in God and be healed by Him, and did not go to a Doctor. The time passed and I prayed to be healed, wishing that there were elders near. One day, I decided to do as I had been desiring, although had held back doing so, because I live among unbelievers and because I had told none I was ill. I did not want to worry the family who loved me, or face the incredibility of those who couldn't believe I could ever be ill. But most of all, I had clung to the belief that God would heal me if I believed.

My decision was to contact the two elders in the city about a hundred miles away. I didn't have their phone numbers, so I called a very dear sister who lives relatively near, just giving her the vague notion that I wanted the numbers in the "remote case" of any problem arising at any time, that they might be needed. I acquired the numbers without betraying the

reason to this beloved sister, who would have been so concerned for me and not in the best health herself, although along with her dear husband, she would have been, as always, instant in providing help however possible. Having begun this course of action, deciding to call upon the gifts of these elders if it came to that, I continued to pray and wait.

Our residence was then along a busy highway and we were enclosed by other residences on both sides. One family owned a business and the noise of tractors, trucks and other heavy equipment spoiled the peace. They had moved next to us possibly two years back. The following year, a young couple moved next to us on the other side, nice enough people, but spoiling the privacy and semi-solitude we were accustomed to. I feel no animosity, nor should I, against these people; they must live and work as well as we. Nevertheless, I found no quietness of spirit and sought to escape houses inventions, noise and activity, the society of telephone and passing cars. I wanted to commune with God in relative peace and solitude.

We are fortunate to own a small twenty-acre tract, (on to which we since have moved, June 1977), about 2¼ miles away. I climbed into the car, (but I believe I would have walked inspite of the pain, if necessary, I was so impelled), and went over. There are three tracts of about twenty acres each of cleared farmland on three sides of our tract, before any farm residences are built, so there is some sense of apartness, while still having the farms in view and accessible. There is a house on the fourth side, across the dirt road, and down only about one hundred feet also.

Once at the "Twenty," I walked back in the green hay-covered field and began again to pray although I always prayed continually in my heart. I prayed that if He didn't desire to heal me completely, that He would give me enough strength and endurance to do all the chores required of me. And, if He wouldn't preserve my life indefinitely, that He would keep me until my second and last child was graduated from school.

This may not have been a full expression of faith, to compromise and ask for partial healing if He didn't see fit to grant full health, I don't know. I had been all along asking it that way, in case my time had come. I had prayed also that He would expunge my past sins, which were plentiful, purify my present thoughts and desires, break my proud and rebellious spirit and cleanse me to righteousness before He took me. The sorrows of the years had broken my heart and taken me down a peg, but there were (and are) innumerable pegs of pride and error to go. Sometimes I despair of overcoming, but I don't quit) I go on to hope again. Feeling of unworthiness continually seek to discourage me and sink me in the bondage of despair, but hope is of God and in Him is my hope. I know I must keep this principle constantly before my eyes, and my eyes straightforward on the goal.

I stood in the midst of our field, to which I had slowly walked and stopped at times, probably to favor the pain and weariness. This is the process by which

I had moved through my work each day and tried not to let it show to my family and acquaintances.

It had become clear to me that my illness was not just a mental deceit or a "fluke," because of the length of its occupation and incapacitating nature of it. I had been having the foreboding of death that was more than melancholy. Something was sapping my strength severely and steadily, my lungs and heart were failing; my arms and legs felt too heavy to lift.

I don't know how long I prayed, alternating between standing and kneeling, but I was standing when the blessing came to me.

As I stood there, I began to feel a "movement" in my chest; it was not just a vagueness or a flutter, nor do I remember a burning as is sometimes reported. Within a few seconds or minutes perhaps, I had the sensation of something corporeal or material, of substance, "receding" from my chest. I felt it moving backward, as though it were forced from the front and out the back. I felt it move as though resisting, but unable to stop or break, or even diminish the evenness of the Force which compelled it to leave my body.

God could have touched me and made me whole in an instant, but it seems He wanted me to feel the malady as a "something" that had attached itself to me, and to feel it removed, in a few moments, under His power. There could be no doubt for me that it might have been after all, just a little problem that took care of itself someday. It was not purely an emotional, a psychosomatic matter and all in my mind, although my state of mind and spirit, for over five years, had doubtless helped precipitate it. Though I don't compare myself to that righteous man, I do know like Lehi, whose rebellious sons brought him down near to the grave, that one can die of a broken heart. Nevertheless, I can praise God that this was a healing and it had come to even me.

I rejoiced as I stood there, feeling a vast gratitude that God would heal me, and do so in a fashion that would let His presence be known. This was a blessing to my spirit, even above that of my body. I know I have been blessed interminably since my birth, saved often from the worst effect of my own foolish and rebellious; proud, haughty and carnal ways . . . chastened and suffered to continue, only to err again.

How I pray to become perfect before Him. I want to leave the world and the lusts and spiritual diseases of man behind and become clean before Him and perfect, as He is and His Son, Jesus Christ, Savior.

I praised and sang hymns of thanksgiving when the plague was fully taken from me. I did not leap about, but I thanked God the pain was gone and walked around the field without exhaustion. I thought of the passage: May I "walk and not be weary, run and not be faint . . ." I was grateful just to walk that day. He gave me strength for the day! I thanked Him that He chose that way to show me He was present without mistake, to give me hope that He still strove with me, that He was a merciful God and avail-

able to those who had faith and called upon Him . . . even a little faith so much as to experiment on His word. Try Him and see if He won't pour out the blessings of Heaven.

I rejoiced that in these days of increasing immorality, of vile and perverted lusts, of murders, unspeakable horrors and nameless and indescribable abominations (and those becoming acceptable and even respectable) that He had not abandoned man. That, in spite of all appearances, He still worked miracles, as He touched one here and one there, even one so unclean as I, for healing, for prophesy, for wisdom and understanding, for ministry, for discernment, or for convincing powers to lead men to Him.

I stayed in the field a long time, rejoicing, filled and heaped up and running over with joy. He had taken cognizance of me; He preserved my life when it was swiftly ebbing away. He drew me back from death. He gave me another chance to strive to live aright and correct my erring thoughts and ways. He is not willing that any soul should perish. He loves even me. Must I not then return and thank Him and publicly proclaim His Holy name, though a whole doubting, cynical world despise my seeming presumption. But I do not presume on any self merit, only on His promise.

"This is my story; this is my song . . ." Now, "though He slay me, yet shall I trust Him." Still, I pray, call me not away until my heart is right before Thee. Let me recognize evil and eschew it with all my being; let me hate the very appearance of evil. Let me hate the garment stained by sin. Wash me and make me clean, Oh Heavenly Father. Let Thy thoughts be my thoughts and Thy ways be my ways. Let me no more seek to please the world and the vanities thereof, to be acceptable thereto, but may my trust be in Thee to hold me up, if all the world forsake me. Amen.

It has been about a year since I was healed of the affliction and so far, it has not returned. And if it does, I pray I will not forget or begin to doubt that He indeed was the Healer who had compassion on me, whether or not I be healed ever again. Why should it be me, I don't know; it is not because of deserving or worthiness. It is mercy alone.

I want to write this down, so I may not forget, or becloud with doubt, in the process of time, the "surety" of my blessing from God, There is another reason.

If I die today or tomorrow, I want to leave this testimony that I am a Believer. I love the law of Christ, which He received from His Father. "He lives," and because He lives, we will live also. We have a Master and Creator who condescended to become our brother, making us joint heirs with Him in His Father's house. All praise and thanksgiving and honor to God and to His Son, Jesus Christ, the Lamb, slain (for my sins) from the foundation of the world.

(Attested to: June, 1977)
Winona (Adams) Onstott

HOUSTON LOCAL NEWS

Sacramento Sunday this month was a very busy day here, starting with three baptisms in the Sunday School time slot. This was performed at Indian Creek about three miles from the church with Elder John Jones baptizing our three new sisters, Diane Keeney, daughter of Ireatess and Margaret Keeney; Jannen Barke, and Marita Mendenhall. Confirmation was held back at the church and the Hug of Fellowship and welcome was extended to each.

A new song dedicated to Sister Anna Keeney brought tears of joy to her eyes, and ours, too. It was written by our talented sister, Lois Helseth, (both words and music) and sung by Deanna Medders, Anna's granddaughter. It is truly beautiful and inspiring. It is entitled, "Our Little Green Church By The Wayside," which is about our church here at Houston.

That same afternoon an open house was held at church celebrating Anna and Ern Kenney's 60th wedding anniversary and was attended by well over 100 friends, relatives and brothers and sisters of the church, wishing them many happy years to come.

That evening Bro. Oren Caviness spoke to us of security; where do you expect to find it? in wealth? perfect health? in education? in association with a certain class or type of people? He recited examples of this and what is to be found and is lacking also in thinking thusly. The man who is stayed on God has perfect security. God is a refuge for us. Man is safe only when in harmony with God's will. This feeling alone gives man peace of mind and heart, security of soul. Your security, your sanctuary is God. Nothing holds terror if the mind is stayed on God, the one God.

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Bro. Tony Grzincic thought the songs sung that morning had a great message. They were, "Look For The Beautiful" and "I Would Be True." They indicate what we should be doing as Christians and soldiers for Christ. We need to carry Christ in our minds and hearts. He listed the principles of the gospel and told us how we need to go on to perfection, that we must be "doers of the word, not hearers only." Then he asked us, "To what depth has the gospel of Jesus Christ been placed in your heart?"

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Bro. John Jones told us we must draw nearer to Jesus if we want Him to draw nearer to us. We must live to please God, not man. We are not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, but walk in paths of righteousness. Think about your behavior; are we like sheep going astray? We need to adhere to the words of Christ. To become more like the Master should be our goal.

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Your reporter and family went to Wisconsin for the wedding of our son, Walt, to Kathy Breining, held in Madison. It also turned out to be a delightful family reunion with all seven of our sons and daughters being

together in one place. This was the first time in about four years. My stepmother also flew in from California to be with us, then came back to Missouri with us to spend a couple of weeks. We will be sorry to let her go. Oh, yes, we also brought our wandering James home (he has been in S. D. visiting his older brother for the summer) just in time to start school again. Strange how much more lively it seems around the old ranch again. Sorry we missed the visit of the Phoenix brothers and sisters and especially Darrin, who we all here have been very concerned about and have remembered daily in prayer.

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Bro. George Brantner told us we're here to glorify God. By putting God first in your life, you can remove your mountain of doubts, receive riches physically and spiritually. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things will be added to you. God wants us to choose to serve Him and receive eternal life. We must become as one in purpose and spirit or we are not His.

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It's been a month of people coming and going, off on vacations elsewhere and some coming here. We're pleased to see each and everyone. It's good to have Teresa Medders and the young ones back after a visit to her family in California.

J is for Jesus, God's only Son
 E is for Every blessing He gives to us
 S is for every Song we Sing to Him
 U is for Us, his children
 S is for Sunday, the day we praise Him
 C is for His Children, Christians
 H is for His Heart, in which He has love for us
 R is for Riches He promised to us
 I is for the incredible miracles we witnessed
 S is for Him, the Saint
 T is for the Tremendous gift He gave to us, Himself.

JESUS CHRIST!

by James Addie

Your reporter,
 Mary Addie

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MY CHURCH, I MISSED IT!

It's great to be back in Church again. I didn't know I'd miss it so. I'd been away all summer. Sundays felt so strange without MY CHURCH. Getting up at 10:00 a. m. and wondering who would be preaching back home today and wishing I was there.

But walking back into the CHURCH OF OURS, I feel like I'm walking into my family (and in a sense I am). They welcome you with a hug and a smile and say, Did you have a nice summer? We missed you so." I know. I missed them, too!

PHOENIX LOCAL NEWS

Greetings from Phoenix, Arizona! Those of us who returned from church conference elated over the baptisms that took place there, where lifted even higher to learn of the decision of our brother Gary Frank to enter the family of Christ. Gary is a fulfillment of the scripture admonishing us to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance," for his countenance and life have truly changed since his baptism. He is a testimony of the power of God. Just a few weeks prior to the writing of this article Gary entered into another covenant that of marriage with our sister, Margie Sar-ratt. Margie was a radiant bride. It's great to have a new family in our midst.

Well the hand of the Lord is certainly on the rising generation here in Phoenix. A whole crop of babies are rising all at once. Ed and Michelle Yates are expecting in December. Ken and Marlene Oar's child number two in January. Jay and Chris Moser, Brian and Becky McIndoo are both on the docket for February. I'd like to give special note to the forerunner of all this. Jared Jeffrey Ely just born to Duane and Kathy Ely. He is a very special little boy who arrived in a special way. For some reason unknown to her, Kathy felt apprehensive about this pregnancy. She was administered to for this reason. Jared showed up a bit early under complicated circumstances in which the birth was delayed to save the baby's life. The nurse was amazed at the calmness of Kathy and the consistent vital signs throughout the delay. Kathy said that she felt complete peace and experienced no fear. She attributes this to the blessing that remained with her from the laying on of hands.

Another wedding took place at our little church in recent weeks when our sister Cindy Yates was joined in marriage to Dan Birquist. Dan is the brother of Cindy's sister, Karen's husband, Dave. We would appreciate your prayers for Dave Birquist at this time. He recently underwent surgery for removal of a ruptured dis. He is experiencing great pain and may have to train for a different type of work. In our current economic situation we know how difficult that can be. So please remember Dave and Karen!

In early August another couple was united in marriage. Our sister, Debbie Beringer, and Mike Verdugo have joined to form a new home. We wish God's blessing on all these new families. We are also happy to welcome Jeff and Rita Shultz to the neighborhood, they have recently moved closer to the church from another part of the city.

Well on the sermons. In the past months we received a most encouraging sermon on something we sometimes don't avail ourselves of to the degree in which it is offered, the grace of God. Some thoughts from the brother's sermon: We don't need to stop in despair when we feel that we have gone as far as we can go — there is the grace of God. Forgiveness of our sins can continue on a day to day basis, if you feel

Godly sorrow and your spirit is broken and you are reaching out to God, there is hope of grace for you.

Another sermon contained practical instruction on overcoming barriers to fasting and prayer. The speaker told us it is possible to block out the distraction of the world by the Spirit. He then asked the congregation how one could prepare himself at the beginning of the day that the Spirit would remain with him throughout his busy day. One brother used his drive to work as a time for prayer. Another thought of the words of hymns when he heard profane conversations around him. Another brother actively talks about God to his co-workers. The brother went on to testify that on a recent occasion when he had fasted mightily Christ drew so near to him that he felt the Master was standing beside him.

Shortly after this sermon was given we received another message on the responsibility and blessing of fasting. The brother admonished us of the need to continue **prayer** and watch. In his words, "the world is changing at a rapid pace and we need to change with it in the opposite direction. As quickly as the world is changing we need to draw closer to God." The speaker went on to give his personal testimony on his experience on a recent fast. He told as of experiencing a new avenue of communication. He felt the Lord's undivided attention, as if they were the only two in the world.

We have a bit of sad news to report this time, our brother and friend Hubert Ammon Yates, went home on August 10th. He will be greatly missed by us all but each of us have a joy in our hearts knowing that he has no more pain or sorrow but is resting in the paradise of God.

Until next time, brothers and sisters in Christ is our hope.

Marlene Oar

THINK ABOUT IT

In our world there is a counterfeit for every genuine article, and christianity is no exception.

Inspiration without expression eventually means stagnation.

The coal that rolls off to itself on the hearth soon loses both it's heat and it's glow.

Sincerity is not enough; many are sincerely wrong.

Wrong attitudes are still the prevailing sin of the professed Christian.

God is more interested in changing us than in changing our circumstances.

When the violinist tightens the peg he is not intending to break the string, but to tune it.

GRIEF WAS SWALLOWED UP IN JOY

I have witnessed recently the working of the Spirit of the Lord. On August 10 Hubert A. Yates passed from this life to go home to be with his Heavenly Father. What I have witnessed is the comforting power of the Lord. The sadness that their family and each of us felt was swallowed up in the joy of knowing he was with God. This was not just a hope but an assurance he had been taken home. Through this the power of the resurrection has been made known unto me. I can't really explain it but any apprehension that I had about death has been completely taken from me. The joy of crossing from this life to the next was manifested more fully to me.

Our brother Hubert E. Yates had just started to preach to the group gathered at the ranch when he got word that his dad had passed away. He was asked if he would like to go to the house but he told us no that he would finish. He proceeded to preach one of the most powerful sermons that I have ever heard. He told of the resurrection, of going home to God, of the joy we will have, that this is what the gospel of Jesus Christ is all about. the salvation of our souls. I know that each of us was deeply touched and felt the power of the Almighty God there in great abundance. The tears of sorrow we all had gradually turned to a grateful heart knowing of the love of God for us and that we can rest assured of a heavenly home if we adhere to this gospel.

This past few days I have witnessed the hope and faith of a family who were saddened by the loss of a loved one. I know each of them felt great grief but from the first this grief was swallowed up in the joy of the hope of this gospel.

My words are weak and it is very hard for me to express on paper how I feel at this time; I pray that what I feel comes across. I know that the Lord has used this sadness to bring to our hearts more fully the continuity of life. That we don't die but only pass to the next life. I thank God for this hope that we have in the gospel of His precious Son.

Ken Oar

WHAT I COULD DO IF I WANTED TO

(This excerpt is being gleaned from the Grand Junction Daily Sentinel. They had gleaned it from the Litchfield, Ill. "The Messenger." They had copied it from the "Willow Street Messenger," who had taken it from the April 13, 1969 issue of the "Lookout" printed by Ben Merold who was preaching at Sullivan, Indiana)

1.If I wanted to ,I could help make this church the most wideawake and working church in all the world.

2.If I wanted to, I could visit members who are sick and possibly find other ways of helping them.

If I wanted to, I could attend Sunday School classes regularly, and encourage others to attend.

4. If I wanted to, I could show more devotion in worship services, and receive much more good from them myself.

5. If I wanted to, I could profit more from the sermon by not resenting the truth when it reveals some of my weaknesses.

6. If I wanted to, I could tell others about Christ and His church and lead them to salvation — at least my actions could always speak for him.

7.If I wanted to, I could use my effort to help promote the greatest possible harmony in the church.

8. If I wanted to, I could give back to the Lord each Lord's Day as I have been prospered; thereby helping to spread the gospel of Christ into all the world.

9. Of course, this all depends on what I want to do about it. I have the ability to be an honored servant of the greatest of Kings, but the question is, "What Do I Really Want To Do?"

These nine bold statements do set us thinking, don't they? That you could change so many things about the church! Allow the love of the cross of Christ and the Christ of the cross to fill you until you "want" to.

There is a great difference between saying, "I would if I could, but I can't," and "I could if I would, but I won't!" The first statement is caused by a lack of faith, but the last statement is caused by a lack of love. Examine your life to see that you are so filled with both Faith and Love. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

IF GOD SHOULD GO ON STRIKE

How good it is that God above has never gone on strike.

Because He was not treated fair in things He didn't like.

If only once He'd given up and said, "That's it I'm through!

"I've had enough of those on earth, so this is what I'll do.

"I'll give my orders to the sun - cut off the heat supply!

"And to the moon - give no more light, and run the oceans dry

"Then just to make things really tough and put the pressure on,

"Turn off the vital oxygen till every breath is gone!

You know He would be justified, if fairness was the game,

For no one has been more abused or met with more disdain

Than God, and yet He carried on, supplying you and me

With all the favors of His grace, and everything

for free.

Men say they want a better deal, and so on strike they go.

But what a deal we've given God to whom all things we owe.

We don't care whom we hurt to gain the things we like;

But what a mess we'd all be in, if God should go on strike.

Author Unknown

CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 1981 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) will commence Sunday, April 5, 1981. The business sessions will start at 10:00 A. M. Monday, April 6. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, April 3 and 4, 1981.

The 1981 Minister's Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) will be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 19th, 20th and 21st at Independence, Missouri.

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Articles, sermons, poems, news items, letters, notices, etc. which are appropriate to be printed in this paper are requested by the editorial staff. If possible they should be typewritten on one side of sheet only, double spaced and grammatically corrected. If this is not possible, please send your material anyway. Send all material to one of the members of the editorial staff or to the general church (see title page). The deadline for each month is the 7th of the previous month.

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