

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*

Vo. 61

Independence, Missouri, February 1984

No. 2

Life's Lesson

I have learned as the years roll onward
And I leave the past behind,
That much I have counted sorrow,
But proves that God is kind:
That many a flower I've longed for,
Had thorns of a hidden pain,
And many a roughened by-path
Skirted fields of ripened grain.



The clouds that cover the sunshine -
They cannot banish the sun
And the earth seems all the brighter
After the rain is done.
We must stand in the deepest shadow
To see the clearest light.
And often from wrongs' own darkness
We gain the strength of Right.



So, the heart from the hardest trials
Gains the purest joy of all,
And from lips that have tasted sadness,
The sweetest songs will fall.
For as peace comes after suffering,
And love is reward of pain -
So, after this life, comes heaven,
And out of our loss is gain.

From Jewish Hope

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EDITORIAL

TO KNOW THE WILL OF GOD

Is there a way to know the will of God? The scriptures indicate that there is. It begins with a desire in which is a willingness, not only to know but to be obedient to what we know.

"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." John 7:16-17. If this be true of Jesus in his teaching, how much more it will be true of any other who goes forth proclaiming to teach the gospel and doctrine of God. To one who really wills to do his will, it shall be given to know whether a man speaks of God or of himself.

"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord. . ." Hosea 6:3. Knowledge comes through the exercise of faith. To know we must begin by faith to follow. A good example is Alma's lesson on the planting of the seed, chapter 16.

"There will be no discernment, no witness of the Spirit to the truth of God, the ways of God, until man is willing to be obedient; 'you can't know,' says Christ, 'until you are willing to do.'" Philips.

When we have proven by action on faith that we are willing to do, are willing to follow, as long as we do follow, he will lead, and step by step we will

be brought to know. Peter would never have known the wonder of the experience of walking on the water if he had not had the faith to step out of the boat when Jesus said to him, "Come". Of what purpose for God to reveal his further will to those who have not the faith and trust to do what they already know and profess to believe?

The scriptures are full of the revealed laws, commandments, will and purpose of the Lord, and the world is full of peoples who say, "Lord, Lord," but who yet do not do the will of the Father in heaven. **Are we among that number?**

Until a determination to obedience is a settled matter in our heart's intent, we have no reason to seek to know the will of God, as a Church, or as a person, in our own affairs. To know and then not do is a sin, and a danger worse than ignorance. See John 15:22-24.

"For the commandments of God come therein; concerning which we ought to have a twofold understanding. One is, that we should understand and know what his biddings are, and how to love them and keep them. The other is that we should know his forbiddings — how to hate them and refuse them. For in these two is all our working comprehended."

Julian of Norwich.

To believe and not to follow that belief with obedience is a dead belief, (faith) says James 2:17, 20, 26. Believing which does not serve to change the life and permeate the living is a farce. In the words of Deidrich Bonhoffer, "Only those who believe, obey; and only those who obey (really) believe."

Obedience is the proof of love, ours for the Lord. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (Knowing, following, loving and doing) "... If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth my sayings: (he that keepeth not his sayings loveth him not?) and the word which

ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." John 14:21, 23-24.

"And unto this people thou shalt say, (the Lord's people? in this specific case the Israelites.) Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I have set before you the way of life, and the way of death." Jeremiah 21:8. The way of love and obedience or the way of unbelief, self-will and disobedience?

"... I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life ... that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days; ..." Deuteronomy 30:19-20, as spoken to Israel in particular but applicable to all you would seek — to know the will of God.

A.S.

THE NEED FOR SINCERE FASTING AND PRAYER

Sermon at Missouri Reunion, August 12, 1982

By Apostle Marvin Ely

Prepared and Condensed for Publication

PART 1

This morning a statement was made that we need a greater faith. And I hope that sank deeply into each of your hearts. The statement was made that we need a faith like unto the Brother of Jared, and that when that becomes a reality there are some great and marvelous things that will be unfolded unto the children of men. A question was asked, What is necessary to have Zion? And then the statement was made, the redemption of Zion shall come by power; and that Zion will be redeemed with judgment. It was also said, the gospel must be taught to all people, and we're to endure hardness as a good soldier. We're to strive for righteousness, and the duty of man is to fear God and keep his commandments.

It has been the desire for many years of those of the restoration movement to have a Zion condition. It has been the desire of many to have a greater outreach unto the children of men. It seems like a task that is beyond our capability, but yet, if we rely upon God and Christ, all things are possible. The whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commandments; and how are we going to fully accomplish that?

I copied down a few brief statements out of a manifestation that was published in the July Advocate, and I hope most of you have taken time to read it. It said that the gates that hold back the

floods would be lifting. It mentioned the plagues that would take place; that there would be famine instead of fertile fields. It mentioned that judgment shall begin at your doors. The redemption of Zion is by judgment. One last paragraph I copied down, "Only by your sincere fasts and prayers joined by righteous obedience shall ye inherit the security found in Zion." And tonight I have felt directed to dwell on this thing of fasting and prayer, and responsibility.

I feel we need to approach God with greater humility. There is much required and you and I, of ourselves, cannot do it. Don't ever kid yourselves, we're not able, but with the help of God we're more than able. Yes, we can have the ministry stand here and preach by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost that it will carry into the hearts and lives of every person. And I hope that I might preach tonight with that power to the extent that I will touch every heart here, and stir to a greater responsibility, a greater commitment to God. Let us be that good soldier spoken of; let us increase in that faith. The Apostle Paul said, that without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Let us remember to have greater diligence. It is our responsibility; don't take it lightly. We can do it but we can't do it of ourselves. We've

floundered through the years, 152 already since the restoration of this Church of Christ in these latter days. And now we've entered the time of the last days, and we have not yet accomplished its purpose. It will accomplish its purpose, the prophet Daniel of old said it would, and I've got complete confidence in what God has caused his prophets to write.

I have confidence in God, that he is able; total and complete confidence. Sometimes I may become weak in flesh. But I've had cause to rejoice, lately, because of a number of experiences. They've filled my soul with joy. This isn't a gospel of sadness, it isn't a gospel of gloom. Let us reach out to the souls of men who are hungering and thirsting. Jesus said, blessed are those who do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost. And those who seek to bring forth Zion in that day (after the coming forth of the Book of Mormon) also shall have the gift and power of the Holy Ghost.

In times past, in times of great stress, man has approached God in humble fasts and prayers. In times of bondage man has approached God and has been delivered. None of us here really knows what it is like to be in bondage; bondage to another nation, or like when the Nephites were in bondage to the Lamanites. But the bondage I'm going to talk about isn't a bondage to another nation. Let us think tonight of our responsibility to God for indeed it is great.

In the ending of the year 34 A.D. Christ came to a people upon this continent, he proclaimed his commandments to them, his gospel. He chose twelve disciples and they proclaimed this gospel. In two years all those upon the face and the breadth of the land were converted to Jesus Christ. There were no disputations or contentions among them. They were a blest and happy people. Let us read on page 682, verse 13, "And they did not walk any more after the performances and ordinances of the law of Moses, but they did walk after the commandments which they had received from their Lord and their God, continuing in fasting and prayer, and in meeting together oft, both to pray and to hear the word of the Lord." That's the way those humble people, who were all converted to the Lord, did. That's a people who actually had all things common among them. First they arrived at a personal righteousness, and that proclaims today the importance of us becoming a righteous people before God; a holy, dedicated people.

Moroni, 6:6, tells of another people: "And the church did meet together oft, to fast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of their souls: . . ." and we've gathered here to speak one with another concerning the welfare of our souls. There are scriptures that say, pray for the welfare of the souls of those about you. And we've gathered

here that we might learn to be more fervent and intense in our outreach to others. And I hope that from this time onward we might make greater progress, and even if we stub our toe once in a while, not become discouraged.

There were all kinds of things that tried to keep us from getting here today. Where I was staying a little bridge, a land bridge, was almost washed out. Just a little bit more of that flood last night and we would have had a hard time getting here. But there was enough left to drive across, though when I saw it I offered a prayer before I went over it. God heard that prayer. Others have come that have distressing conditions in their home; I prayed for them as well; they're here. Yes, the devil is trying everything to prevent us from getting together, but we are more than the victor with the power of Jesus Christ. We don't have to back up from anything or anybody, because we have that help; it is there, and by our humble fasts and prayers we shall have it.

There are special occasions when men approach God. One was after Jesus' baptism when he was led out into the wilderness for the space of forty days. He fasted and prayed and was tempted of the devil. Afterwards he was an hungered and the temptation of the devil was very great. He said, if thou be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread. Jesus had a ready answer, and you and I must have that ready answer. Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth forth and cometh forth from the mouth of God. We must not underestimate the importance of the word of God. Even as in Lehi's vision, the rod of iron is a representation of the word of God, which, firmly grasped, can lead you to the tree of life, which is a representation of the love of God.

There were other people in the Book of Mormon who fasted and prayed on special occasions; I will turn to one of them in the book of Helaman, 2:31, and I will give the background for this occasion. This was a people who had been converted unto the Lord, but pride had entered among them, and those began to persecute the more humble followers of Christ, and caused them to wade through much affliction. So what did they do? We read, "Nevertheless, they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, . . ." There is the way. They didn't just become all distressed and disturbed. Oft times things happen and discouragement enters into the hearts of the children of men. Now under those same conditions would we become discouraged, or would we do what they did? They fasted and prayed, and they became stronger in their humility and firmer in their faith in Christ. ". . . unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of

their yielding their hearts unto God." We must become a pure and sanctified people.

I think of the sons of Mosiah after their miraculous conversion to God and Christ. They desired to undo the evil they had done; and they desired of their father, King Mosiah, that they might travel among the Lamanites, a hardened and even a ferocious people, to convert them unto Christ. He was concerned and he prayed many days, and the Lord said, Let them go, they'll do a great work there and I will preserve them. Do you know what they did? Read about it in the 12th chapter of Alma. They fasted and prayed much, and I dare say the ministry of Jesus Christ, today, better take an example from this instance, because many of you will be called to go to distant lands. And even here you will go under trying conditions. This preparation beforehand is vital. They fasted and prayed that the Lord would grant unto them a portion of his Spirit, and the Lord was not deaf to their humble prayers; he said, Be comforted, and he told them they would do a goodly work, but that they should be patient in their afflictions. He didn't say that there wouldn't be problems; he didn't say that they wouldn't be tried. He didn't say that they wouldn't be persecuted, but to be patient and they'd bring souls unto God. These men fasted and prayed oft. They searched the scriptures, and as a result they spoke with the Spirit and the power of revelation and prophecy; and they taught with that same power. The gospel must be carried into the hearts of men by that power.

We must reach the attention of not only the adults but of every child. The children have a responsibility as well as those who are adult, by their example before their associates. Our lives are examples that would cause people to know that there is something different about us. We all have that same responsibility, and if we should be called upon to suffer persecution, do it with patience. You have heard about turning the other cheek; there may come a time when we may literally have to, and it might become a little sore. With God you can do it. Even if we should have to lay down our life for the kingdom of heaven's sake, there's no fear in that; with God we can do it, but only with the help of God can we do it.

I would like to stress this thing of fasting and prayer. I'm going to read the 58th chapter of Isaiah, it isn't long, and I'm not going to read it all at once. The Lord told Isaiah, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people . . ." Who? "my people," he said, "their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily," which is good; we should seek the Lord daily, "and delight to know our ways," They delighted to know his ways but somewhere along the way something was not right. The Lord had something against them, for he says, "Cry unto my people, show them

their transgression. Sound it like a trumpet."

"They delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God." All this, but still there was something not quite right. It reminds me of the Pharisee and the publican who went up to the temple to pray. (It's in Luke 18:10-14) The Pharisee offered his prayer; everything that he said about himself was commendable, but he bragged and boasted about it. Lord, I'm not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers. I fast twice in the week and tithe all that I possess; I'm not even as this publican. These things were commendable, but his prideful disposition was what was the sin. The publican smote himself on the breast, wouldn't even look up to heaven, and said, God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Jesus said this second man went away justified, not the first. The publican humbled himself and God heard his prayer.

Isaiah, verse 3: this same people said, "Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? "Throughout the scripture, fasting was a manner of afflicting one's soul, in abstaining from food, and sometimes both food and drink. And they said, Why Lord, we've afflicted our souls and Thou takest no knowledge. They wanted to know what was wrong. And the answer was, "Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labors." Listen to that closely. *In the day of their fast they found pleasures.* Now this is written for you and me. When we separate ourselves for a time of fasting and prayer these pleasurable things must be put aside. The newspapers, the magazines, the radio and T.V.; we must even be careful what we talk about. God had ought against these people because in the day of their fast they sought pleasures. It wasn't wrong that they took delight in and approached the Lord daily; it was the manner they were doing this in that the Lord had against them.

And then it says, "and exact all your labors." Now there may be necessary tasks to be done in a day of fast. As an example, if the time of fast was a week long, the cow couldn't wait that long to be milked. But we don't have to set out to plow the south forty on that day or in that time, too. Yet, during our time of fasting we sometimes find a lot of tasks that we shouldn't encumber ourselves with. The necessary things, yes; the unnecessary things we don't have to do. We must learn to discipline ourselves in this thing.

"Behold," he said unto them, "ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voices to be heard on high." Now, I want us to think about this more fully. There's a lesson there. Turn to

1 Corinthians 3:3, Paul's statement to the Corinthian people; he called them brethren. They were converted to Jesus Christ, but things had entered in that prevented them from being fed with the meat of the gospel; they had need of milk instead. Listen closely to this: "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" It's plain and simple to our understanding. Envy, strife, division, is it among us? We should not entertain such things at any time, especially not during a time of fasting and prayer. Evidently these people had strife among themselves; they debated over certain things. That is why I say we must be careful about what we take up to even talk of, if there is something of a very agitative nature we don't need to start arguing back and forth over it. This is what he told these people not to do.

Verse 5, Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul?" Is that what the Lord has chosen? "a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?" Do you really call that God's type of a fast. I feel even more important is the attitudes we deploy and the things we pursue during these special times we set aside.

There's a statement in the Book of Mormon, on page 639, verses 108 and 109. A similar statement is in the sermon on the mount. This says, ye shall not fast as the hypocrites do, of a sad countenance, for they disfigure their faces to be seen of men. And it says, they have their reward. But ye when ye fast, anoint your head and wash your face, and fast to your Father in secret and your Father which seest in secret shall reward thee openly. There are times when others may have to know, but we don't have to go around with a hungry look upon our faces. That isn't the way.

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen?" verse 6, "to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" I want to analyze that a bit. First, we are to fast that we might loose the bands of wickedness. One way to do that is by our prayers. Amulek (Alma 16:219) had this to say, "Yea, humble ourselves, and continue in prayer unto him; cry unto him when ye are in your fields; yea, over all your flocks; . . ." your crops, and households and all your undertakings of life; Jesus Christ once said to pray over your families and pray for the welfare of those about you. But the thing that I want to stress here is, "cry unto him against the power of your enemies; yea, cry unto him against the devil, who is an enemy to all righteousness." It says here to loose the bands of wickedness, which is brought about by the devil through his great deceptions.

Turning to 2 Nephi 1:101-103, Lehi had a rather significant thought. He says, I must needs suppose, that an angel fell from heaven. This angel desired that which was evil, wherefore he became a devil. And that scripture says, he became miserable and desires the misery of all mankind. I'm as confident as can be that once he fell he knew what he had lost. And he is happy when you are all miserable. He is just as happy when man and wife get agitated with one another; when children fight and squabble among themselves. That makes the devil happy. So we must fast and pray against the power of the devil, against wickedness, to undo the wickedness and to undo the heavy burdens. And there are many things today that are burdening people. The very time we live in is a burden. The high unemployment rate is a burden. The inflation is a burden. The drugs: marijuana, cocaine etc. are a burden to our society. The immorality is a burden in our society. There are those who are heavily burdened because of the thieves that stalk the night to break into homes. There are those that live alone in various places. I invite each of you to pray for such. In a way of responsibility this is a part of our fast, to help undo the heavy burdens. This is a burden and it can be removed. The peace of God that surpasses understanding can touch each and every one of them.

To let the oppressed go free. Isaiah 1:17, "Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." We have a duty. James said, "Pure religion and undefiled before God, and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." That's our responsibility, just don't forget it.

Another, that ye break every yoke. And there are yokes. Man is yoked to a multitude of things. I don't mean to especially pick on sports tonight, but some of us have a hang-up on them. Maybe some of us have a hang-up on fishing. I don't mean to pick on all the fishermen. I've done a little of it myself, but it's how much we do it and the way we do it that counts. Maybe our yoke is T.V. and there are good things on T.V. but there's a lot of things that aren't good. Maybe we waste time. Maybe that's a yoke. I could look in the mirror there. Galatians 5:1, ties well with this very thing. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." Free from what? Free from sin. "And be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Part of the yoke of bondage he spoke of was the Mosaic law. But I think another part is the yoke of bondage as a result of sin. And so, brothers and sisters, entering the waters of baptism can set you free, but if you get entangled again with the bondage of sin get down on your knees and in humble repentance pray to God in fasting that he will forgive you your sins, so that you can function more fully before him.

(To be continued)

A MISSION TO EUROPE — 1983

By the consent and urging of the apostles and others, we (the Sheldons) made preparations and undertook a mission into Europe about the last of September, with The Netherlands (Holland) as a primary objective, because of a small group of members living at Enschede, which is about ten miles from the West German border. This group is the only branch of the church in Europe, and meets at the home of Elder John Schut, who is their pastor. There are about 10 members, and a few others who are interested, who meet fairly regularly.

Our trip was by plane, the first leg being from Kansas City to Chicago by TWA, and the second from thence direct to Amsterdam via KLM Royal Dutch airline in a huge 10-passenger width Boeing 747, capable of carrying 360 (+) passengers; what a marvel!

By previous arrangement, Brother Schut met us at the airport, accompanied by one of these interested people, who drove his own car on a very foggy morning to meet us at about 7:15 a.m.; they had traveled perhaps 100 miles. We appreciated very much the fact that it was unnecessary for us to take a taxi from the airport into Amsterdam, and thence by train to Enschede. I felt it best to register with the American consulate in Amsterdam before leaving, so this was done without too much delay, and it afforded us our first view of Dutch life and scenery. As is common with most other major cities of the world, we were told of the more sordid aspects of life, there, which impresses those who would shun such to have as little contact as possible. However, we were fascinated by much of the old architecture, and of many narrow cobbled streets.

All of Holland is practically flat, and so many residents ride bicycles. This, of course, saves much in transportation costs. Many streets in the larger cities have bicycle paths of brick immediately adjacent to the street. As we traveled through Amsterdam, these two Americans often caught our breath for fear of side-swiping the cyclists with the car, or as we observed others; but we saw no accident, and all seemed to be relatively unconcerned.

The fog had lifted as we went toward Enschede, and we noted nice little farms with cattle, well-kept homes and barns, and pleasant groves of trees; and little gardens, yet producing food and flowers. Holland is well-noted for its flowers, an international commercial item. Giving of flower bouquets is a custom in Holland, Germany and Belgium, with which we tried to comply as the occasion warranted.

Brother Schut had received a letter from our brother Henri Vindreau of Paris, France, informing him of an expected visit that very night of our ar-

rival. I had written to Brother Vindreau of our expected trip, but we were all surprised at this. However, he did not appear that evening. It turned out that he had gone to a previous address of Brother Schut, and then we were contacted the next morning. We visited together in the Schut home that day (Saturday), but then he had to leave early Sunday morning for return to Paris by train. Being unable to meet with us for service, I asked if he desired the Sacrament. Affirming his desire, four of us had a brief service before we took him to the depot. It seems to be about 7 or 8 hours by train, so this says something for his good desires and anxiousness for even a brief visit. He is very lonely, and needs our prayers.

Brother Schut has a wife (Ine) and four sons, ages about three years to twelve. Well, these boys are typical, so there is a lot going on at the Schut home! Additionally, Sister Ine's 16 year old half-brother, Jannie (or Johnnie), lives with them. Both speak some English, so we made out rather well in our conversations. Brother Schut speaks and writes English fluently. We became "opa" (grandpa) and "oma" (grandma) to the boys, and really enjoyed them. Jannie is a member (also Ine and her eldest son), and we were pleased to observe his willingness to pray over the food, and of his concern for our comfort. Our communication with others was largely through Brother Schut, and by use of sign language.

I would observe here that we received the greatest kindness in every way, not only in the Schut home, but throughout our stay with others in Europe. Sister Ine was a bit shy at first, but no doubt because of the language barrier; but her English improved as time went by. We came to love her almost as a daughter.

"Home" is a 3-story apartment in a complex of several, and we found this typical of most city dwellings in Europe. Horizontal space is at a premium, so they go upwards in many cases. This means that we got used to climbing stairs; also, much more walking than we are accustomed to in the U.S.

Cheese is very much a part of the diet in Holland, and we got to liking it pretty well, with good bread for breakfast. Entertainment of guests with hot or cold drinks, often cheeses, cookies or cake, perhaps cold cuts of meat, is much a part of Dutch life.

As a rule, the Dutch have pleasant countenances, and we were struck with the little children's pretty, round faces, blond hair and blue eyes. It was interesting and pleasant to see a mother on a bike with her young child in a special basket or other seat behind her, as she went to shop, etc. We were astonished, too, at elderly men and women riding the bikes.

There is very little of wood construction in Europe, and so most buildings are of brick, concrete or stone. In older cities, the streets were not only narrow (generally), but angled off in every direction as the erection of buildings had permitted, the focal point being a large church or a civic or commercial center.

We had three or four Sunday services at Enschede, mostly in the nature of a study class conducted by Brother Schut, although once or twice, I gave a sermonette, with him interpreting. Otherwise, we visited several of the homes. We had three visits with a friend of Brother Schut, and his family, who had not attended meetings at the home, but we discussed scriptures relative to the Book of Mormon, and other topics of religious import. He promised to read the Book of Mormon given to him, and we hope some fruitage will appear.

The man who picked us up at the airport has shown a keen interest, even toward baptism, which may have been accomplished since we left, or perhaps will be in the near future; his wife also is interested.

Another prospect is a young woman in her late 30s, who has a daughter of 13 years. We think her contact is worth mentioning in that she despairingly had placed an ad in a newspaper, asking if there is any hope. Brother Schut noticed it and answered the ad. Since then, they have been in faithful attendance. Being poor, they have occasionally been returned to their home with food after spending Sunday with the Schut family.

We visited with the parents of Brother Schut on several occasions, and were able to converse in English. Their demeanor was friendly and hospitable. Brother John's mother even gave Doris a good pair of shoes, hardly worn, which became a blessing in our walks. Her footwear we had brought was not really suitable.

After a week or so at Enschede, we contacted Brother and Sister Kuhnlein at Nurnberg (Neuremberg), West Germany by telephone. They were anxious for us to come, and we arranged for them to meet us at the train depot, carrying a Zion's Advocate in hand for identification, for we had never met.

These dear ones had come to Independence earlier in the year, had visited the Temple Lot, and were converted through efforts of two or three of the brethren. Elder Maynard Case had baptized them, and they returned to Germany, our only members at present in that land.

It was certainly a pleasure to see the Advocate in the hand of our brother, so quickly as we stepped from the train, to glance up and see the big, friendly smile and pleasant countenance. Then, to see the rather shy, but no less pleasant and handsome face of his wife . . . ! Well, we came together and shook

hands and embraced as though we had always been the dearest of friends, but separated for a time, and now joyfully reunited. We were additionally warmed as Sister Ingrid thrust a beautiful bouquet of flowers into Doris' hands. How wonderful it is when the bond of love in the gospel of our Lord, which knows no national boundary nor language barrier, is seen and felt.

As we did not know of their facilities to accommodate us, we had arranged that Brother Kuhnlein should obtain a hotel room for us, to which we were taken to dispose of our luggage, and thence to their apartment for supper. Their quarters is on the third floor of an apartment complex, consisting of a small kitchen, toilet and bath rooms, with a little hall leading to a living room and a single bedroom. We retired early, being tired from our journey.

After breakfast the next morning at the hotel (which comes with the room), we returned to the Kuhnlein apartment. He had called the hotel and left word that I should call him. It was soon understood that we mutually desired to stay together, though, to us, it did not seem possible because of their one bedroom. We were given to understand that they could accommodate us, and so we moved in. While there more than a week, Doris slept on a couch and I on a small cot, which, with our bedding, was moved into the living room each night and taken up each morning for storage in their bedroom. So we dwelt together in comfort, and seemingly without emotional difficulty. Each night, there was a scripture study and prayer by one, a warm embrace and a fond exchange of wishes for a good night's rest.

A Sacrament service was held one Sunday morning. We prayed and testified of God's goodness, and even sang a couple of hymns. In one, we at least partly overcame the language problem by Doris and I singing a couple of verses in English while they followed with a couple of verses in their native German. Brother Kuhnlein speaks fairly well in English, but she requires his interpretation.

During the days, we went by streetcar and considerable walking (for two unaccustomed yankees) to various points of historical interest and of civic beauty. We found the Germany of our contact to be exceptional, both for general interest and beauty. It was fascinating to see medieval castles on hills overlooking the Rhine river; of barges traversing the Rhine and Main, of choice grape vineyards in vertically rising rows upon little mountain sides; of neatly kept little gardens as our train passed through the countryside, and of moderate-sized homes with steep, tiled roofs; the cities again, with narrow, cobbled streets; large, modern department stores, and quaint, little shops, in the midst of remnants of bygone ages: magnificent churches and cathedrals, of square and circular towers and sections of ancient walls; of yet more castles in good repair, and some

showing evidence of past and present reconstruction despite the horrors of World War II which all but destroyed most of the larger cities. It was amazing to observe only traces of that carnage remaining.

In Germany, we found more evidence of widespread opposition to the deployment of military rockets, etc. than elsewhere, and upon one occasion, were in the midst of a peaceful demonstration by a few hundred people. In such surroundings, and in view of years of personal encounter by natives yet living in the memory of the futility of war, and as their children have grown into an aversion by the hearsay of its tragedy, an outsider begins to have a different perspective. He comes to at least a measure of sympathy for them, though with some feeling that, in all probability, the communist agitators have done much to excite an opposition to present defense measures in order to subvert a nation and decrease its potential for resistance of aggression.

Brother Kuhnlein has a zeal for the work of the Gospel, and has spoken unashamedly of our faith to others; some of these, we met, even in their apartment. It is our desire, with his, that some of our literature may be translated into German, that he may not only speak to his countrymen, but to give them such tracts to read as may enable some progress for the Church there.

While staying with them, we took a side excursion by train to the village of Germersheim to briefly visit a friend of our Brother Sam Gould. They had met in Oak Ridge, Tenn. when the former had come with his family for a year's stay while he was engaged in studies at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory where Brother Gould works as an engineer. Brother Gould had paved the way for this visit by writing to his friend. So he met us at the depot, and in about two minutes we had walked to his home. I must say that we couldn't have been treated better, to make our visit comfortable and enjoyable, even with a day's sightseeing tour to nearby Speyer with its great cathedral, and afterward to famous Heidelberg with its ruined castle.

In the evening before (as the host knew of the purpose of our visit), we spoke of our faith, to which he and his wife gave respectful attention. Giving them some of our literature in English, we found, the next morning, some evidence of it having been perused. Having two teenage daughters who spoke good English, we left them in the hope that at some point of time, one or more of the family may be stirred by the Holy Spirit to investigate further. We have written to them briefly since our return, and we hope to keep up some contact if they will show an inclination.

After returning to Nurnberg, and later to Enschede, we contacted another correspondent at Brussels, Belgium, (Joseph Andre) with whom

Brother Henri Vindreau has also corresponded. I understood that he had been active in another branch of the Restoration, but became discouraged with Church policies and attitudes. I later found he had withdrawn. So, I was pleasantly surprised to receive a cordial invitation to visit him and his wife. Here again, we used the *Advocate* as our medium of recognition, as he met us at the station.

Brussels is truly an ancient city, also, going back to the 1100s at least. I must say that the cleanliness was less than we observed in German cities, and those in Holland. This may be due in part to the great influx of people from the middle east and northern Africa. Nevertheless, there was much of ancient grandeur, and the palaces of the present king Baudoin (his residence, and that of state functions) were truly handsome buildings, along with other civic structures of exquisite architecture, dating back in the hundreds of years. The palace grounds of the royal residence was surrounded by an imposing fence, covering many acres, and revealed to a limited extent a great degree of horticulture care and beauty.

We happened to be in Brussels at the observance of World War I armistice day, and were permitted to view the placing of wreaths by the king and other dignitaries at the tomb of the unknown soldier; to hear the booming of cannon as a tribute to their dead, and to see a parade of military forces and other marchers, as they passed in salute to the same; a most impressive occasion. We couldn't help but appreciate and respect the on-lookers as they also voiced devotion to their king, as a symbol of national unity.

Brother Andre and his sweet wife could not have accorded us more kindness. She is a good cook, and we enjoyed several meals with them. However, their apartment is too tiny to have afforded us a sleeping facility, so he had arranged for us to stay with his sister and mother, who occupy a four-story apartment, not far distant. Our bedroom was on the fourth floor, and while we were required to use many steps, we slept quite comfortably.

The sister reminded us of our Sister Mildred Hooker, here in Independence, and, while not expressing much of religion by mouth, yet her care and concern for our welfare will never be forgotten. So also, was the sweet little mother, a gracious lady in her upper 80s, crippled and walking with a cane, yet every time we left, we looked up to her second floor balcony to see the friendly smile and wave of the hand. We were impressed by Brother Andre's devotion to mother and sister, and of their kiss as they met or parted.

He spoke fairly good English, and his wife, something less; but her understanding was quite good. Sister and mother know only a little, so with them, there was considerable of sign language used. The Belgian (Flemish) language is a French dialect,

of which we could understand much less than they of our English. But love and friendship does find a way!

At the Andre home, we frequently discussed matters of common concern in our gospel faith. I feel I can safely say that they are really one with us, and expect that time and proper circumstances will find them fully united in the Church of Christ.

Upon our decision to leave there, returning to Enschede, a national strike of Dutch civil servants was in full sway. For this reason, during our last several weeks in Europe, the postal service was paralyzed, and we had no communication by mail with the U.S. Being somewhat apprehensive of difficulty at the Dutch border, even on the train, Brother Andre kindly offered to drive us back to Enschede, which we gladly accepted. He desired also to meet Brother Schut, with whom he had conversed by telephone.

Going early on a Sunday morning, we arrived at about 11:30 a.m., a little late for service in the Schut home; but after lunch, we had a little study class together, which we felt to be profitable. After this, the Andres returned to Brussels.

I should have mentioned that Brother Andre is a printer by trade, doing business at his home. We think it quite possible that some of our literature, after translation, may be reproduced in Dutch and in German by this good brother, and for use in the respective countries.

Having another correspondent in Denmark, we fully expected to journey to his home for another personal contact. I had met him in Independence on two occasions, and he has shown a genuine interest in our story, especially in contra-distinction with larger Restoration churches. This man is a minister of a protestant church, but has shown a very brotherly attitude toward us.



Congregation at Enschede, Holland (Left to right from top): Henk Zielman (NM), Johan Domhof (M), Elder John Schut (M), Louise Zielman (NM), her child, Thea DeHeus (M), Thea Snabel (M), Uilkje Roep (M), Ine Schut (M), Jannie Hulshof (NM), Angelique Hulshof (NM), Wesley Schut (NM), Michael Schut (NM), Mark Schut (M), Alexander Schut (M).

He expressed a desire for us to visit him, but initially, he was rather ill, so he suggested a later date. After a week or more, I phoned again, and we agreed to the visit, although, because of his church commitments, it would have been for only about two or three days.

Thinking to obtain special train rates in Germany, we went to the depot at Gronau, perhaps 15 miles from Enschede; however, we found that their time schedule was not according to our understanding, and that we could not obtain the special rate until the following day. The regular rate we felt to be prohibitive, and we decided not to go.

Our friend expects to come again to Independence in 1984, and it is hoped we may have personal contact at that time. He has asked for an *Advocate* subscription, and more of our English tracts, which is being provided.

With this, we felt we had done about as much in Europe as should be done for the present, and under the circumstances.

Before we left Enschede, Church members and friends were invited to Brother Schut's home for a pleasant, social time of farewell. In the relatively short time we were there, we had learned to love them, and we felt it was returned.

Brother and Sister Schut graciously drove us the approximate 100 miles to the airport in severe wind and rainy weather, where we bid them a tearful farewell. May the Lord bless our weak efforts there by the powerful influence of His Spirit, and that the members may appreciate more fully the divinity of this latter day work, and to realize that the church in America does care for them. We solicit your faithful prayers for them.

William A. Sheldon



Luzian and Ingrid Kuhnlein (members)
Nuremberg, West Germany

SPECIAL NOTICE

In accordance with instructions of the 1983 Ministers' Conference, a larger facility has been rented for the first Sunday of the 1984 Conference that all may be able to meet in one room. All Activities for Sunday, April 1, 1984, will be held at the Mid-America 4-H/University of Missouri Extension Center Bldg., located at 2828 South M-291, Independence, Missouri. Please note that access to this building is only possible via the M-291 frontage road. This is the same building that was rented last year.

For further information please contact either Smith Brickhouse, 5713 Logan Rd., Kansas City, Mo. 64136, 816-356-9214 or Marvin Case, 409 N.W. Woods Chapel Rd., Lee's Summit, Mo. 64063, 816-373-1116.

CONFERENCE TO CONVENE

April 1, 1984

Following instructions of the 1966 Referendum, the annual conference of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), will begin on the Sunday of the week in which the 6th of April occurs, which, this year, will be April 1st.

Business Sessions, however, will start at 9:00 a.m., Monday, April 2nd.

As per Bill No. 1, 1972 Referendum, "all committees and boards etc. of the Church empowered to expend general Church funds or collect the same shall be required to submit an annual report of their activities to include a financial statement of funds received and disbursed and submit to a joint meeting of the Council of Twelve and Bishopric at least one week prior to the opening of Conference a proposed budget for the ensuing year."

Officers and committees, as noted in the directory, should see that their reports are filed with the conference secretary as early as possible. Persons needing a place to stay should contact the Conference Coordinator. Those wishing to donate food or money to the conference should contact the Dining Hall Committee.

We are looking forward with eager anticipation to greeting each one of you and pray that the Lord's Will will be done in all things.

R. W. Oldham
General Church Secretary

AVA NEWS AND VIEWS

We had the privilege of having quite a day on October 16th with visiting elders, Marvin Case, Larry Beem, and Virgil Addie. So we dispensed with the usual Sunday School class and had two good preaching services. Brother Addie from Houston was assisted by Brother Beem for the first service. Brother Marvin Case followed in the second hour before we enjoyed our meal together at noon. If there had been time we would have had Brother Beem give us his thoughts, too. We appreciated his able assistance.

There were questions proposed about the gospel of Jesus Christ and we were directed to the answers from scriptures. Thoughts on the unchangeableness of God and the requirements of faith and repentance that remain unchangeable were brought to our attention.

Among the visitors were James Addie, Diane Case, Christie Beem, Jewell Beem, and Sister Martha Bell. We had a church filled with friends from Independence, Houston, Willow Springs, and Oklahoma.

November 13th brought us Brother Robert Oldham and wife, Brother Mike Smith and wife, Sister June Sarratt, Sister Sharon Smith, all who were weekend guests of Sister Lorraine Welton. We enjoyed having them with us for church and Brother Oldham was our speaker. Sister June Sarratt brought us a nice special in song to make it a fine service.

November 20th we had the pleasure of the visit of Brother Jerry Case and his family. His message about repentance and forgiveness, the close relationship of each as the source of hope and joy, was given in a very humble manner. Sister Pam Jenkins was a visitor here from Arkansas. We miss our younger folk who have moved away, many too far to be with us each Sunday. Now we miss Sister Minnie Smith, who is in Phoenix, Arizona, and Sister Lorraine Welton, who has gone to Florida for the winter months. These will be coming home this next spring with the birds and warmer weather. In the meantime we here at Ava will be keeping the flame of faith alive and warm in our hearts.

Those who visit the "outposts" of God's vineyard bring encouragement we cannot measure. We are made to feel a part of something much larger, in a spiritual sense, than just our own group. There is a true ministry of love and friendship that makes us brothers and sisters in the family of God. Come again, often.

Ava Reporter

HOUSTON LOCAL NEWS

A wonderful season of the year is here again. If we could only convince all men that, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." "And now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, these three: But the greatest of these is Charity."

After the verb, "to love," "to help" is the most beautiful verb in the world.

Our Merry Christmas may have depended on what others did for us . . . but our happy new year will depend on what we do for others. Remember that love weighs more than gold.

We have had a beautiful 1983 here in the Ozarks. Most of our local were privileged to attend the ordination service at Collins, Mo. It was a beautiful service. We enjoyed the beauty over the hills that day as we traveled along.

On September 13, Ron and Dee Anna Hutcheson were the proud parents of a little bundle from heaven, Nancy Kathleen. On September 18, she was blessed by Brother Leon Yates in the home of Kim and Jane Ann Stancil of Springfield, Mo.

We are living in a time when men rely on the words of men. Jer. 2:3 tells us, "they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Some people deliberately choose broken cisterns.

In Rev. 13 & 14, God warns us of things to come. We must uphold the teachings of God. We must strive to put God first.

We need to thirst for that "pure living water." And now I would that you be humble, and be submissive, and gentle, easy to be entreated, full of patience and long suffering, being temperate in all things, being diligent in keeping the commandments of God at all times, asking for whatsoever things ye stand in need, both spiritual and temporal, always returning thanks unto God for whatsoever things ye do receive, and see that ye have faith, hope and charity, and then ye will always abound in good works.

In November our visitors were Vickie Tucker and Kelly Bowman, friends of David and Doug Keeney. Our visiting ministry were Brother and Sister Gus Schwegler, and Brother and Sister John Case and family.

Those attending the Phoenix reunion from our local were Margaret, David and Diane Keeney, Lois Helseth and Ike Medders.

In December Brother Leslie Case was our speaker. His thoughts were on the hope we have in the birth and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We were blessed with a solo that day by Sandy Smith. She sang "How Great thou Art." We enjoyed having Sandy's mother and Joe Carney's friend that Sunday.

Our Paster admonishes us, "let us live as children of light." Use our time as wisely as Jesus. Night cometh when no man can work. Difficulties now face us; we must be obedient children. Give yourself as a gift to Jesus. Giving yourself to Jesus is giving yourself in service to others.

Brother Virgil Addie asked this question: What does Christ's birth mean to us? His life is our great example, so we must pray for one another. We must strive to serve him one hundred percent.

Everyone enjoyed our "Pot Luck" Christmas program on Christmas day. Little Bethane Marie Hawkins, daughter of Joanie and Steve Hawkins, was blessed by Brothers John Jones and Ike Medders. Grandad and Grandmother Keeney had all their family home for Christmas. Those out of town were Walter and Florence Kommer, Kim and Jane Ann Stancil and family and Ron and Dee Anna Hutcheson and family all from Springfield, Mo., Alzada and Harold Massey of Weatherford, Okla., Marilyn Massey of Shawnee, Okla., Bill Massey of Austin, Texas and Joanie and Steve Hawkins and family from Memphis, Tenn.

We are thankful for our blessings of life and we pray that we might live as Psalm I: 1 & 2 tells us. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night."

New Wine and Old Bottles

A Love which is wholly to their good.
"Doing unto others as we would be done by . . ."
..... Matt. 7: 12

Richly, deeply, in the divine quality of loving
written in the "fleshly tablets of the heart."
2 Cor. 3: 3, 17-18

Which may not be always to do as others wish,
Satisfying every idle whim, no
But divine love guiding the 'doing' it will
Be for the best 'good' of both they and us.
He, our Savior, is the only one who can
Transform the old bottles, these old garments
Into the "New" capable of holding
His, New Wine, able to Be, to live
His Love; made truly whole in Him.
..... 2 Cor. 5: 17-21
Eph. 4: 13

Darleen Smith

WHERE DO WE STAND?

"Thus saith the Lord your God, even Jesus Christ, the Great I AM, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end the same which looked upon the wide expanse of eternity, and all the seraphic hosts of heaven, before the world was made, the same which knoweth all things, for all things are present before mine eyes:

"I am the same which spake and the world was made, and all things came by me:

"I am the same which hath taken the Zion of Enoch into mine own bosom:

"And verily I say, even as many as have believed on my name, for I am Christ, and in mine own name, by the virtue of the blood which I have spilt, have I plead before the Father for them:

"But behold the residue of the wicked have I kept in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day, which shall come at the end of the earth, and even so will I cause the wicked to be kept, that will not hear my voice but harden their hearts, and wo, wo, wo is their doom.

"But behold, verily, verily I say unto you, that mine eyes are upon you; I am in your midst and ye cannot see me, but the day soon cometh that we shall see me and know that I am:

"For the vail of darkness shall soon be rent, and he that is not purified shall not abide the day:

"Wherefore gird up your loins and be prepared."

Verses 14-20: "And for your salvation I give unto you a commandment, for I have heard your prayers, and the poor have complained before me, and the rich have I made, and all flesh is mine, and I am no respecter to persons. And I have made the earth rich, and behold it is my footstool: wherefore, again I will stand upon it:

"And I hold forth and deign to give unto you greater riches, even a land of promise; a land flowing with milk and honey, upon which there shall be no curse when the Lord cometh, and I will give it unto you for the land of your inheritance, if ye seek it with all your hearts:

"And this shall be my covenant with you, ye shall have it for the land of your inheritance, and for the inheritance of your children forever, while the earth shall stand, and ye shall possess it again in eternity, no more to pass away:

"But verily I say unto you, that in time ye shall have no king nor ruler, for I will be your king and watch over you."

"Wherefore, hear my voice and follow me, and you shall be a free people, and ye shall have no laws but my laws, when I come, for I am your Law-giver, and what can stay my hand.

"But verily I say unto you, teach one another according to the office wherewith I have appointed

you, and let every man esteem his brother as himself, and practice virtue and holiness before me."

Verse 22: "Behold, this I give unto you a parable, and it is even as I am, I say unto you, be one; and if ye are not one, ye are not mine. And again I say unto you, that the enemy in secret chambers, seeketh your lives."

Verses 25, 26: "Wherefore, treasure up wisdom in your bosoms, lest the wickedness of men reveal these things unto you, by their wickedness, in a manner which shall speak in your ears, with a voice louder than that which shall shake the earth:

"But if ye are prepared ye shall not fear."

Question: are we prepared?

Verses 32-38: "And if ye seek the riches which it is the will of the Father to give unto you, ye shall be the richest of all people, for ye shall have the riches of eternity:

"And it must needs be that the riches of the earth is mine to give:

"But beware of pride, lest ye become as the Nephites of old.

"And again I say unto you, I give unto you a commandment, that every man both elder, priest, teacher and also member, go to with his might, with the labor of his hands, to prepare and accomplish the things which I have commanded.

"And let your preaching be the warning voice, every man to his neighbor, in mildness and in meekness.

"And go ye out from among the wicked. Save yourselves.

"Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord: even so Amen."

The above are the words of the Lord, and who can deny them?

Again I ask, are we prepared?

Your sister in Christ,
Stella Winegar

EAGLES OR OYSTERS?

When oysters were created, they were guaranteed absolute economic and social security. They were given housing (their shells) to protect them. When hungry, they simply open their mouths and food rushes in for them.

Eagles were not so fortunate. The blue sky was their limit, and they were made to provide their own housing and food. They sought out the highest mountains for their nests, where storms threaten their security. For food they fly through miles of rain, snow and winds.

The eagle, not the oyster, is the symbol of Americans.

VOICES OUT OF THE PAST

"... I had a little experience the other day which acted as a bracer to me. If in the future you find you need a little 'bracer upper' it may help you a bit.

I had picked up the Advocate, read the conference notice, some letters and other items, none of which were very encouraging. I wondered if Brother Gould was too optimistic about the feeling he found in his recent travels, I felt rather downcast and wondered just what the whole picture looked like to a disinterested person. I wondered what it looked like to God. As I sometimes do when I want to make an honest, serious analysis of a thing, I withdrew myself from it and considered it in abstract. I asked myself many questions about it from all angles. Among others, "... people are awfully like sheep. It seems easier for the average person to follow than to think. What of the Church, what of the work the Lord has said would be done?"

Sweetly, gently, quietly so easily I scarcely realized what was happening, the Spirit of the Lord came and I saw in my hand, palm open, a flower bulb as if laid there for my inspection. I thought, "Why this is no good... it is dead." So with my other hand I began to peel back the dried leaves or wrappings. I peeled off several layers and could find no sign of life. It looked so dried up that even water wouldn't revive it. Then I saw it put into the ground, moist, good earth. I did not put it there but I saw it there. I could see right through the soil and green shoots began to come up from that bulb that had looked so dead.

As I sat there and pondered over what I had seen a thought came to me, not from within me but conveyed to me, "perhaps it is necessary in God's wisdom that the church go down still further before He can work with it as He will. Perhaps it must dry up and shrivel until from all outward appearance it is dead, before new life can spring up."

I don't know whether that bulb meant our particular faction or the whole restoration but it represented God's work. I felt lifted up and encouraged....."

This experience was had by a member of the Church of Christ in the year 1942.

As sure as God puts His children in the furnace,
He will be in the furnace with them.

Spurgeon

I suspect what we think to be our best prayers,
are our worst; that we are still taking satisfaction by
the measure of much and fluent speaking.

THE TWO ANGELS

Two angels, one of life and one of death
Passed o'er our village as the morning broke;
The dawn was on their faces and beneath
The sombre houses hearsed with plumes of smoke.

The attitude and aspect were just the same,
Alike their features and their robes of white;
But one was crowned with amaranth, as with flame
And one with asphodels like flakes of light.

I saw them pause on their celestial way,
Then said I with deep fear and doubt oppressed,
"Beat not so loud my heart, lest thou betray
The place where thy beloved are at rest."

And he who wore the crown of asphodel
Decending at my door began to knock,
And my soul sank within me, as in wells
The waters sink before an earthquake's shock.

I recognized the numbless agony,
The terror and the tremor and the pain
That oft before had filled or haunted me,
And now returned with threefold strength again.

The door I opened to my heavenly guest
And listened for I thought I heard God's voice.
And, knowing whatso'er he sent was best
Dared neither to lament or to rejoice.

Then with a smile that filled the house with light,
"My errand is not death but life", he said,
And ere I answered, passing out of sight
On his celestial embassy he sped.

'Twas at thy door, Oh friend, and not at mine
The angel with the amaranthine wreath
Pausing, decended, and with voice divine
Whispered a word that had the sound like death.

Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,
A shadow on those features fair and thin,
And, softly from that hushed and darkened room
Two angels issued where but one went in.

All is of God, if he but wave his hand
The mists collect, and rain falls thick and loud
Till with a smile of light on sea and land
Lo! he looked back from the departing cloud.

Angels of life and death alike are his;
Without his leave they pass no threshold o'er.
Who, then, would wish or dare, believing this
Against his messengers to shut the door.

Author Unknown

THREE KINDS OF GIVERS

Some witty person once said: "There are three kinds of givers — the flint, the sponge and the honeycomb."

To get anything out of a flint you must hammer it, and then you get only chips and sparks.

To get water out of a sponge you must squeeze it, and the more you squeeze, the more you will get.

But the honeycomb just overflows with its own sweetness.

Some people are stingy and hard: they give nothing away if they can help it.

Others are good-natured: they yield to pressure, and the more they are pressed, the more they will give.

A few delight in giving, without being asked at all: and of these the Bible says: "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." Selected

GIVE ME BURDENS TO BEAR

(A prayer poem)

Dear Lord,

Give me burdens to bear
Give me the chance to share
In the burdens of Jesus.
The Burdens He bore for us.

Give me burdens to bear,
For Jesus did care
Enough for each soul,
That we might reach our goal.

Yes, dear Lord,

Give me burdens to bear,
I would understand, and care
About the burden Christ bore—
And the crown of thorn He wore.

Give me burdens to bear, dear Lord,
To keep me in accord
With the burdens Christ bore,
That I might reach heavens door.

When my burdens are done,
And the race I have run;
In my heavenly home
No more will I roam.

Lucinda Scott.

Wrong silence: We shall have to repent in this generation not so much for the evil deeds of the wicked people, but for the appalling silence of the good people.

Martin Luther King

When An Error Is Not A Mistake

When we are given our rewards, I would prefer to be found to have erred on the side of grace rather than judgment;

To have loved too much rather than too little;

To have forgiven the undeserving rather than

refused forgiveness to that one who deserved it;

To have fed a parasite rather than to have neglected one who was truly hungry;

To have been taken advantage of rather than to have taken undue advantage;

To have believed too much in my brothers rather than too little;

Having been wrong on the side of too much trust than too much cynicism;

To have believed the best and been wrong, than to have believed the worst and been right.

—Gerald Boyer

Taken from Pulpit Helps, published by AMG International, Chattanooga, Tenn.

The Golden Path

I walked along a golden path,
The birds were singing as I passed,
The lion roared then walked with me
And in the pastures so lush and green
The lark sang praises of the day.
The lion, the lamb, the foal, the calf,
All grazed together, there was peace at last.
The weapons of man were no more to be seen,
The former things had passed away
And there was peace in the land for a day.
As I walked along the golden path
The breeze carressed my face, the air was fresh,
The mountains ran free with new wine
And milk in abundance I did see.
On my trek I met new found friends
And from our hearts praises we did sing.
I continued on and in this path
A man I met whose beauty was unsurpassed.
He gently spoke and called me his child
And bid me to walk with him over the miles.
Suddenly everything changed,
I found I had been dreaming
Of the Millennial reign.

Mary Hunter

A prayer that says in effect, I thank you Lord that I'm not as this Pharisee, is just as false as that of the pharisee was when he prayed, I thank you that I'm not as this sinner . . . that we are not as those unconverted christians out there in the world?

CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 1984 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) will commence Sunday, April 1, 1984. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M. Monday, April 2. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, March 30 and 31, 1984.

The 1984 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) will be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 15th, 16th and 17th at Independence, Missouri.

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