

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

Volume 68

Independence, Missouri — August 1991

Number 8

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And now, if the
Lamb of God,
he being holy,
should have need
to be baptized
by water to
fulfill all
righteousness,
O then, how
much more need
have we, being
unholy, to be
baptized, yea,
even by water?

Nephi, son of Lehi

Special Issue: Baptism



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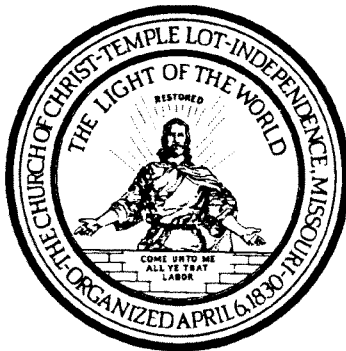
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To promote Jesus Christ as Saviour;

To promote His Teachings & His Church, the Church of Christ;

To be a voice of warning to His people; To be Zion's advocate.

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Priesthood articles and sermons, testimonies for "Path Lights," submissions to "Apocalypse Now," and news items of Church-wide interest are requested, and should be sent to the Editor as listed above. Deadline for material requiring publication in any certain month is the 10th of the previous month.

Format of Submitted Material: Please type all submissions (if possible), on one side of the paper only. Do not use "eraseable" or textured bond paper. Please avoid overuse of underlining, ALL-CAPS, and *italics*. Finally, it would be

helpful if you would be certain you are using a typewriter ribbon that gives a good, distinct image (not smudgy or too light). The most important thing, though, is to send the material — the staff can arrange for typing or otherwise prepare anything you send.

Word Processors/Computers: If you use a word processor, please use "letter quality" or "near letter quality" print. We can utilize text files on a computer floppy disk of any size or format, if it is IBM® compatible.

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Editorial ...

Baptisms



And the Lord said unto him. I give unto you power that ye shall baptize this people, when I am again ascended into heaven. And again the Lord called others, and said unto them likewise; and he gave unto them power to baptize. And he saith unto them. On this wise shall ye baptize; and there shall be no disputations among you. Verily I say unto you, that whoso repenteth of his sins through your words, and desireth to be baptized in my name, on this wise shall ye baptize them: Behold, ye shall go down and stand in the water, and in my name shall ye baptize them. And now behold, these are the words which ye shall say, calling them by name, saying: Having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. And then shall ye immerse them in the water, and come forth again out of the water. And after this manner shall ye baptize in my name, for behold, verily I say unto you, that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one, and I am in the Father, and the Father in me, and the Father and I are one. And according as I have commanded you, thus shall ye baptize. —

III Nephi 5: 21-28

How blessed we are to have laid before us in the Master's own words the power given, the method and details of baptism, the exact words to be offered, in short his commandment as given concerning this sacred ordinance! As we look at other churches expressing a belief in Jesus Christ, why is there a lack of understanding with this principle of the doctrine of Jesus Christ also found in the Bible?

There exist churches, sanctioned by our government, strictly for tax exemption purpose, that have baptized; can they be serious or do they

mock? Still others do not link baptism with repentance, the scriptures teach baptism is the first fruit of repentance. Some churches teach that baptism is just an "outward sign", but is not baptism with water for a spiritual cleansing and purification to receive the baptism with fire or in other words the laying on of hands to receive the Holy Ghost? Some churches do immerse their candidates for baptism, others wash, still others sprinkle. Some regard and do lay hands on, others never. Why the wide disparity? Why the disputations? Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, the destruction of man's soul! Why has man given way to his convenience and not found the way to keep the Lord's commandments?

It is our hope in this issue of *Zion's Advocate* not to dwell on the negatives found in other churches but to present a small cross section of what our members think, believe, and hope concerning baptisms in the light of the scriptures. "Yea, the place of Mormon, the waters of Mormon, the forest of Mormon. How beautiful are they to the eyes of them who there came to the knowledge of their Redeemer;" Mosiah 9: 66

One writer submits that parents and those older in the church have the responsibility and duty to expect something fruitful of the youth, but an example must be given the youth. Another writer tried to express the way he felt after baptism and did so simply and beautifully. Another testifies that with the confirmation of the Holy Ghost, a prophecy was given which many years later came to pass.

A Sister from Yucatan, Mexico, conquers her fear of the ocean because of her reverence for this sacred ordinance of the Gospel. A letter expressing concern for Sunday School teacher and student alike, their instruction and study of baptism, is im-

portant to all! Another article, directed toward the youth of the church, warns that society mocks commitment and more especially *spiritual* commitment.

And now I speak concerning baptism. Behold, elders, priests, and teachers were baptized; and they were not baptized, save they brought forth fruit meet that they were worthy of it; neither did they receive any unto baptism, save they came forth with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and witnessed unto the church that they truly

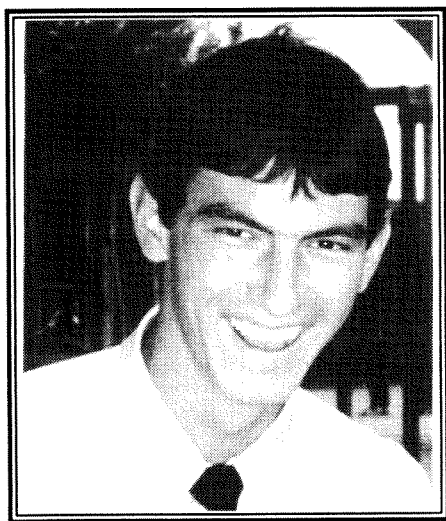


Priest Michael McGhee

repented of all their sins. And none were received unto baptism, save they took upon them the name of Christ, having a determination to serve him unto the end. And after that they had been received unto baptism, and were wrought upon and cleansed by the power of the Holy Ghost, they were numbered among the people of the church of Christ, And their names were taken, that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way, to keep them continually watchful unto prayer, relying alone upon the merits of Christ, who was the author and finisher of their faith. Moroni 6: 1-5 **ZA**



We live in societies today where morals aren't taught, and where there is an increasing lack of respect to ones commitments. Many people are also quick to laugh at those who do make commitments, especially a religious commitment. People seem to be afraid to make commitments today, and when they do, many find it hard to remain faithful to their commitments because of the pressure of the world. It is with these things in mind that I desire to write to all that would read this, especially to the young people.



Elder Joel Yates

Many religious institutions teach that baptism is not necessary to gain eternal life, and in so doing they overlook one of the most basic principles of Christ's gospel. Jesus says in St. John 3:5 "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." This scripture tells us clearly that baptism is necessary if we would enter into the Kingdom of God. Jesus himself set the example

Commitments

by being baptized when he began his ministry, and he said in Matthew 3:15 "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." We see here that in order for Christ to fulfill all righteousness he had to go down into the water and be baptized.

We read again along this same line in 2nd Nephi 13:7-14:

And now, if the Lamb of God, he being holy, should have need to be baptized by water to fulfill all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water. And now, I would ask of you, my beloved brethren, wherein the Lamb of God did fulfill all righteousness in being baptized by water?

Know ye not that he was holy? But not withstanding he being holy, he sheweth unto the children of men, that according to the flesh, he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments; Wherefore, after that he was baptized with water, the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove. And again: It sheweth unto the children of men the straightness of the path, and the narrowness of the gate, by which they should enter, he having set the example before them. And he saith unto the children of men, Follow thou me. Wherefore, my beloved brethren. Can we follow Jesus, save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father? And the Father saith, Repent ye, repent ye, and be baptized in the name of my beloved Son."

This scripture tells us clearly why we need to be baptized. It is the commandments of the Father, and it is the way to open the gate to eternal

life. Jesus tells us again in St. Mark 16:15-16, just how important baptism is when he spoke to this disciples and said "Go ye into all the World, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be dammed." Most of us have heard many people say all you have to do to be saved is believe, but Jesus himself told them in this quote that baptism is necessary to be saved. Hebrews 6:1-2 tells us that baptism is one of the doctrines of Christ, and thereby important to our spiritual life if we would be saved in the Kingdom of God.

I want now to turn to a different aspect of baptism and write about the commitments that a person must make if they desire to be baptized. The first commitment we must be able to make is the same commitment that Christ made, which is to witness unto the Father that we would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments (2nd Nephi 13:9). Again, in Mosiah 9:39-41, we find several commitments that one must be able to make if they would be baptized.

And now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light; Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times, and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life:

Now I say unto you, If this be the desires of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have en-

tered into a covenant with him that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?

After reading these scriptures it is easy to see that the commitments that a person must be willing to make to be baptized are very serious and will demand the rest of their life to faithfully keep these commitments.

Another aspect of baptism that is important to understand, is that when you are baptized you take upon yourself the name of Christ. In his letter to the Galatians (3:27), Paul says "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." The Book of Mormon says it a little differently but the meaning is the same. Moroni 6:3: "And none were received unto baptism, save they took upon them the name of Christ, having a determination to serve him unto the end."

In 3rd Nephi 12:18, Jesus told us the importance of taking upon us the name of Christ when he said "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;"

We have shown the importance of baptism and the commitments that go with it, and that by baptism we

Are we ashamed, because of the pressures of our world, to take upon us the name of Christ?

take on the name of Christ. I desire, now, to write to those who have not been baptized.

Baptism is a commitment that must be made individually, and no one should ever be forced to make such a commitment. This kind of a commitment must be made only when a person desires with all their heart to serve God and be faithful to His commandments. The thing that concerns me about our day, is that so many people are unwilling to make

such a commitment to Christ. I see young people who have grown up in church that seem to be unwilling to make a commitment to baptism and, even though they are good people, it doesn't seem like they really want to serve God that much.



A Prophecy in Mormon 4:52-53 speaks to these people that are uncommitted to Christ and it asks the question to them still today: "Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do ye not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness, than that misery which never dies, because of the praise of the world?" The prophet who asked this question of us was shown our day and age, so this question should be asked of ourselves. Are we ashamed, because of the pressures of our world, to take upon us the name of Christ?

It is my hope and prayer that our young people would wake up to the ways of Christ, and make the commitments necessary to inherit life eternal.

ZA

"It Seems Odd That I Even Know How To Talk"

The following testimony is taken from the January, 1977 issue of, Zion's Advocate:

Scot Phillips Bush and Sheena Lea Bush were baptized and received the laying on of hands September 19, 1976 at Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Apostle Joseph W. Kidd officiated.

Scot and Sheena, grandchildren of Mr. and Mrs. Ray C. Phillips of Manchester, Tennessee, were received as members of the Oak Ridge, Tennessee Local Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Lee Bush, parents of Scot and Sheena, reside at 200 Rose Street, Manchester, Tennessee.

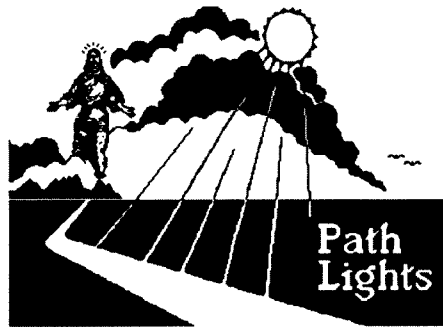
Returning home after services in Oak Ridge, riding in the car, Scot turned to his grandmother and made the following comment: "I just feel like a brand new person."

Grandmother responded: "That is the way you are supposed to feel—." Scot interrupted: "I know, but this is different—it just seems like when you are a new baby and it just seems odd that I even know how to talk. I just can't really explain it."

It seems apparent that Scot, 12 years old, has experienced the "new birth" in a very special way.

We welcome Scot and Sheena into the greatest family upon the earth—the family of Christ.

Scot is now 27 years old. Submitted by his Grandmother,

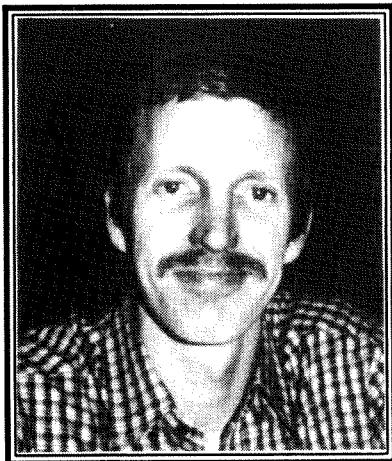


Virginia K. Phillips



Confession/Witness Before Baptism?

Abraham Lincoln claimed that "all that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother," and Clarence Thomas, the most recent Supreme Court Justice nominee, testified that his early parochial school training was a great benefit, because they "expected" something out of him. In America, someone seems to be "out to lunch" when it comes to instilling within our children a vision of excellence and a rigid view that something indeed is expected of our children.



Priest Randy Sheldon

What is that essence that infuses within the mind that mediocrity is not enough, that mindset bent on victory with its eye unwavering from the goal? For the Christian, it's divine inspiration is the empowering spirit of God, its the memory of Christ having gained the victory with the promise that we shall, too, if we struggle successfully through to the end.

To be specific, look around in the Church of Christ and see if the youth are singing in the congrega-

tions. Are they testifying or saying their prayers, reading their scriptures? Are they involved in the things of God? If not, why not? You might say that all young people are like that and you might be right, but the steadfast soldiers of the past and the hopes for our future were and are people who were like Mr. Lincoln and others, molded and encouraged to be what they are. Something was expected of them!

What is expected of them? Everything! God demands all of you, not some. He wants a great deal, not a little, and he's asking for your death before he can consider your life. (Rom.6:1-11) How do we know that he wants these things? His word says so. His word says that we are his witnesses (Isa,10:12); also on the basis of the "Great Commission to go out into all the world and preach the gospel"(Mark 16:15). We can't do that unless the fundamental impulse to witness and testify and sing of his glory regardless of wherever we are has been established in our hearts(Mosiah 9:39-40). And who can assist in the establishing of that impulse? The parents.

When can you first make a commitment? The day of your baptism.

The individual who does this is very similar to an old hazardous building that is crumbling down. The only thing that can be done is to rebuild from the foundation up. If the foundation is not built solid or correctly, the new building becomes as much a hazard as the old. Several years ago in the Hyatt Hotel in Kansas City, a suspended walkway fell, killing scores of people - the collapse a result of shoddy workmanship. The scriptures speak clearly of our beginning underpinnings - how we should start after trusting in faith upon the Lord Jesus, so that we need not collapse.

We start with repentance, but to whom have we confessed our sins?

"And whosoever repented of their sins and did confess them, then he did number among the people of the church. And those that would not confess their sins and repent of their iniquity, the same were not numbered among the people of the church and their names were blotted out." (Mosiah 11:144-145) In another place it says, "And as many as believed on his words, went forth and sought for Nephi, and when they had come forth and found him, they confessed unto him their sins and denied not, desiring that they might be baptized unto the Lord." (Helamen 5:110)

People who are not accustomed to telling the truth have great difficulty with confession because they yet desire to hide behind a cloak of secrecy. But if we come to Jesus we come as we are into the light and out of darkness all the way. One of the best services I remember included the confession of a young lady steeped in sin. Following this petition came the answer to her requests for power and prayers to overcome. There was power in that body of believers as they answered with their compassion.

Public disclosure of sin sends a message that sin has met its conqueror.

The sham of hypocrisy will be cut at the root if we begin in the scriptural way. Public disclosure of sin sends a message that sin has met its conqueror. It serves notice to the Devil and witnesses to the sinner, besides reinforcing to the candidate the gravity of the commitment.

If that young person has been taught right according to scripture, he (or she) will know he must witness of the Lord before others. He

will have seen Mom and Dad doing it and it won't be strange for him. One thing he will have learned is that he and God are a majority of two. When you have that kind of faith, intimidation by others is minimized.

I just heard in a recent testimony of a young lady (who leads a group of women in an exercise class) that was approached by another woman about having a circle of prayer at the time of the Desert Storm Conflict. This young lady marvelled at the courage it took and wished she possessed that kind of bravado. It's that kind that is going to make a difference in this world.

Dr. James Dobson, famous Christian psychologist and author, speaks of the time he was invited to a primarily women's seminar to sit around in a circle presided over by another individual. To make everyone relax, the one in charge asked this lady, then another, if they would like to go up and get a cup of coffee at the coffee machine. The first couple refused, then he was asked. He said he would, and then got up to get a cup. Immediately, everyone got up and crowded around the

coffee table. This is a poignant example of the herding instinct born out of insecurity. The child of God knows that he follows none other and, though he may have a certain degree of fear, will do what he is supposed to and that is: Witness of the God who created him.

The Bible says "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven, but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 10:32)

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved, for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:9-10)

The songs we sing testify of our belief: "I love to tell the Story," "Are you witnessing for Him," "We've a story to tell to the Nations.

The word "witness" in Greek is "Martus, or Martur," and signifies one

that gives testimony to the truth at the expense of his life. It is in this sense that the word is mainly used in the New Testament, and our word "martyr" had come from this also (Crudens Complete Concordance).



In conclusion, remember that we are to be dead to ourselves but alive in Christ. We are taught by our parents to meet the challenges of the world and those of God. We must confess our sins and witness before God and his people *before* the ordinance of baptism is performed, for thus is it stated:

...neither did they receive any unto baptism, save they came forth with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and witnessed unto the church that they truly repented of all their sin's. — Moroni 6:2

Oliver's Baptism

Last summer, when I was 10 years old, I decided to get baptized and asked my Dad to baptize me and I asked Apostle Roland Sarratt to Confirm me so I could receive the Holy Ghost. I learned about baptism in Sunday School and from my Mom and Dad, and I felt I wanted to become a part of God's family and go through the "gate" my Dad taught me about. My dad and I had a discussion on some things about what it really meant to be baptized, and I understood. We also discussed what to do at the baptism, what he would say and what I would do. We agreed to both fast until after the service on Sunday and so we did.

On Sunday we went to the Brantner's, near Lone Jack, Missouri. My Mom and Dad talked to Brother & Sister Brantner until the people came. Dad said the weather forecast called for rain and possible thunder and lightning — and I was going to be baptized outside. So we had a family prayer Saturday night asking God to make it not rain. God answered our prayers, because it was sunny and nice all Sunday morning until at least after the services were over.

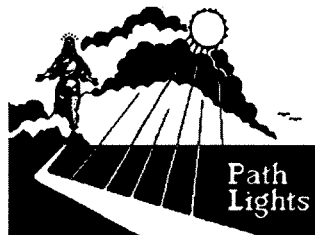
We went down stairs and sat down in our seats. We

sang a song and had a prayer then we went outside and walked to the pond where I was to be baptized. Everyone stood around the pond and sang songs, then my Dad gave the message from the scriptures — mostly talking to me. I told why I wanted to be baptized. We went into the water and my Dad baptized me. When I started to come up out of the water I saw and felt the bad spirit leave my body and disappear into the water. When I got up, me and my Dad walked out of the water. We dried off and everybody walked back to the Brantner's basement where the services are held. Then I was confirmed and received the gift of the Holy Ghost. We had the hand of fellowship.

Darl Temple and my Mom sang a special song.

I think part of the reason God allowed me to have the vision during the baptism was because I decided to fast up until the day arrived for the baptism and the service was over. I am very glad I was baptized and I hope to remember how important it is to fast and do without food and pleasures to show God how important I think something is.

Oliver Housknecht

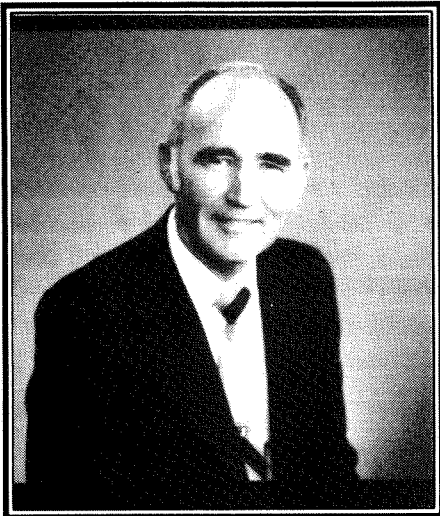


Into the Depths of the Sea



The wind blew steadily out of the north and decorated the green waters of the Gulf of Mexico with whitecaps. Jay and I were standing with our Indian brethren looking out toward the rising surf as Elder Roger Can prepared to begin the service. The sight was not very reassuring to Sister Bonafacia, age 74, who had never seen a larger body of water than the well from which she daily drew her family's supply.

We had spent the previous night in front of Roger's home so we could get an early start to the beach. Since there is no standing water in all of Yucatan we travel to the ocean for our baptismal services and try to arrive early before the wind kicks up the surf. Since a norte had been blowing, all our efforts were to no avail - the surf was running high for this coast on the Gulf of Mexico.



Apostle Don McIndoo

We awoke early the morning of February 21st and awaited the candidates for baptism. Sr. Bonafacia and some of her family members arrived early, but we had to wait a little while for Juan, age 22, and his sister, Nelly del Carmen, age 17, to arrive from Kopte, a little village five miles away. When all had arrived we loaded our camper with 7 or 8 and drove northward to the town of Telchac Puerto on the coast. It is almost impossible now to find a private place for a baptismal service since all the beach front has been bought by rich people for vacation homes or coconut plantations.

We found a place at the edge of town where we could walk down to the beach. Gathering at the edge of the water, we all knelt in the warm sand as Roger invited Nelly, the youngest of the candidates, to open our service with prayer. (Most of our ministry in Mexico do not feel a person is ready for baptism if they do not pray and bear their testimony during church services.) There was little thought given to the people idly walking around us, since on previous occasions some of them had joined us in the service and enjoyed it greatly. Rising again we joined in song, after which Roger read the text from Micah 7 which includes the appropriate words, "... and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

Jay and I both had our books in hand because we knew one of us would be asked to give a sermonette. Sure enough, the lot fell to me this time. I already had my pockets empty and my shoes off for it was to be my turn to assist with the baptisms. Invariably, two members of the ministry accompany the candidates into the water. I imagine this custom began with members who were somewhat afraid of the large expanse of ocean, the tug of currents

beneath the surface and the force of the surf above.

Today it was necessary: Sr. Bonafacia had an unhealed broken arm and the pounding of the surf could be quite dangerous. As we took our places in the water it was less than hip-high one moment and over the shoulders of our sister the next. Although she had great difficulty in keeping her footing, she didn't lose her composure nor was there any sign of fear - just a reverence for the sacred ordinance of the Gospel. Nelly and Juan were baptized in turn. After the last baptism, Juan asked the closing prayer for the solemn and sacred service.

We were able to use the camper for our dressing room. While each of the candidates, then Roger and I, took our respective turns changing (I think I took longer than anyone) the remainder of our party picked up pretty seashells from the beach. Later we stopped at a little open-air restaurant at the edge of town where Jay and I bought an inexpensive fish dinner for all the party. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship as well as the change of diet.

Ordinarily the confirmation service would take place in the chapel on the same evening. In Mexico the confirmation service is never squeezed in between other services - it comprises the entire evening, with a sermon about the subject, special music and the confirmation. But on this day Jay and I had to drive the 200-odd miles to Cancun to pick up Brother Case and Brother Brickhouse, so the confirmation service was to be postponed until the following week when we could all be there.

When we arrived in Motul the next Tuesday all was ready for a full evening. The congregation of Motul was present as was the congregation of Kote. It was an enjoyable and memorable service for all. The local

children and Young People had prepared a lot of special music, Chris Moser sang a solo while the Bruner and Kauffman quartet sang a number of beautiful songs, all remembered to this day. Jay and I then presented some scriptures and thoughts about the reception of the Holy Ghost and then proceeded with the confirmation of the three new members. Later there were two children

to be blessed. Leslie and Buzz blessed one of them as he gurgled and played with their neckties and

Most of our ministry in Mexico do not feel a person is ready for baptism if they do not pray and bear their testimony during church services.

then Rodger and Allen blessed the other (It was a case of love at first sight).



The hand of fellowship was extended to our three new members and then the entire group retired to the patio in back of the church where we visited, fellowshiped and ate roast pig. It was a fitting conclusion to a long, eventful day. Most importantly, it was a day Bonafacia, Juan and Nelly would always remember and cherish.

New Meaning to Precious Memories

I remember as a child, wishing that I could be baptized. I asked my mother on numerous occasions if I could do so, but I was thought too young, and was held off a while. One day when I was ten, my mother came to me and asked me if I would still desire to be baptized. I readily agreed. There were three of us to be baptized that day. We were to be the first ones at the then "New East Local", to be given this privilege. How I anticipated that event, and how it means so much more to me even now. I was taken into the water by Apostle William Sheldon. How lovingly he took me through that most important event in my life.

Later, the Laying on of Hands for the reception of the Holy Spirit was performed by Apostle William Anderson. I remember at the time, being thrilled by the words he spoke, but I'm afraid that within a short time, I soon forgot what was said, but the words he spoke would forever remain with my mother.

It wasn't until after I was married for several years, that my mother reminded me of the words spoken some ten to fourteen years before during that confirmation. It was given that the man I would marry, would someday be a missionary and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When I met, dated and then married my husband Steve, I had definitely not evaluated him on the basis that he might someday be a missionary. I guess, you could say that this was probably the furthest thing from my

mind. Steven is and always has been a very loving, kind and generous person, but I would not have attached the label "spiritual" to him at that time. I did not recall that admonition during these years, so it was much to my surprise when my mother reminded me of it one day. At this time, though we always attended church, we both were not "giving our all." Also, Steven has always been

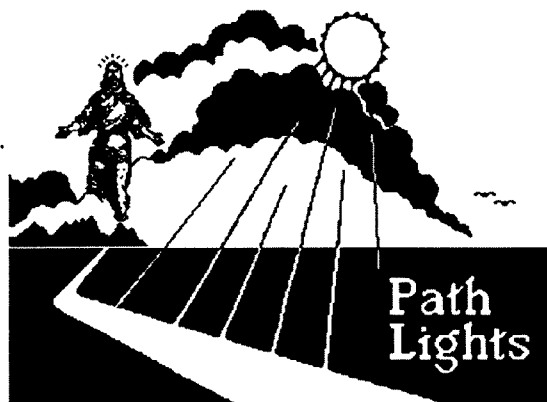
a very shy person, never wanting to draw attention to himself. If at that point in time, I had said that he was to one day be a missionary, he probably would have fled. So it was, that my mother and I decided never to say a word to Steven, or to anyone regarding that admonition lest someone should let it slip to him.

Even now, almost 28 years after my baptism, I remember that day. It has new meaning and a fresh impact whenever I see my husband stand behind the pulpit to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Yes, I eventually told him of that admonition, but not until after he had accepted his call and was ordained.

Do I believe in the literal fulfillment of the scriptures and prophecy? YES! "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isaiah 55:11.

Melissa McShee



Does your Sunday School have a planned curriculum?

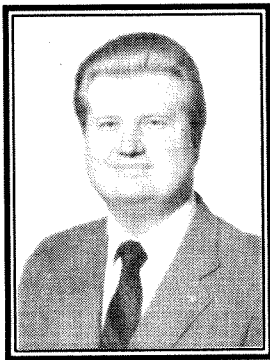


Reading, (W)riting & Baptism

Would you consider, even for a moment, sending any of your children to a school that could not guarantee that reading, (w)riting and (a)rithmetic, would be taught? After all, these three "R's" are the very heart and soul of any good education. The question is rhetorical, of course, since any parent with common sense would not send their children to such a school.

Now turn your thoughts to an education that, to any believer in God and the glorious eternal life He has offered, is far more important than the secular education mentioned above. If you have never thought of Sunday School in the same manner as your children's secular school, you should start now. That is, if you are concerned about the subjects being taught, the quality of the teachers, and the educational goals at your children's school, you should be at least as concerned about the same things at your children's Sunday School.

I can't believe there would be a single Sunday School teacher, or Sunday School Superintendant in all



Elder Gary A. Housknecht

of the Church of Christ that would be offended if concerns were expressed by a parent, or if someone questioned the content of the local Sunday School's curriculum (if one even exists). That is what our local business meetings are for; that is what periodic interim Sunday School staff meetings are for — to objectively analyze your Sunday School structure and catch (and correct) weaknesses. Some common sense agenda items or questions you might ask at your meeting about your own Sunday School program, might be like these:

1. Is each student in each class responding and participating, at least minimally? And, if not, is he or she in the right level of class? Just like in our secular schools, it is sometimes advantageous to hold a child back another year, or move them to a more advanced class. Does a child have some personal problem about which you might need to discuss privately? Are there some methods that a teacher might use to help bring the shy and withdrawn into class participation?

2. Are there sound or visual distractions for any particular class that could be corrected?

3. Has each teacher arranged for qualified replacements through the Superintendant for times when they won't be there? And has the teacher briefed the replacement teacher?

4. There may be complaints, questions, suggestions, etc., from parents or the congregation that need to be discussed — and dealt with appropriately.

5. Are there problems of excess noise or too much "lobby-lingering" between Sunday School and the start of regular Sunday services? Deal with them, if there are. Incidentally,

the Pastor of the Local Church should be an integral part of the Sunday School, especially the occasional business and planning meetings you have.

6. Do any of the teachers need help and/or suggestions about teaching a particularly difficult subject? To one teacher, a subject might be a natural — quite easy — while another might really struggle with it.

7. Are there discipline problems that need to be discussed and/or prayed about?

8. Reminders by the Superintendant about being on time each Sunday (early enough to at least set up for class and have a few moments of prayer and silent reflection on that day's lesson plan — before the appointed hour arrives).

9. General Sunday School Association matters from the General Church, such as Sunday School collection tithing to the GSSA, teaching material needs and concerns, etc.

10. Etc., etc., etc. It is easy to see why there should be regular meetings throughout the year, not just the annual Sunday School business meeting where officers and teachers are elected or appointed.

These are just a few examples of what needs to be considered an integral part of a Sunday School program. However, I left out one of the most important, and at the same time, one of the most frequently found missing from our local Sunday Schools: The *Program Outline* for your local's Sunday School. This outline, at a minimum, should include these three items:

1. **GOAL/PURPOSE:** The general educational goal that each individual teacher, and the staff collectively, will strive to achieve for each student, young and old.

2. **STANDARDS:** Minimum

teacher qualifications for each class. You might require a priesthood member to teach a certain age-level and above; Church of Christ membership; etc.

3. CURRICULUM: A curriculum doesn't have to be anything more than a listing of each subject that should be covered during any given student's Christian education.

"Reading, writing and baptism" ... the title of this article ... is really attempting to ask if you are certain your child will be taught about Christian baptism during his or her years working their way through Sunday School. Any other subject could be substituted in this analogy, but I am using "baptism" because this issue of *Zion's Advocate* is focusing on Baptism, and because, of all the subjects that need to be covered in Sunday School, baptism is one of the most important (perhaps THE most important of all). Baptism is at least the Christian equivalent of knowing how to read and write to survive in this world.

Other articles that appear in *Zion's Advocate*, and sermons heard over the pulpits of the land, deal adequately with the significance of baptism, so I will say no more of that here. However, if there is one item I would hope and pray that you will believe and do something about, it is the cold fact that it is entirely too possible that your son or daughter could conceivably go through many years of Sunday School having never been taught the essentials of this, or any other subject. This subject must be covered in Sunday School in addition to what your children may pick up in sermons, prayer services and at home. "School" is designed primarily to educate (implant something in our brains), while sermons and testimonies are primarily for inspiration (implant something in our hearts). Both are needed.

Let me give an example of how this could happen. At no fault of any individual teacher, Jimmy (a name I

have chosen simply for illustration purposes) has advanced through the various levels of Sunday School, from age 4 through 16, but has never formally been taught about baptism. Without going into a detailed account, it is simply that when Jimmy passed through each level of Sunday School, that happened to be a period during which that particular teacher was not covering the subject of baptism. When Jimmy moved up to the next level, the teacher from the previous level started on the subject of baptism — his new teacher had just finished! And so forth

Far fetched? Not really, and how do you know a particular teacher cov-

There is nothing wrong with having a stated purpose and curriculum — it won't "crush the Spirit" of inspiration and guidance — it is simply using your God-given common sense and intelligence to organize yourselves a little.

ers the subject of Baptism at all? As I said in the example, it is not the fault of any one teacher; it is the failure to have a well-planned Sunday School Program. No one needs to dictate to any teacher how to teach a class, or require that a certain subject should be mentioned for a certain number of weeks at a certain time of the year, etc. Each teacher seeks their inspiration directly from God, and may have their own peculiar method of teaching, and materials —

and this is how it should be. However, it is a necessity to have at least a simple statement of the three minimal items I listed above for the "Program," and just enough of a "plan" to carry it out.



The subject of baptism, for instance, is important enough that the subject be covered well, especially between the ages of about eight through ten. These are the years that many children reach that intangible stage in life when they become "accountable for their sins" and are able and ripe to understand the basic principles of faith, repentance, baptism, and the receiving of the Holy Ghost. So all that may be required is to assure that baptism is taught at least once by some teacher during these years for each child.

How? Perhaps, for one example, by a simple "Certificate of Completion" that you can either buy at a bible book store or make yourself. Give the original to the Child and/or parent, and a copy to be kept on file at the Church. In this way, the teacher receiving a new student beyond age 10, for instance, can check the local Sunday School records to be certain he or she was taught about baptism. If not, that teacher can simply plan to teach the subject sometime in the near future while that student is in the class. It won't hurt if there are some in the class that have already been taught, for it is a subject that cannot be taught too often.

Complicated? Only if you choose to make it so. The simpler the Sunday School Program the better, as long as it accomplishes what you intend. There is nothing wrong with having a stated purpose and curriculum — it won't "crush the Spirit" of inspiration and guidance — it is simply using your God-given common sense and intelligence to organize yourselves a little. God, after all, does help those that help themselves.

ZA



From Zion's Advocate, February, 1950, page 18

Nephi's Plainness

Apostle Leon A. Gould

Plainness of speech was characteristic of Nephi, and his soul delighted in it, and all who love truth must also take delight in the plainness of Nephi's teaching. The object of this plainness is stated in this language:

"My soul delighteth in plainness unto my people, that they may learn." II Nephi 11:7

Other prophets sometimes made statements that were veiled, and the truths contained therein were hidden, and could only be understood when compared with and interpreted by the plain teachings of men like Nephi.

It is so plain that a child can understand it ...

Chapter 13 of Second Nephi is a concrete example of his plainness of speech and the simpleness of his teaching. It is one of the most comprehensive chapters that we find in scripture. And considering the subject matter contained therein, one could almost say that it contains a "fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ." And the language is so plain and simple that a child of eight years, or one who has come of the years of accountability, can easily grasp and understand it. We turn to it and quote:

And now I, Nephi, make an end of my prophesying unto you, my beloved brethren. And I can not write but a few things, which I know must surely come to pass; neither can I write but a few of the words of my brother Jacob. Wherefore the things which I have

written, sufficeth me, save it be a few words which I must speak, concerning the doctrine of Christ; wherefore I shall speak unto you plainly, according to the plainness of my prophesying. For my soul delighteth in plainness; for after this manner doth the Lord God work among the children of men. For the Lord God giveth light unto the understanding; for he speaketh unto men according; for he speaketh unto men according to their language, unto their understanding.

Nephi was writing this about the year 545 B.C. He had been prophesying to his brethren concerning the coming of Christ and the things that would take place almost 600 years later. He continues:

Wherefore, I would that ye should

remember that I have spoken unto you, concerning that prophet which the Lord shewed unto me, that should baptize the Lamb of God, which should take away the sin of the world.

Nephi had a foreknowledge of that which would take place in the future, when John should baptize the Son of God, an account of which we find in Matthew, as follows:

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw

the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The question has often been asked: If baptism is for the remission of sins, and Christ was without sin, why then did it become necessary for him to be baptized to "fulfill all righteousness?" Nephi understood why, and gives the answer in simple language, after stressing the greater need for our baptism:

And now, if the Lamb of god, he being holy, should have need to be baptized by water to fulfill all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water. And now, I would ask of you, my beloved brethren, wherein the Lamb of God did fulfill all righteousness in being baptized by water? Know ye not that he was holy?

But notwithstanding he being holy, he sheweth unto the children of men, that according to the flesh, he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments: wherefore after he was baptized with water, the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove.

The purpose of his baptism is here made plain. First to show unto the children of men, that he, while in the flesh, humbled himself before his Father who was in heaven; and, second, as a witness unto his Father that he was obedient in keeping His commandments.

It is so plain that a child can understand it; and how we, too, in going down into the water, humble

ourselves before our Father in heaven, and before our fellow men, and also we witness before our heavenly Father that we will be obedient unto Him in keeping His commandments. There is also something else connected with the ordinance of baptism that is important to us:

And again: It sheweth unto the children of men the straightness of the path, and the narrowness of the gate, by which they should enter, he having set the example before them.

Nephi understood full well the narrowness of the way that leads to life, and that Christ, through his obedience, emphasized that fact; and that he commanded his followers to do likewise:

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: ... because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” - Matthew 7:13, 14

Nephi continues:

And he said unto the children of men, Follow thou me. Wherefore my beloved brethren, can we follow Jesus save ye shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father?

Hear now the voices to which Nephi hearkened:

And the Father said, Repent ye, repent ye, and be baptized in the name of my beloved Son.

No one can misunderstand that, except through willful disobedience. *And also, the voice of the Son came unto me, saying, He that is baptized in my name, to him will the Father give the Holy Ghost, like unto me; wherefore follow me, and do the things ye have seen me do.*

There is no need to go into a trance, or to have a revelation from any source, to understand that kind of language:

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I know that if ye shall follow the Son with full purpose of heart,

acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism: yea, by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water, according to his word; behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost; yea, then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost; and then can ye speak with the tongues of angels, and shout praises unto the Holy One of Israel.

But behold, my beloved brethren, thus came the voice of the son unto me, saying, After ye have repented of your sins, and witnessed unto the Father that you are willing to keep my commandments, by the baptism of water, and have received the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost, and can speak with a new tongue, yea, even with the tongues of angels, and after this, should deny me, it would have been better for you, that ye had not known me.

And I heard a voice from the Fa-

ther, saying, yea, the words of my beloved, are true and faithful. He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.

And now, my beloved brethren, I know this, that unless a man shall endure to the end, in following the example of the Son of the living God, he can not be saved; wherefore, do the things which I have told you I have seen, that your Lord and your Redeemer should do: For, this cause have they been shown unto me, that ye might know the gate by which ye should enter.

Nephi tells in few words the gate by which we 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.



Baptism of water and of the Spirit is for the “remission of sins.” And this is the gate taught to Nicodemus by the Master, when he said: “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.” - John 3:5.

This is the gate, and the only gate by which we enter into the way of life:

And then are ye in this straight 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 witnesses of the Father and the Son, unto the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that

Nephi understood full well the narrowness of the way (baptism) that leads to life, and that Christ (having been baptized) ... commanded his followers to do likewise:

if ye entered in by the way, ye should receive.

In the foregoing quotations the Father repeatedly bears witness of the Son, by his own voice; and the Son repeatedly bears witness of the Father by His own voice; and the Holy Ghost bears witness of both the Father and the Son:

And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this straight 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,

Baptism of water and of the Spirit ... is the gate, and the only gate by which we enter into ... eternal life.

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen.

How simple and plain Nephi makes it: The voice of the Father speaking to Nephi, and telling him

that men must repent and be baptized in the name of His beloved Son, and declaring that the words of His beloved were true and faithful.

The voice of the Son, speaking to Nephi nearly 600 years before he took upon Himself flesh, testifying that His Father would give the Holy Ghost to all those who were baptized in the name of His Son, and would follow in His footsteps.

And then they would receive the Holy Ghost to bear witness of both the Father and the Son.

As the Apostle Paul said, so say we:

“Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” - Galatians 1:8

Wake Up Camp Anniversary

Due to mounting sentiment and repeated request, 1991 will see a 25th anniversary gathering in memory of the Wake Up Camp. The old site at Bemidji is not available and the Reed family is no longer there. However, the **Tri-State Reunion** will provide time and place for being together. Release time and social schedule in the Reunion will allow ample occasion for reminiscing. George and Lovita Reed plan to attend.

Your inquiry and plans may be addressed to:

Thomas Maley
13021 Rich Valley Boulevard
Rosemount, Minnesota 55068

The date for the Reunion is August 30 - September 1, and will be held at Whitewater Youth Camp, Whitewater State Park, Altura, Minnesota, about 8 miles north of St. Charles.

Please plan to attend!

Puryear, Tennessee Reunion

The members of the Puryear, Tennessee, local Church of Christ (Temple Lot) invite all who can do so to join with them in love for a time of fellowship and Spiritual edification at the 1991 Puryear, Tennessee reunion.

The reunion will be held October 12-13, 1991, at the church at Foundry Hill near Puryear.

For information contact:

Robin Cox
Rt. #1, Box 79
Paris, TN 38242
phone (901) 644-0143

or

Glenn Gill
1761 N. 73rd Terrace, Apt. 4
Kansas City, KS 66112
phone (913) 299-6525

“One Lord, one faith, one baptism” — Ephesians 4:5

When Ye Shall See

One day as Christ sat upon the amount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3).

Jesus answered by telling them of many things that would prevail upon the earth preceding His coming. He said that many would come in His name proclaiming Him to be the Christ and yet would deceive many. They have! He said we would hear of wars and rumors of wars. We have! And He said there would be famines, pestilences and earthquakes. This has also been true. And because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold. Is this not so today? Last of all He foretold that there would come those who would claim that they themselves are the Christ. The most notable of these is the so-called "Maitreya" who proclaims himself to be the Christ returned. Today this individual is secluded in some secret place in London, England, having arrived there by jet from some place in the east. A full page spread in the *USA Today* newspaper heralded his return to earth some few years ago.

In the midst of these things, however, **THIS GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM** shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come. This has only just begun. But to them which reside in Judea, Christ issued this warning (emphasis throughout by H.E.S.):

When ye therefore shall see the

ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place ... Then let them ... flee into the mountains. — (Matt 24:15)

This, with haste, not returning to take anything from these houses, "For there shall be great tribulation (Matt. 24:21) unlike anything before or after it. Paul, in Luke 21, identifies this abomination as Jerusalem



Harvey E. Seibel

compassed with armies, then, says the Lord, "know that the desolation thereof is nigh." (Luke 21:20)

A sign is now given which reveals the day and time in which we live. For, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the

times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). And there shall be great trouble on the earth and signs in the heavens. Then, says Christ, "This generation shall not pass away, till ALL be fulfilled." (Luke 21:31-32)

Here is one of the great signs pinpointing our day, a day in which we may expect the return of Christ. For the generation witnessing the fulfillment of Gentiles times will also witness the return of the Lord.

What a wonderful and terrible time to be alive. What a century in which to have been born and to witness the very things which the prophets of old only saw in vision, and longed to see fulfilled in their day.

The beginning of the fulfillment of Gentile times really commenced in 1917 when Turkish rule in Palestine was overthrown. That same year witnessed the rise of atheistic communism in Russia fulfilling the prophecy in Ezekiel that, when the day of the Lord came, it would be the time of the heathen. Then, in 1948, Judah became a nation again, regaining sovereignty for the first time in more than 2000 years. The six day war in 1967 completed the process, fulfilling the prophecy concerning Jerusalem and the Gentiles, and pinpointing our generation as the one which will witness the end of the world and the return of Christ.

In summary, the rise of the heathen (the time of the heathen), the ending of Gentile times, and the regaining of Jewish sovereignty, are three great signs which identify the day in which we live.

WE NEED YOUR HELP: The Advocate staff is soliciting your contributions to this column. The purpose of "Apocalypse Now!" is to reveal, through *current* world and local news, that some prophecy from the Bible, Book of Mormon or latter-day revelation has been fulfilled (even if only in part). The source of the news item can be any local, national, or international newspaper or magazine since about 1970. Please indicate the exact name, date and page of your source.

Even if you only "suspect" that something may be a fulfillment of prophecy, send it in! You don't need to make any commentary, but if so inclined, you may do so, adding related scriptures, etc. "Thanks," in advance, for your help.

Please send all material to: **Harvey E. Seibel, 9800 E. 32nd Street, Independence, Mo 64052**

MARY LOIS BRYANT

Mary Lois Bryant was born Mary Lois Harris to Vance H. and Lois Harris at Union, Nebraska, January 10, 1936. The family moved to Omaha, Nebraska, where she received her elementary education. In the spring of 1952, when Mary Lois was 16, the family moved to Independence, Missouri. There she graduated from William Chrisman High School in the spring of 1955.

At ages nine and twelve, Mary Lois suffered through two sieges of rheumatic fever and was never able to participate in the activities enjoyed by those of her age because of a heart impairment. She was extremely talented in sewing and music and devoted many hours to those activities. She composed songs and music in praise of the Savior and raised her voice in that praise time after time in many places.

On August 24, 1947, at age eleven, Mary Lois committed her life to Christ through the waters of baptism and became a member of the Church of Christ in Independence. At a church reunion in Puryear, Tennessee, she met Loren Daniel Bryant of Cowgill, Missouri, who had a short time before returned to the United States after his release from a prisoner of war camp following the Korean War. They were united in marriage at the Church of Christ in Independence on May 28, 1955.

Loren took his bride to their new home on his farm in the Georgeville area at Cowgill. Here Mary Lois became very active in the church at Georgeville and in the community. Her devotion to Christ was her life. She was pianist, the children's Sunday School teacher, and a devoted member in the Georgeville Church of Christ. She served as chaplain of the Georgeville Women's Extension Club in Ray County and of the Ladies Auxiliary of the American Legion at Cowgill. In the latter capacity, a monthly program in the Braymer Golden Age Nursing Home was among her duties. She also served on the Welfare Advisory Board of Ray County.

Mary Lois Bryant passed from this life of probation in the Independence Re-

gional Health Center, Independence, Missouri, June 16, 1991. The funeral service was from the Pitts Funeral Home in Braymer, Missouri. Elder Marvin M. Case delivered the sermon. He was assisted by Elders Alvin L. Harris and Glenn Gill. Interment was in the Braymer Evergreen Cemetery with Elder Gerald R. Bryant assisting in that service.

Survivors include her husband, Loren, of the home; a son, John Loren; a daughter-in-law, Sharon Kay; and two grandsons, Joshua Daniel (3) and Joseph Glen (20 months) of Kansas City, Missouri; a foster son, Alfred Eugene Silvery and family, Richmond, Missouri; one brother, Alvin L. Harris, and a sister, Martha L. Bruner, Independence; a sister, Margret E. Gill, Kansas City, Kansas; her mother, Lois Harris, Cowgill, Missouri; and a host of relatives and friends.

Music was furnished on the organ by Grace Rudd. A nephew, David Rudd, and two nieces, Karen Claypole and Melody Christian, sang "Sweet Hour Of Prayer" and "Blessed Hour Of Prayer." The two sisters of the deceased, Margret E. Gill and Martha L. Bruner, sang two selections a cappella from Mary Lois's own compositions.

Pallbearers were son, John L. Bryant, and nephews, Jason Christian, Robert and Dennis Bruner, Scott L. Harris and Donald C. Gill.

My Sister

She had a faith that did hold firm,
Through tempted here below
In a body very frail and weak,
So full of ills and woe

Yet in her trials she rarely questioned
God's holy plan,
Because she knew without a doubt
God's promise given to man.

Though she was frail, she did put forth
By action, poems, and by song,
The word of God as we're told to do,
The teaching right and wrong.

She had her faults as all humans do,
But tried her best each day
To do God's will, and when she failed,
For forgiveness she did pray.

For all of us an example gave
Of patience, compassion, and love,
A strength for all who cared to gain
Insight on God above.

In her life a commitment made
To follow God, till nigh
In her death she could arise
And dwell with Him on high.

Margret E. Gill

To Mary Lois

When but a fragile little babe
From the moment of your birth
God blessed you with His presence
To guide your life on earth.

"I'll be there," He gently whispered,
"Though your steps at times be slow,
And your path in ways be troubled,
I'll be with you here below.

Childhood days were fraught with trials
Sometimes hard for all to bear.
But always hearkened back the promise,
"When you need me, I'll be there."

Young womanhood brought joys and wonders
It's mysteries did unfold
The miracles of faith and love
In the Holy Book foretold.

The beauty of life fulfilled your dreams
But you could not stand alone.
True to His promise, He's been ever near
To guide you and shield you from harm.

You've brought joy to the lives of all you hold dear,
You've shown what He'd have us to prove
That no greater reward can come to us here
Than to walk in the light of His love.

Should discouragement assail you
And doubts should find their way through,
Listen to that gentle voice
Affirming this promise to you:

"In the stillness of the night
Should thoughts lead your mind astray
Remember this, my precious child,
I'm never far away.

I'll hold your hand, caress your brow,
I'll banish every care.
Wherever you are, whatever your need,
I'll know — and I'll be there."

Aunt Mildred (Hooker)
March 18, 1991

Greetings from Warrensburg

Its with surprise we find its July 1, 1991 already. Many things have happened since our last report.

In December there was a surprise "Eightieth" birthday luncheon given in honor of Sister Sarah Brantner. There were visitors attending from other locals making the attendance twenty five. Our pastor Elder Eugene Gould was our speaker on this special day.

With joy we witnessed the blessing of baby Rebecca Danielle Gould on December 30, 1991.

The long awaited day for dedicating our little building for service to our Lord Jesus Christ arrived on May 26, 1991. Elder Gale Brantner and his son and two grand children came from Michigan to join us in our joy. The services of the day were so filled with the Holy Spirit that everyone rejoiced. At 10 a.m. the first meeting was called to order by Apostle Roland Sarratt, Song number 66 "Guide us, O Thou Great Jehovah"

was used. Opening prayer by Elder Nicholas Denham, asking for a special blessing for the meetings of the day. We then had a special by Stephen Gould "I My Cross Have Taken." The opening remarks and introduction was given by Apostle Sarratt. The Message "A broken heart and a contrite spirit" was brought by Elder Eugene Gould. Hymn number 349 "Through the Furnace" was sung for the closing with prayer by Elder Nicholas Denham.

At 11 a.m. the service of dedication was opened by our Pastor, giving comments and purpose of the meeting. Hymn number 226 "O Je-

sus, The Giver of All" was sung. The dedication prayer was offered by Apostle Sarratt, with number 169 "Except The Lord Conduct the Plan" being sung and Elder Gale Brantner as our speaker for the dedication message.

On Sunday June 23, 1991, a beautiful service of baptism was held at the lake on the Brantner farm. Though it rained hard at the time the great feeling of Spiritual presence caused rejoicing by all. Elder Gould led Shauna into the water, then we re-

tle children in the primary class and their teacher, Sister Rebecca Burnette, is doing a wonderful work in teaching these children the foundation of the gospel. In the Adult class we still are in Ephesians. Apostle Paul was such an in-depth spiritual teacher that we discuss and digest nearly every word written. We have been following each book as they come after the book of Acts. Our leader is Sister Sarah Brantner but everyone takes part and we all learn from each other. The spirit of joy is



turned to the Church building where the confirmation by Elder Frank fann and Elder Eugene Gould was conducted. The right hand of fellowship was given to our new sister in the gospel, Shauna Michelle Tabler. May the blessings of God be with you all your days, dear sister.

Our hearts have rejoiced so many times over these few months by the presence our many visitors from the other locals and the very appropriate messages they have brought us. And the good fellowship and love they expressed in their eyes and arms through that "spiritual greeting."

We have a very nice group of lit-

present so strong in our classes we often reluctantly close on time.

Our eyes are scanning forward with that spiritual hope and faith that many more will come to worship with us, everyone is welcome.

The hymns for all our services are chosen with much thought and prayer through the Spirit to bless the occasion; therefore, the numbers are given. Tapes of these services are available upon request. Contact Sister Sarah Brantner.

As always in Gospel Bonds ...

Sarah Brantner

Collins Local News

The hot, dry days of summer are here. We've enjoyed the longest day of the year and now the days are slowly going the other way with a few minutes less of daylight each day. It seems kind of sad, doesn't it? But God designed the world and its seasons and gave us the privilege of living here and being useful to Him and all His creation. He gave us the ability to make choices. I hope you can enjoy the summer God has created and give thanks to Him for another day to live in His world.

Haley Isabel, daughter of Aaron and Julie Isabel, came to visit us at Collins. She was seven weeks old and simply perfect! Her momma and daddy had waited seventeen years for her arrival and were very pleased to tell of the blessing they had received through little Haley.

Brian Coberly was home for a few days from the Navy. He had to report back to his ship in San Diego

July 4th. He has approximately one year left on his enlistment. He then has a job opportunity waiting for him in New Mexico. Brian needs an interest in your prayers.

Other very welcome guests and visiting ministry have been Brother Glenn and Sister Margret Gill, Brother Gerry and Sister Cindy Case and family, and Brother Roland Sar-ratt.

A few of us from Collins were able to attend the Houston Rally, during Memorial weekend, while Brother Bob Eddy attended to services at our local. The *BAK to Gospel* group (Bruners and Kauffmans) have had several singing engagements in this area. They sang for the Coon Creek Baptist Church's friendship dinner at Collins, the Bear Creek Methodist Church of Osceola, the Butterfield Senior Citizen's in Bolivar, and a bar-b-que for some special friends at Vista.

Here are a few sermon quotes I hope you will consider:

- ◆ "It's so easy to talk and so much harder to do."
- ◆ "Where ever we go we represent the Church of Christ."
- ◆ "We have such a beautiful Shepherd, if we would just learn to be obedient sheep."
- ◆ "What is the largest room in the world? The room for improvement." "Brother Anderson often said, 'Your best is not good enough.' Don't put a limit on yourself, saying, this is all I can do."
- ◆ "Our health: Diet of the body and the diet of the soul."
- ◆ "The Clock of Life is only wound once, and each hour that passes will not come by again."

*Your reporter,
Czerna Kauffman*

Flint Local News

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Hello from Flint Local. We're thankful for the many blessings the Lord has bestowed upon us.

We were glad to hear that Brother Darwin and Sister Audrey Ex got back home safely along with Sister Agnes Eddy. They made a trip to California to visit Harold Eddy who

needs our prayers for a serious illness. We also need to remember Elder Ed Padola, a Bishop for the General Church, who lives in Detroit and is suffering with terminal cancer.

Recently, on the 29th of June, we all got together armed with painting materials and blessed with a beautiful day. We worked until 9 p.m. leaving the church cleaned and painted white.

The subject of Sunday's sermon was about how we should always "strive to do the best that we can with the allotted amount of time that we have."

Pray for us and the work of the gospel. Our prayers stay with you.

Priest Adam Porter

*Repentance is a claim check for a valuable prize.
Forgiveness is that prize.*

Can God Trust Us?

by Amy Schrader

...Trust ye in the Lord your God and ye shall be trusted.

(2 Chronicles 20:20, Rotherham's translation)

The Gospel of Jesus Christ unto salvation involves the matter of faith and trust in God and His Son Jesus Christ. Sometimes in the weakness of our humanness it seems we attempt to exercise faith yet fail in trusting. Is this not contradictory and revealing of the true extent of our believing? Surely God can be trusted for all that is good and wise and for the eternal well-being of his beloved creation. If not, there is no hope; no point in trusting him for a little part of the whole.

Jesus can be depended upon. On the cross he finished an appointed service of sacrifice for the souls of mankind. All that that sacrifice was to achieve is secured. We may not understand all of it, may only glimpses minute part of the great thing that was accomplished there, but we can rest assured that what he did was done the best and most completely it was possible for God to do it, otherwise it would not have ended until it was wholly done. God and Christ can be trusted exceedingly beyond the stretch and the limits of thinking and imaginations of man's mind.

But for one deeply sincere about total discipleship to Jesus, the real, rather than mere nominal Christian-

ity, faith and trust must go deeper. The question becomes, not only do we trust God but do we trust him enough so that he can trust us? Are we to be trusted, can he depend upon us?

Can he trust us to want and to seek to know the real and whole truth rather than to defend and cling to what we've always thought or believed or have been taught? Can he trust us with his precious truth? Will we teach it by word and by living without garbling it up with our mortal minded half-truths, beliefs, unbeliefs and foregone conclusions?

Can he trust us to be obedient? Do we go when he says go, stay when he says stay, do when he says do this? Indeed can we be depended on to hear or know when he says any of these things? Can we be trusted to discern his voice from all the other voices urging us one way or another, our own included?

Can he trust us to remain true, faithful and diligent in our discipleship when he must disappoint us? when his answers to our prayer is not what we desire; can he say "no" to some heart-wrung prayer without us falling into the abyss of complaint and self-pity, or succumbing to remonstrations of untrust? Can he trust us to continue to trust him when nothing falls out as we expected, as we thought it would or should? Can he trust us to trust him when he works out his will and purpose his way, not ours?

Can he trust us to be true to our covenant and commitment ...whatever happens? Can he trust us to seek first his kingdom and its right-

eousness, our personal comforts and needs of well-being second, letting him add to us such as he will? If we have in our commitment "rendered to him all that we are and have" (Mosiah 1: 77) can he trust us not to hold back ought of it when he requires it of us?

Can he send us, can he trust us to go on any errand of love for him; even to the most unlovable? Can he trust us to befriend our enemies? to do good to those (if any) who hate us? to pray for those (if any) who despitefully use us or persecute us? Can he trust us to love when and where we are definitely not loved? Can he trust us never to respond in kind to any unkind attitude or action?

Can he trust to throw our whole heart, mind and soul into becoming like unto Jesus in living, or dying; whatever comes neither turning to the right or to the left, or turning back when the going gets rough? Can he trust us to cast our own will and wishes aside, making ourselves of no reputation, too, but with him reaching the heights of spiritual growth and fullness by going down, down, down into the valley of humiliation, of meekness and lowliness of mind and heart; none of which appeals in the least degree to the finite desire? Can he trust us to make the sacrifice of love, taking upon ourselves the position and service of being a servant of servants?

These are awesome thoughts and questions. Just how much and how far are we to be trusted? Are we, have we, can we become so trustworthy?

ATTENTION CHURCH OF CHRIST PRIESTHOOD: A couple years ago or more, many of you made a commitment to submit usable material to *Zion's Advocate*. This was done by a show of hands at the August Ministers' Conference in Independence. Some of you have since submitted articles; most have not.

The Advocate staff is presently very short on priesthood-authored material and would greatly appreciate your consideration of this work. Thank you. — gh

CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 1992 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ will commence Sunday, April 5. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M., Monday, April 6. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, April 3 and 4. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

The 1991 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 14 through 16 at Independence, Missouri. (NOTE: Changed by Conference action.)

CHURCH OF CHRIST PUBLICATIONS

Send all orders to the Church of Christ, P.O. Box 472,
Independence, Missouri 64051-0472

	<u>Price Each</u>
Zion's Advocate Subscription Rate:	
Members (optional)	\$ 4.00
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A Brief History of the Church of Christ
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The Principles of the Gospel - Laying on of Hands
The Principles of the Gospel - Baptism
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The Book of Mormon (tract)
Articles of Faith & Practice of the Church of Christ
Articles of Faith & Practice (Spanish)
Article #9 Amplified: Bible & Book of Mormon
Article #20 Amplified: Marriage
Sermonettes on the Teachings of Jesus
What the Church teaches about Matrimony (Spanish)
Mighty Acts of the Ages (Spanish)
Priesthood - Divine Authority
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A Synopsis (Compares beliefs of 3 Restoration churches)
First Presidency or First Apostles?
Marriage for Time and Eternity? - A Fallacy
Baptism for the Dead? - A Fallacy
Zion and the Temple of the Lord

NOTE: Donations accepted to cover postage & printing costs.
(Multiple copies available: 6-50¢ / 100-\$5.85 plus postage)

Sunday School Materials

Send orders for SS Materials to Becky Sheldon, 31607 E. Major Rd, Grain Valley, Mo 64029. All materials are free of charge to members of the Church of Christ except as noted. Donations accepted to cover postage.

Church History for Juniors - Includes a Teachers Guide

The Book in the Stone Box - About the Book of Mormon

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The following materials are available on loan to members of the Church of Christ from the Audio, Video, Visual-Aid and Archeology Committee:

Slide Programs with Taped Narration

Specify program(s) wanted, anticipated dates of use, and the make of your projector. Slide projectors and tape players are not provided except in the Independence, Missouri, or Phoenix, Arizona, areas.

Allow adequate advance time for handling and shipping, and for your own preview of the programs. Write to Gary Housknecht, 11308 E. 78th St, Raytown, Mo 64138.

Mexico, Land of Contrast (39 minutes) — Illustrates how modern archeological finds in the Americas lend credence to the Book of Mormon and the story it tells of the continents' former inhabitants.

Out of the Dust (45 minutes) — Tells the story found within the Book of Mormon.

Light at Evening (27 minutes) — Story of the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon and the restoration of the Church of Christ in the 1820's and 1830.

A Lamp Unto My Feet (32 minutes) — Directed specifically toward American Indian viewers, compiled from the three programs listed above.

The Return (12 minutes) — Reveals the significance of the return to the "land of Zion" in 1867 by the members of the Church of Christ especially as holders of Title to the previously dedicated Temple Lot.

Holy Scriptures on Audio Cassette Tapes

Complete sets narrating the King James Version of the Bible New Testament and the entire Book of Mormon. Write to Dan Lawrence, 8420 Lee's Summit Rd., Kansas City, MO 64139.

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For a sermon on cassette tape write to Mike Kelley, 1949 E. Libby St., Phoenix, AZ 85022, or Ron Temple, 5621 Logan Rd., K.C., MO 64136.

PRIESTHOOD VISITATION

If you or someone you know (member or non-member) would like to be visited by a member of the Priesthood of the Church of Christ, please call or write to the Council of Apostles at Church Headquarters in Independence, Missouri. The phone number and address are listed on the inside front cover.