"THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST" Acts 1:1-11
or
"THE FORGOTTEN FUNDAMENTAL"

(1)

INTRO:

A.-A Forgotten Fundamental:

1-If you ask fundamental Christians about their faith's details..
2-They'll respond--Virgin Birth of Christ
--Virtuous life
--Vicarious death
--Victorious resurrection
--Visible return
3-But there is a SAD OMISSION in that listing
4-What about Christ's VITALIZING ASCENSION to glory ??
5-Complete presentation of the Doctrine of Christ
--Includes the ascension
--Involves His glorification
--Introduces His present session in heaven
6-Ascension--The CONSUMMATION of the resurrection
IS --The COMMENCEMENT of His present ministry
--The CONFIRMATION of His claims

B.-AN OVERSHADOWED OBSERVANCE:

1-Two key Christian days--Christmas
--Easter
2-Secular Days--New Years Day
--Presidents' birthdays
--Memorial Day
--Independence Day
--Labor Day
--Thanksgiving Day
3-Family Days--Mothers Day
--Fathers day
4-ASCENSION DAY--Overlooked in the shadow of Mothers Day
--Observation falls on a weekday
--FORGOTTEN FESTIVAL of the Chruch
*--Because the Ascension has become a DEAD DOCTRINE
But it is a day of significance;
** In the Scriptures
** In the history of the Church
** In systematic theology
*--Vital relevance today !
5-Hastings Dictionary Of The Bible, Pp. 253-254:
"The Resurrection is itself the strongest witness to the reality of the Ascension, as the virgin birth, nor would either in the nature of the case have been capable of winning its way to acceptance apart from the central faith that Jesus actually rose from the dead." (Quoted in Lockyer, All The Miracles)

6-Outline: I.-The DETAILS Of The Ascension:
II.-The DOCTRINE Of The Ascension:
Plus another message to follow

7-PROP: We need to realize the reality of the truth
JESUS LIVES TODAY!!!!

I.-THE DETAILS OF THE ASCENSION:

A.-Ascension Foreshadowed:

1-God often teaches truth BY **PICTURES** before teaching it BY **PRINCIPLES** — in the N.T.
(in the O.T.)

2-Two such foreshadowings of the doctrine of ascension:
- --ENOCH was translated to heaven (Gen 5:24)
- --ELIJAH ascended to glory in a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2: 9-15)
--**Ascension of PERSONS** to heaven

3-Nothing was really "made of this", except as historic exceptions to the normal pattern of the termination of earthly life

B.-Ascension Foretold:

1-Foretold in TYPES (==Divinely purposed illustrations)
(Drawn from the FEASTS OF JEHOVAH in the Jewish Calendar)

Feast of

(a) FIRSTFRUITS--L. S. Chafer--"The **WAVE SHEAF** represents Christ in resurrection. Of all the sheaves of grain on the hills of Palestine but one from each homestead was waved ceremonially before Jehovah, and that on the day following the Sabbath (cf. Lev. 23:11) and as a **representation** of all the sheaves of the harvest. Thus Christ when He ascended from the tomb appeared as an earnest of the mighty harvest of souls whom He had redeemed, who came with Him out of the tomb and who share His resurrection life and glory. He was thus the 'firstfruits of them that slept,' a representation of that resurrection of believers that is yet to be (cf. 1 Cor. 15:2023)." (VII, P. 20)

Day of

(b) ATONEMENT--Chafer--"The other type which Christ fulfilled in connection with His first ascension was that of the High Priest presenting the blood in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. Thus Christ, the true High Priest answers every need of the sinner forever. The importance of the presentation in heaven of the emblem of His **finished work** in redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation cannot be estimated nor should it be slighted." (VII, P. 20)

2-Foretold in Psalms statements
- * --24:7-10
- --47:5--"God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet
- --68:18--"Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them."

-110:1--"The LORD said unto my LORD, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Expressed

3-In N. T. Gospel records
--Omitted by Matthew
--Referred to by Mark 16:19 & Luke 24:51
--AFFIRMED by Jesus in 8 chapters as presented by John

** 3:13	** 14:1-3, 28
** 6:62	** 16:10, 16, 28
** 7:33-34	** 17:11
** 13:3	** 20:17

4-Not very many prophetic announcements, but
--They ARE THERE !!
--And they are IMPORTANT !!

C.-Ascension Fulfilled:

1-END of the gospels presentation of Christ's life on earth
--Mark. 16:19-20--"So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following. Amen."
-Luke 24:49-53

2-BEGINNING of the HISTORY BOOK of the Church
--After a period of extensive demonstration by Jesus of His victory over the grave (Acts 1:3)
--After a period of intensive instruction (Acts 1:3-5)
--After a period of careful instruction (Acts 1:6-8)
--THEN.....Acts 1:9-11

3-IMPORTANCE--Jn. 10:35--"...the Scripture cannot be broken."
--For God's glory the ascension is important
--For our good the ascension is important

4-Contrast--Resurrection was viewed only by the angels, and not by any of the disciples
--Ascension was accomplished in full view of all of Christ's apostles

5-Ascension was--A historic event
--Personal
--Visible
--Gradual
--In His physical body
** --Literally accomplished
-Lockyer--"While such a miraculous event may be beyond scientific scrutiny, the fact is plain that He who came into this world went from it, and never since has been physically in it." (All The Miracles, P. 254)

6-ILLUS--Some years ago a delegation of Sioux Indians was present at a Christian meeting. Red Cloud, whose burly form and natural eloquence had attracted much attention was called upon to speak. Turning to Mr. Stuart, he said: "Red Cloud wants to ask you one question. 'WHO MADE US??' Did you ever see the Great Spirit or His Son? You have told Red Cloud that the Great Spirit came down from heaven and dwelt

among the white men, and that He went up again.....What did He go up again for? Red Cloud wants to find out....?" (4)

(1) (2) The issue of "WHY DID HE ASCEND?"....also involves the issue of "WHAT IS HE DOING NOW?"
- --Answer the first question in this message
- --Answer the second question in the next message

II.-THE DOCTRINE OF THE ASCENSION:

A.-IMMEDIATE PURPOSE---TO PRESENT HIS BLOOD:

1-John 20:16-17--"Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascendunto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God."

2-Christ is the eternal High Priest who had to present the sacrificial BLOOD of atonement in the heavenly sanctuary as the earthly High Priest did in the temple

3-No one was permitted to DETAIN or to TOUCH the High Priest until after he had sprinkled the blood (Lev. 16)

4-LATER that night
- --In the Upper Room
- --Lk. 24:39--"Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I myself: handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have."

5-To THOMAS one week later
- --Again in the Upper Room
- --John 20:27--"Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side, and be not faithless, but believing."

6-WHAT INTERVENED ??
- --Between denial of Mary that she might touch Him
- --And a free inviting of the disciples to "handle" His body in an intensive inspection???

7-ANSWER --Presentation of Christ's blood in heaven at His first ascension on the day He rose from the grave
- --POINT :: Redemption was finished as the blood of sacrifice was presented in the heavenly sanctuary. — This was the IMMEDIATE PURPOSE.

B.-ULTIMATE PURPOSE----TO PROVE HIS TRIUMPH:

1-Triumph over SIN
- --O.T. ritual was a continual offering of sacrifices for people's sins
  - ** Day after day
  - ** Year after year
  - ** Century after century
  - ** Never any cessation
  - ** Priests never sat down !!!

Work was NEVER DONE!

- --Heb. 10:11-14

--Summary found in 1 Pet. 3:22--"Jesus Christ: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject to Him."

--POINT:::: Triumph of Jesus Christ over sin

2-Triumph over SATAN

1-Col. 2:15--"And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them."

--"Spoiled" (ἀπεκδυσάμενος)=="disarmed & subdued", "stripped"

THE POINT--Celebration of TRIUMPH over Satan and his power

3-Triumph over GRAVE

--Eph. 4:8--Wherefore He saith, When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men"

*--Emptied paradise of O.T. saints (2 Cor. 12:4)

--Those detained previously were then delivered

*--NOW no detour to "hades" IMMEDIATELY!

BUT "absent from the body, present with the Lord"

--POINT--Total TRIUMPH over all enemies by the risen and ascended Christ—This was His ULTIMATE PURPOSE

C.-DISPENSATIONAL PURPOSE---TO POSITION OF HEADSHIP OVER THE CHURCH:

1-HEAD of the Church, which is His Body

--Col. 1:18--"And He is the Head of the Body, the Church: Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence."

--Body is formed by the Baptism of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12-13)

--Uniting of Jew & Gentile into a "NEW MAN" (Eph. 2:11-18)

--Honored place at the right hand of God the Father (1 Pet. 3:22) who is gone into heaven + is on the right hand of God, angels + authorities + powers being made subject to Him."

2-BESTOWER of the Spirit---OUR ENABLER:

--John 14:16-18

--John 15:26-27

--ILLUS--When Nansen started on his Arctic expedition, he took with him a carrier pigeon, strong and fleet of wing; and after 2 years---2 years in the desolation of the Arctic regions--he one day wrote a tiny message, tied it under the pigeon's wing, and let it loose, to travel 2,000 miles to Norway; and oh, what miles!! What desolation; not a living creature. Ice...Ice..Ice... snow and death.

But he took the trembling little bird and flung her up from the ship, up into the icy cold. Three circles she made and then, straight as an arrow, she shot south. 1,000 miles over ice, 1,000 miles over the frozen wastes of ocean, and at last it dropped into the lap of the explorer's wife as she sat on her porch in Norway. Mrs. Nansen knew, by the arrival of that bird, that ALL WAS WELL in the dark night of the north. Her husband was alive and well in the Arctic regions.

So it was with the coming of the Holy Spirt, the heavenly Dove: the disciples knew that JESUS WAS ALIVE as the Christ of God, for the Spirit's coming and His manifest works

were proof if it-----JESUS IS ALIVE IN HEAVEN !!! Hallelujah (6)!

3-GAVE GIFTS unto men
--Eph. 4:8, 11-12
--Gifts to men and gifted men to the Chruch
DEF --"Divine enablements for spiritual service in and through the local church" MacRae
--Every believer is thus endowed with a spiritual gift or gifts for effective ministry
--ILLUS--As when Roman heroes returned from blood-red fields, and the Senate awarded them a triumph, they rode in their chariots drawn by milk-white steeds through the thronging streets of Rome, so did Jesus Christ, when He led captivity captive, receive a triumph at His Father's hands. The triumphal chariot bore Him through the streets of glory, while alll the inhabitants of heaven saluted Him with loud acclaim as CONQUEROR:

"Crown Him!! Crown Him !!
Crowns become the Victor's brow.!"

It was the custom of the Roman Conqueror as he rode along to **discharge large quantities** of **money**, which were scattered among the admiring crowd. So, our glorified Lord SCATTERED GIFTS among men; yea, to the rebellious also He gave those **gifts** that the Lord God might dwell among them and be honored by them. In this manner, then, to grace the triumph of Jesus, the Spirit of God was poured forth liberally to shower gifts upon the Church below.

--Lockyer--"...the living Christ Who is in heaven on behalf of His Church and will be until His return for her." (All the Miracles, P.254)

--POINT:::: Jesus is **totally "IN CHARGE"** — This is what the DOCTRINE of the Ascension shows as His DISPENSATIONAL PURPOSE

CONCLUSION:

A.-REVIEW OF "THE FORGOTTEN FUNDAMENTAL":

1-----I.-DETAILS Of The Ascension:
A.-Foreshadowed in persons
B.-Foretold in types and prophecies
C.-Fulfilled in history
II.-DOCTRINE Of The Ascension:
A.-Immediate Purpose--To Present His Blood
B.-Ultimate Purpose--To Prove His Triumph
C.-Dispensational Purpose----Position of Headship

B.-**REALIZATIONS** FROM "THE FORGOTTEN FUNDAMENTAL":

1-Ascension reveals Christ's universal Lordship and Headship of the Church

2-Ascension makes Christ **available** and **accessible** to all believers everywhere---He is the Unlimited Christ ! The God-Man
-"There is a MAN in the glory"

P. 1150 L in SRB

3-Assurance of Christ's presence in heaven **ministering** in our

behalf---Strengthens ** Our faith
** Our hope
** Our fortitude

-To Live For Jesus

--OR----------To die for Him if necessary

4-These are the realizations we derive from the truth that

HE LIVES TODAY !!

5-ILLUS---A writer tells of a young girl whose character ripened into rare lovliness. Her friends watched her growing gentleness and heavenliness with wonder. They could not understand the secret of it

She wore about her neck a little locket within which no one was allowed to look. Once, however, when she was very ill, one of her companions was permitted to open her locket. Inside it she saw the words:

"WHOM HAVING NOT SEEN, **I LOVE**"

This was the secret. It was love for the unseen, ascended Christ which transformed her life.

If we think continually of Jesus Christ, meditating upon Him, and letting His love dwell in us, we shall **grow to be like Him!!**

May it be so for you and for me!

God grant this!

#212 "Crown Him With Many Crowns"
#123 "He Lives On High"
#223 "Praise Him, Praise Him"
#512 "Christ Liveth In Me"
6/2/74 Westbrae
7/26/81 Evergreen Bible Church, Vancouver, WA
11/8/81 Merriam Christian Chapel, IND
12/4/83 Lookout Baptist Church
7/12/87 O.K.B.C.
9/ 91 ABC
9/20/93 - Middletown, CT. - N.E. Bible Conf.
5/19/2000 - Faith Mem. Bapt Ch - St. Albans
6/11/2000 - G. G. Ch.
11/2/05 - Bible Center Chc
4/30/06 - Hilltop Bapt. Ch - Men's S.S.

This message is Part I of a 2-part series. See also Part II

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST
Acts 1:1-4

"THE ASCENSION--A DAY TO REMEMBER" Acts 1:1-11; Heb. 10:1-25 (1)

"LET US GO ON" — 742 Heartwarming Poems John R Rice Complete Sword of the Lord Pub.

INTRO:

A.-Preparation:

1-"Socrates taught for 40 years. Plato taught for 50. Aristotle for 40 and Jesus for only 3. Yet the influence of Christ's three year ministry infinitely transcends the impact left by the combined 130 years of teaching from these men who were among the greatest philosophers of all antiquity.

2-Ralph Waldo Emerson has said:
"The name of Jesus is not so much written as plowed into the history of the world."

3-"Some of us stay at the cross,
Some of us wait at the tomb;
I Quickened and raised together with Christ,
Yet lingering still in its gloom.

Some of us abide at the Passover Feast
II With Pentecost all unknown;
(The triumphs of grace in the heavenly place)
That our Lord has made our own.

3 If the Christ who died had stopped at the cross
His work had been incomplete;
If the Christ who was buried had stayed in the tomb
He had only known defeat."

Annie Johnson Flint (Stanzas 1,2,&3)

B.-Recollection:

"THE FORGOTTEN FUNDAMENTAL" (Previous message; See Acts 1:1-11)

I.-DETAILS:

A.-Foreshadowed in Enoch & Elijah
B.-Foretold 1-In Types
2-In Psalms
3-In Gospels
C.-Fulfilled 1-In 3 Gospels (Mk, Lk, & Jn)
2-In Acts 1

II.-DOCTRINE: (Why did Jesus Ascend?) THREE ANSWERS!

A.-Immediate Purpose--To Present His Blood
B.-Ultimate Purpose---To Prove His Triumph
C.-Dispensational Purpose--To Position of Headship over the Church

C.-Realizations:

All the Miracles Of The Bible →

1-Bishop Hall--"There are three bodily inhabitants of heaven, Enoch, Elijah, and our Savior Christ: The first before the law; the second under the law; and the third under the Gospel, all three in a several form of translation. Our blessed Savior raised Himself to, and above, the heavens by His own immediate power. He ascended as the Son, they as servants; He as God, they as creatures."(Quoted by Lockyer, P. 255)

2-Christ is **HEAD** of the Church
3-Christ is **ACCESSIBLE** to all today
4-Christ is **MINISTERING** in our behalf
5-W.H. Griffith-Thomas--The ascension is not only a great fact of the New Testament, but it is a great factor in the life of Christ and Christians, and, and no complete view of Jesus Christ is possible unless the Ascension and its consequences are included. It is the consummation of His redemptive work." (I.S.B.E. article in location)

6-PROP: We need to personally realize HE LIVES TODAY for our good!! Truly the ascension of Jesus Christ was "A DAY TO REMEMBER!"

I.-ATTESTATIONS OF THE ASCENSION:

A.-Sustaining Stephen: (Acts 7:54-60)

1-Jesus STANDING to sustain His own
2-Stephen--Preached Christ to the Jews--7:53
--Empowered by the Spirit--7:55
--Mobbed by the Sanhedrin--7:57-58
--Stoned--7:59
--Forgave his stoners through prayer--7:60
3-Jesus ministered in time of need for Stephen--Heb. 2:17-18
"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted."

B.-Converting & Calling Of Saul: (Acts 9:1-16)

1-Lights seen; Voice heard; Jesus is ALIVE !!
2-Saul's Question--"WHO art Thou, Lord?"
3-Answer from heaven--"I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest"
4-Hardened persecutor immediately responds--"Lord WHAT wilt Thou have me to do?" 9:6
5-Saved on the Damascus Road
6-Called to the apostleship----Acts 9:15-16
7-Certainly an interaction with the RISEN CHRIST
8-Jesus measured Saul thru his call and lifetime of service

C.-Comforting John On Patmos: (Rev. 1:9-20)

1-John the apostle (1:9)
--Your brother and companion in tribulation
--In the isle that is called Patmos (due west of Miletus & southwest of Ephesus off Asia Minor)
--Banished because of his TESTIMONY ** For the Word
" " ** For the Lord Jesus Chr.
2-In the Spirit on the Lord's day (1:10)
3-Heard a great voice as of a trumpet
4-Message of the Voice (1:11)
--"I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last"
--"What thou seest--WRITE in a book 1:11
--SEND unto the seven churches

5-Vision of the PERSON (1:12-20)
--Voice spake
--Candlesticks seen (SYMBOLS of the seven churches)
--Person ** In the midst of the Candlesticks
** Like the Son of Man
** Matt. 8:20 and Scofield note on it
--Appearance ** Priestly garments (1:13)
** Purity of appearance (1:14)
** Judgment & majesty (1:15)
** Power & splendor (1:16)
HIS RACIAL NAME
--Response of John (1:17a)
--Reassurance of Jesus (1:17b-18)
--Command to write (1:19-20)
6-Banished & comforted----------NOT ALONE !! Jesus succoured him in his time of need on Patmos

D.-Total Of Post Resurrection Appearances:

1-We've just looked at three of them
2-Total of 17 may be discerned ** 10 before ascension
** 1 at ascension
** 6 after ascension (includes 4 to Saul/Paul)
Witnesses by
3-Ones, Twos, The Twelve and above 500
4-Tremendous reaffirmation that JESUS IS ALIVE---! and Jesus is working in behalf of His own

II.-ACTIVITIES AFTER THE ASCENSION:

A.-Jesus Is Busy In Heaven:

1-"SEATED" as to His position with the Father
--Evidence of completed sacrifice
--Expression of His honored position
2-But "STANDING" as to His present session
--He stands to sustain His own in their trials
--Acts 7:54-58 to Stephen
--Rev. 1:12-13 to John the Apsotle
--Rev. 3:20 at the door of hearts
--Rev. 5:8 Elders fell down before Him
--Reminder of ministry of the High Priest in O.T.
--Heb. 10:11--"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offereing oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:"
--WHY??
--Sustaining tried and tested saints
3-W. H. Griffith-Thomas--"...the Ascension involves doctrine for Christians. It is the culmination of the Incarnation, the reward of Christ's redemptive work, and the entrance upon a wider sphere of work in His glorified condition, as the Lord and Priest of His Church." (Quoted by Lockyer, All The Miracles Of The Bible, P. 254)
4-Jesus is ceaselessly active in heaven---even though we do not see Him with our eyes.
* Mediator
* Forerunner
* Advocate
* Anchor
* Intercessor

B.-Jesus Is Succouring The Needy:

1-Heb. 4:14-16
2-When we come to Jesus, we find--A Throne of grace
Obtain --Mercy (==forgiveness & compassion for us)
Find --Grace +
--Help (==Reinforcements) in time of need
3-Jesus--Was tempted & tried on earth
--So He understands our trials
--Moreover, HE FEELS our trials
Because He is man, He can UNDERSTAND our needs.
Because He is God, He can MEET our needs.
4-So, we are bid to "come boldly"
5-W H Y ??
6-Because He will succour the needy in their trials and needs as they walk on the earth below

C.-Jesus Is Interceding For The Weak:

1-Heb. 7:24-25
2-Ministry of prayers of Jesus
--Concerned with believer's weakness
--Concerned with believer's ignorance
--Concerned with believer's immaturity
--Jesus prays for our protection from sin
3-He is keeping those with life IN CHRIST until that time when we will enjoy life WITH CHRIST
P.T.L.!
4-O. T. Examples--MANSLAYER--Num. 35:25--"And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall abide in it unto the death of the High Priest, which was anointed with holy oil."
--David--1 Sam. 24:15--"The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand."
5-We are safe because of Jesus and His prayers for us
6-PERSEVERANCE of the saints is totally dependent upon the Perseverance of theSavior & the Father & the Spirit.
How secure are they? So secure are we!

D.-Jesus Is Advocating For The Fallen:

1-Sadly, it must be stated that Christians do fail, fall & sin
2-Thank God such ones are NOT CAST OUT, or we would all be banished
3-We have an ADVOCATE:
1 Jn. 2:1-2--"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world."
4-We need an effective lawyer to plead our cause, because WE ARE GUILTY !!
AMEN
5-Christ does not present a plea of "Not Guilty" in our behalf

6-Rather--"GUILTY as charged" ! Yes !
--But ""FORGIVEN ALREADY" by our faith in His sacrifice in our behalf
--He pleads HIS DEATH on the cross as the perfect satisfaction of all of God's righteous demands, for Jesus has died as our substitutionary sacrifice for the expiation for sin

7-INDEED-----JESUS IS STANDING in heaven with His eyes upon His people to give them strength---and aid--and keeping until the day of our deliverance hom

8-How appropriate is that poem of Annie Johnson Flint (Stanzas 4, 5, 6)

"But the way of the cross never stops at the cross
4 And the way of the tomb leads on
To victorious grace in the heavenly place
Where the risen Lord has gone.

Oh let us go on with the Lord
5 To the fullness of God He has brought,
Unsearchable riches of glory and good
Exceeding our uttermost thought.

Let us grow up into Christ,
6 Claiming His life and its powers,
The triumphs of grace in the heavenly place
That our conquering Lord has made ours."

III. AFTERMATHS OF THE ASCENSION:

A. Entrance Into Christ's Presence:

1-Present Privileges (Heb. 10:19-21)
--Access (10:19)
--Avenue (10:20)
--Assurance (10:21)

2-Therefore--Present Responsibilities
--"Let us draw near" (10:22)--Exercise of faith
--"Let us hold fast" (10:23)--Exercise of hope
--"Let us consider one another" (10:24) Exercise of love

"Lettuce Patch"

3-Expectations from our Ascension entrance (10:25)
--NOT FORSAKING the assembling of ourselves
--Exhorting one another in the light of the fact that JESUS IS COMING

4-If we realize our privileges related to Christ's ascension, we need also to respond to these responsibilities

5- ILLUS - Flying With The Flock - P. 1300 a of My Bible

B. Equipping For Christ's Service:

1-Eph. 4:8, 11-12
2-Christ has given Evangelists & Pastor-Teachers who are to equip the saints (==mature; prepare for service)
3-Each Believer--Has spiritual gifts from Christ
--Has a spiritual stewardship to fulfill
--Has a work of ministry to the end of helping to build up the Body

4-We NEED ONE ANOTHER--Each has a contribution to **GIVE**
--Each has a contribution to **RECEIVE**
--Tremendous to be gifted from our Saviour
--Expected to be involved in terms of those gifts with which we are endowed

God's appointed Support group

- The work of the ministry
- The edifying of the Body of Christ

C. Encouraged By Christ's Power:

1-Jesus has **all power** (Mt. 28:18)
2-Jesus is always (==all the days) **with us** (Mt. 28:20)
3-Jesus is coming again (Jn. 14:3)
4-**ANTIDOTE**--To loneliness
--To alienation
--To fear
--To discouragement
5-In any age, climate or culture---JESUS CHRIST IS WITH US !!

! PTL !

6-Remember, He is always **IN CONTROL**:
--Process may be of human rebellion
--But the "**END**" is surely predictable
--Wrong may be "in the saddle" now
--But RIGHT will prevail ultimately
--Because the RIGHTEOUS ONE will bring that to pass, because He is almighty
7-Therefore, we can **be encouraged** in the darkest of circumstances because Jesus has the power to work all things for good (Rom. 8:28)

D. Expecting Christ's Return:

1-Jesus is **expecting** to return to earth
2-Heb. 10:13--"From henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool."
3-WE are **expecting** His return also
4-Acts 1:10-11--"And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, 'Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."
--Ascended bodily; will descend bodily
--Ascended visibly; will descend visibly
--Ascended in a cloud; will descend in a cloud
--Ascended from Olivet; will descend to Olivet
--Ascended at an unexpected time; will descend at an unexpected time.
5-We don't know **WHEN** but we do know **THAT** He is coming again !!
6-1 John 3:2-3--"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

CONCLUSION:

A.-Review Of This Message:

I.-ATTESTATIONS Of The Ascension:
- A.-Stephen
- B.-Saul
- C.-John
- D.-Total of 17 post-resurrection appearances

II.-ACTIVITIES After The Ascension:
- A.-Busy in heaven
- B.-Succouring saints
- C.-Interceding-----Priestly activity
- D.-Advocating------Judicial activity

III.-AFTERMATHS From The Ascension:
- A.-Entrance of believers into Christ's presence
- B.-Equipping saints for Christ's service
- C.-Encouraged by Christ's power
- D.-Expecting Christ's return

day of Christ's ascension

** Certainly this is A DAY TO REMEMBER !!

Therefore, we need to personally realize, HE LIVES TODAY for our good !!

Amen !!

B.-Realization Through This Message:

1-ILLUS--When Gen. MacArthur left the Philippines in the early months of World War II because of the Japanese advance, his first words on reaching Australian soil were: "I SHALL RETURN." The General kept his promise, and 3 years later, wading ashore in the battle are, he said: "I HAVE RETURNED."

Just before His departure from earth the Lord Jesus Christ gave His promise to His disciples: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again..." (Jn. 14:2-3) That word of promise can never be broken!

2-The believer now awaits the fulfillment of that Word. We rest assured that "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." (1 Th. 4:16). Indeed, that word of promise is as good as fulfilled....and there is "YET A LITTLE WHILE, AND HE THAT SHALL COME WILL COME." (Heb. 10:37)

3-Fainting believers-----LOOK UP, for your redemption draweth nigh !!!

4-Christ IS coming again as surely as He ascended---------"In like manner"

5-Early disciples
--Work.....Witness.....and Worship
--Mark 16:20--"And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs following. Amen."

(8)

6-What better way is there to commemorate His ascension than that ?? --Work
--Witness
--Worship

7-What, then is **YOUR DECISION** ??--Salvation
--Yielding your body
--Involvement in God's work and program
--Vocational Xn. service.

"Again
Let us grow up into Christ,
Claiming His life and its powers,
The triumphs of grace in the heavenly places,
That our conquering Lord had made ours"

#124--"He Lives"
#144--"Praise The Savior"
#404--"From Every Stormy Wind" 572
#133--"He Is Coming Again"

If the time ever comes when an outline for a bulletin insert on this message is prepared, if space allows, add information from P. 255, Lockyer, All The Miracles of the Bible--red line

Annie Johnson Flint — 6th Stanza
LET US GO ON

6/2/74--Westbrae
7/26/81--Evergreen Bible Church, Vancouver, WA
11/8/81--Merriam Christian Chapel, Merriam, IN
12/4/83--Lookout Baptist Church, WV
7/19/87--O.K.B.C.
10/26/92 - ABC Chapel
9/20/93 - Middletown Bible Ch; N.E. Bible Conf
5/19/2000 - Faith Missionary Baptist Ch - St. Albans, WV
6/11/2000 - G. G. Ch - PM
5/3/2006 - Hilltop Baptist Ch - Men's Class

"Christ's Ascension" Acts 1:1-14

Intro: A.-Book Of Acts:
1-Written by Luke to Theopholis
2-LUKE---What Jesus BEGAN to do & teach was set in order
3-ACTS---What Jesus CONTINUES to do

B.-Valid Proof:
1-Jesus IS ALIVE----not on the cross
2-Infallible or indisputable proofs--physical evidence
3-Seen & heard for 40 days

I.-WORDS OF CHRIST 1:4-8

A.-Wait For The Spirit: 1:4-5
1-Direct prophecy of Pentecost & Baptism of the Spirit
2-Impossible to repeat Pentecost as the Birth of Christ
3-Formation of the Church in the offing--1 Cor. 12:13
4-Not many days---10
5-Dependent upon Christ's return to heaven
6-Believers were BUSY with necessary duties in meantime-1:13-14

B.-Wait For The Kingdom 1:6-7
1-Question about "When the kingdom?"
2-Question about kingdom not rebuked
3-Explained that TIMES are in Father's hands
4-Doesn't deny reality of promised restoration
5-Christ's word about the kingdom is WAIT
6-Not DATES, but DUTIES to concern them

C.-Work For Now: 1:8
1-But-----not the kingdom, but something new.
2-Power is related to the Spirit---Lk. 24:49-
3-World evangelism is to begin HERE
4-Personnel----"YE shall be witnesses..."
5-ILLUS---Moody used to tell of a friend of his who was passing a BAR one night & he saw in there a PROFESSED Christian playing cards. He took a pencil, wrote on a card, & saw a little boy & said: "My boy, here is some money. I want you to do an errand for me. You see that man on the side of the table where those 3 are playing cards?----"Yes, I do."-----"Well, said the man, take that card to him."----The boy went in, & my friend watched the man when this card was handed to him. What was written on the card was, "Ye are my witnesses." The man took the card, looked at it, sprang to his feet, & rushed out into the street to find who had sent it.....Wherever you are & go----Whatever you do in all phases of your life is your witness. What kind of a witness is it? Are you "witnesses of ME"????/

II.-ASCENSION OF CHRIST 1:9-12

A.-Departure Features:
1-Preceeded by blessing & Fellowship---Lk. 24:50-51
2-Place--Mt..of Olives---1:12
3-"Beheld"--clear & visible --with clouds
--gradual 2-with angels
--bodily

B.-Return Of Christ:
1-"In like manner"
2-Features--Place--Zech. 14:3-4 --with clouds
--Visible--Mt. 24:27, 30 --with angels
--Bodily --with b[illegible]
of enemies & establishment of Christ's [illegible]

5-Headship
6-Gifts for Service

C.-Attitudes Of Believers:
1-Sudden shock; reassured by angels
2-Worshipped Jesus & had joy---Lk. 24:52
3-Issued forth in praise in God's House--24:53
4-Brought all into "one accord"--Acts 1:14

III.-PRESENT SESSION OF CHRIST

A.-Introduction:
1-ILLUS--Some years ago, a delegation of Sioux Indians was present at a Christian meeting. Red Cloud, whose burly form & natural eloquence had attracted much attention was called upon to speak. Turning to Mr. G. H. Stuart, he said: "Red Cloud wants to ask you one question,---"Who made us? Did you ever see the Great Spirit or His Son? You have told Red Cloud that the Great Spirit came down from heaven & dwelt among the white men, & that he went up again....(Pondering).... What did He go up again for???? Red Cloud wants to find out.."
2-Question of "Why did He Ascend" includes "What is He doing now?"

B.-Power---Supernatural Power:
1-Man's efforts to go up---Da Vinci, Wright Bros., Space Rocket
2-Omnipotent strength required for Christ's Resurrection & Asc.
3-Space, like prison bars, surround man & there is no escape. Man cannot lift himself by his bootstraps to heights beyond the skies.
4-ILLUS--A serious effort is being made today to accomplish this old but impossible feat. A prominent engineer of 1 of the aircraft companies in So. Calif came into Dr. McGee's study recently to make a substantial contribution to missions. He asked him, rather skeptic[illegible], about the possibility of man making a trip to the moon. Immediate[illegible] he sensed that this was no laughing matter to this man. He stated categorically that he believed that if we live out our normal life span it will be possible to make a trip to the moon. He said that the mechanical problems were largely solved, but that the major problem was to acclimate man to the environment of space. He spoke with ease of establishing an island airport in space at the exact distance where the gravitated pull and the centrifugal force would be equal. This would create a planetorial, where the earthlings would go by plane & there to begin their journey by space ship. He spoke of these FICTIONAL subjects as FACTUAL. His concluding comment was, "It will take power to accomplish this feat."
5-Eph. 1:19-21
6-Power leads to HEADSHIP of the BODY---Eph. 1:22-23
7-Power available to us who are in the BODY---Power to live above the smog of the world, flesh, & devil.

C.-Bestowment:
1-Spiritual blessings
2-Spiritual home being prepared
3-Spiritual gifts---Eph. 4:7-11

D.-Priestly Ministry---Heb. 9:24
1-Intercessor to KEEP FROM sin---Rom. 8:34
2-Advocate to KEEP US AFTER we've sinned---1 Jn. 2:1-2
3---------See that Christ ascended for purposes seen abo[illegible]

Concl: A.-ALL BECAUSE OF ASCENSION:
1-Savior who is ALIVE
2-Blessed Hope of His return--for us----to the world
3-Help for today & bright hope for tomorrow
4-POWER--demonstrated
--available to us
----Direction of the BODY
7-Eternal Security & Communion

"YE SHALL BE WITNESSES!" (or "CHRIST'S LAST WORDS")

Acts 1:1-8
Luke 24:46-49

INTRO:

A.-Spectacular Event:

1-Prominent personage

--Visited USA this week
--Spoke to the UN
--Conversed with our President
--Stayed here 14 hours
--Guarded by 18,000 of New York's "Finest"
--Viewed in person by millions
--Viewed on TV by almost every living American — 93% TV's have
--Claims to be VICE-REGENT of Christ on earth
--Pope Paul VI

2-Departed by airliner for Rome

--Wonder what his thoughts were?
--Last words were heard by a few at airport
--No record of his parting words
--Doubtless they'd be interesting to know
--But they are not known

B.-Similar Event:

1-Prominent Personage

--Virgin born
--Son of God
--Healer & miracle worker
--Teacher & mover of men
--33½ years on earth
--3½ years public ministry
--Died for sins of world
--Buried for 3 days in a borrowed tomb
--Raised from the dead
--World's only Savior, Jesus Christ

2-Departed by Ascension for HEAVEN

--Last words heard by a few
--Last words recorded for all
--Promise of KINGDOM

** Acts 1:6-7--"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."
** Kingdom to be restored
** Time of restoration is not now
** Schedule is in Fathers' hand

--BUT--a new program presented
--something un-prophesied is presented
--very simple
--very special

--Acts 1:8--"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

3-FIVE POINTS of vital importance
4-Christ's "last words" to all believers — Very Important

I.-THE POWER--"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you..."

A.-The Gift:

1-In answer to Christ's prayer
2-Spirit given by the Father
3-Jn. 14:16--"And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever;"
4-HE is a PERSON--Holy Spirit
- --Indwelling in new nature
- --Empowering thru the new nature
- --No GOOD in the old man;
  No POWER in the new (man).

5-He is our POWER--="energy"
- --Contrast with 1:7 where "power" means "authority"

6-Possession of EVERY child of God
7-Rom. 8:9--"...Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

B.-The Time:

1-When the Spirit comes upon you
- --For them at PENTECOST
- --For us at SALVATION-----to all believers equally

2-Baptism of the Spirit links Christ & the believer
3-Not to "tarry"--Lk. 24:49--"And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."
- --Tarrying was "UNTIL" Pentecost. A time of waiting was involved
- --Doesn't say "TARRY FOR", which would emphasize the thing received
- --H. A. IRONSIDE---Those who tell us today that we must "tarry" are 10,000 miles off course and 1,900 years too late.

C.-The Result:

1-Power in the life; Divine ENERGIZING
2-Phs. 2:13--"For it is God which worketh in (energizeth in) you both to will & to do of His good pleasure."
3-L. S. CHAFER--"The fact that the believer comes instantly (at salvation) into possession of sufficient power by the Spirit to live wholly unto God is in marked contrast to the world's ideal of 'character building' which demands years of painful defeat and failure."
4-Power of the Spirit gives
- --Victory over sin
- --Effectiveness in service
- --Fruit in life
- --Boldness in witness

5-ILLUS--Spirit's working thru Christ on earth—POWER
--STATED--Jn. 3:34--"For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him."
--DECLARED--Lk. 4:18--"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me..."
--PROVED--Mt. 12:28--But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you."
--EXTENDED--Jn. 14:12--"Verily, verily I say unto you He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father."

II.-THE PURPOSE--"...and ye shall be witnesses..."

A.-What A Witness ISN'T:
1-Arguer
2-Eloquent
3-Necessarily well educated
4-Artful persuader

B.-What A Witness IS:
1-One who is clear on the facts which he knows
2-One who cannot be silent
3-One who tells what he knows
4-One who delivers souls
--Reaches OUT to those in need
--Takes seriously his "Marching Orders"
--Realizes there is no discharge in this army
--Tells the "Old, Old Story of Jesus and His Love"
--Follower of the One who promised--"I WILL MAKE YOU FISHERS OF MEN"
--Not content just to be a "keeper of the aquarium"
--Believes "As the Father hath sent Me, so send I you"
5-H. W. BEECHER--"Every christian is to be a pilot boat. He is to cruise about hard by the harbor of salvation watching for the tempest tossed soul, if perchance he may guide that soul into the HARBOR OF LIFE."

III.-THE PERSON--"...unto Me..."

A.-The Substance of The Message:
1-Salvation (or Deliverance)
--Is not merely a doctrine
--But is a PERSON
--Salvation IS A PERSON NB
--That Person is the Lord Jesus Christ
2-It is OF HIM that we are to tell
--Not our church
--Not our program
--Not our Pastor
--Not our denomination
--Let's go back to BASICS
--1 Cor. 1:17--"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel..."

3-Person to person-------about THIS PERSON
4-ILLUS--Jn. 4:25-26, 28-30, 39 Samaritan Woman
5-Christ is our message of deliverance from sin

B.-The Singularity of The Message:

1-Not other things plus Christ
--Not Buddhism plus Christ
--Not Islam plus Christ
--Not Hinduism plus Christ
--Not Animism plus Christ
--Not Confucianism plus Christ
--Not Taoism plus Christ
--Not Mary & the saints plus Christ
2-But CHRIST ALONE, and ONLY Christ
3-Not "one more" god added to a pantheon
4-But THE ONE TRUE GOD
--1 Jn. 5:20--"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life."
--Acts 4:12
--Jn. 14:6
5-Remember, God has said--Isa. 42:8--"I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give unto another..."
6-ONLY Name in which there is help & hope for sinners is in the Name of Jesus
7-Witness is to be "unto Me", said the Lord Jesus

IV.-THE PLAN--"...both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

A.-How NOT To Do It:

1-ILLUS--Dr. Dixon said that the Parable of the Shepherd is rendered like this in many a church---"A certain man, when he found that some of his sheep were lost, built a handsome shelter on the edge of the wilderness and over the door wrote these words, 'Any lost sheep straying near this wilderness hard by, if he will present his credentials & give good references to the committee in charge, will be admitted to the shelter.....after due deliberation.'"
2-How foolish!
3-Such a church (or the people in it) will never reach the great sinning, sorrowing multitudes

B.-Key Words:

1-Must make proper distinctions
2-Word to SINNERS is "COME"
--Mt. 11:28--"Come unto me all labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."
--Isa. 1:18--"Come let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."
--Jn. 1:38-39--"Then Jesus turned, and saw them following

and saith unto them, what seek ye? They said unto Him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, COME AND SEE....

--[illegible]
--Those without the Savior must COME TO HIM
--God has no other "word" for them

3-Word to BELIEVERS is "GO"
--Christians are expected to heed the "go" of Christ
--Mt. 28:19--"Go therefore, and disciple all nations...
--Mk. 16:15--"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel..."
--To whom have you gone?
--Have you ever gone with the gospel?

If not, you're missing Real Joy

D.-How To Implement This Plan:
1-Not enough to have a plan
2-Must also WORK the plan.....systematically
3-4-Fold area of operation
a--Jerusalem===Your own city
b--Judaea======[illegible] COUNTY
c--Samaria=====[illegible] STATE + NATION
d--Uttermost part of the earth **Every continent
**Every kindred
**Every tribe
**Every people
**Using every tool

4-HOW shall we do this?
--Some suggest thorough reaching of 1 area before attacking another
--Who has ever really accomplished that?
--Bible tells us "BOTH" must be our aim
--Reach them simultaneously
--This is the pattern of the Book of Acts
** Jerusalem
**Judaea
** Samaria
** Africa
** Antioch
** Cyprus
** Asia Minor
** Europe
**Asia.....etc.

5-Personalized Direction----------Finding "YOUR SPOT"
--Acts 8 to Phillip
--Acts 16 to Paul
**16:6--No preaching
**16:7--No entrance
**16:9--Vision
**16:10--Immediate preparation to go
Read
--You can't go everywhere
--But you must go.....SOMEWHERE!

V.-THE PERSONNEL---"But ye..." :

A.-Who Are These Witnesses?: ——— "YE" of 1:8

1-Disciples were believers
2-Encompasses all christians
3-ALL are empowered
4-ALL are "called" to witness
--Jn. 15:26-27 ------TURN TO THESE TOGETHER, please
--LK. 24:46-48

B.-What Are These Witnesses To Do?:

1-Plan is--To GO
--And to TELL
--Mark 5:19--"Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, & tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, & hath had compassion on thee."
--Sent to TELL ——— ILLUS - 3x5

Acts 1:8

When a new king is enthroned amongst the Barotse people in Northern Rhodesia every fire in every home must be extinguished. Then runners from every village are sent to the royal barge, the Nalikwanda, to take back a lighted brand from the king's fire. Then every fire in every home originated from the king's fire.

As children of God we have a message from the King of Kings. There is no other message whatsoever and we, as runners for the Lord, are bidden to take that message, as living fire, to every home on earth.

other

it

5 Points

2-The Purpose--------BE WITNESSES
3-The Person----"unto Me"
4-The Plan----------Simultaneous attack
5-The Personnel.....every believer a witness
6-EACH ONE WINNING SOME
7-Begin with one. ——— Have you?

B.-Principles:

1-Need to realize----LOST ESTATE of all men
2-Need to realize----ONLY HOPE is in Christ
3-Need to realize----They MAY NOT HEAR unless we personnaly tell them of Jesus
4-Need to realize----That to BE OBEDIENT is not optional
5-Do we believe these principles?....and apply them?

C.-Application:

1-ILLUS---Some years ago a commuter on the Long Island Railway was known to every regular patron on the 5 P. M. local. He was a well dressed young man who lived at Jamaica. Every

evening after the train had left the subway he would rise and go to the front of the car. As he walked back he would speak to every passenger, saying,

"Excuse me; but if any of your family or any of your friends are blind, tell them to consult DR. GABL. He restored my sight."

2-That is EVANGELISM ! — NB

--He did not argue
--He simply testified
--Courteously, courageously, confidently
--He commended to each and all the one who had opened his eyes.
--He had good news.....AND HE TOLD IT

3-We who are redeemed are to do likewise

4-POEM--"Lord, lay some soul upon my heart
And love that soul through me
And may I nobly do my part
To win that soul for Thee."

5-May this be our prayer.....and our action

6-After all, those were Christ's last words to us — That's what the Church is here for — Isn't it?

Westbrae 10/10/65 Hymns Holy, Holy, Holy
9/28/69 - Alice Sands' Commissioning Tell Me The Old, Old Story (157)
Lookout Baptist Church - 11/20/83 A Passion For Souls (342)
Special — For All My Sin

"Spring Branch Awakening" Acts 1:12-14; 2:1-4, 32-38

Intro: A:-Seen "Centerville Awakening":
1-Progress toward revival
2-Process of revival
3-Moving force behind the scenes is PRAYER

B.-Desire a "Spring Branch Awakening":
1-Church right with God
2-Souls saved
3-Work of God advanced

I.-EXAMPLE OF THE EARLY CHURCH:

A.-Preparation:
1-Ten daysof prayer meeting--Acts 1:14
2-Brethren knit together--"one accord"
3-Expected to WITNESS--1:22
4-Prayer time MUST lead to self examination & purging--1 Pet. 4:17-19

B.-Power:
1-Not ofman, but of God
2-Zech. 4:6
3-Acts 2:4--filled with the Spirit
--Spirit gave utterance

C.-Results:
1-Believers witnessed--2:32-36
2-Reactions--2:37a
3-Response---2:37b
4-Responsibility---2:38a
5-Promise----2:38b-40
6-Souls saved--3000 of them---2:41

II.-REPETITION IN SPRING BRANCH COMMUNITY CHURCH:

A.-Preparation:
1-Togetherness of the church
2-Messages on prayer
3-Much visitation & follow-up
4-Prayer meeting attendance & PRAYER
5-ILLUS --A preadher, while watching a marble cutter at work, exclaimed: "I wish I could deal such clanging blows on stony hearts!" The workman replied: "Maybe you could if you worked like I do; ON YOUR KNEES."

B.-Power:
1-Not of us
2-But thru clean lives
3-By the filling of the Spritit---Eph. 5:18--"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."

C.-Results:
1-Homes united
2-Souls saved
3-Community stirred--

Isa. 59:1--"Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear."
1 Sam. 14:6--The Lord will work for us; for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few

Concl: A.-Need In Us:

1-Cleansing of life

2-Prayer life

3-Power of the Spirit

4-Witnessing

B.-Communion Time:

1-Good time for cleansing

2-Prayer NOW

3-Power is automatic when conditions are met

4-Witnessing "comes natural" when our relationship is fresh

5-RESULTS we can leave with God.

"TONGUES IN THE BOOK OF ACTS" Acts 2:1-14; 32-36 (1)

INTRO: Part I — I + II — Message (1)
Part II — III + IV — Message (2)

A.-Preparatory Statement:

1-Unger--"One of the significant features of twentieth-century Christianity is the rise of a strong charismatic movement within the church. Since 1906 this large-scale spiritual manifestation has spread over America and throughout the world." (P. 1, N. T. Teaching On Tongues)

2-Three Stages of development
--Pentecostal denominations — Early 1900's
--Old-line protestant denominations — 1950's - 1960's
--Ecumenical charismatic phenomena — Roman Catholics, Apostate Protestants, Greek Orthodox, Full Gospel Businessmen's International Fellowship
+ Full Gospel Convention

B.-Various Biblical Sign Gifts:

1-PROMISED by Jesus
--Mk. 16:17
--Word "NEW" is not in the best manuscripts
--Part of a "PACKAGE" in 16:17-18
--Expect all of these signs if we find any of them present at any given time
--"THEY" refers to converts of Apostles saved thru their preaching. "THEY" had these signs following their salvation, but we don't, because we weren't saved thru the Apostle's preaching. Therefore this promise is NOT TO US !!

SPEAKING SERVING SIGN

Hocking's note on Mk. 16:20

2-1 Cor. 12:7-11--VARIOUS TEMPORARY GIFTS are listed in this earliest list of spiritual gifts written about AD 57, but omitted from subsequent lists of operative gifts in the Church

3-Temporary--To gain a crowd to hear a message
--To indicate a CHANGE in God's divine program
--To authenticate one who'd bring a message from God in some instances

4-NOW PASSED AWAY (Proof offered later for this)

5-Tongues are called a "SIGN" gift in 1 Cor. 14:21-22

6-Therefore--Since all sign gifts ceased by the end of the first century
--It is logical to state that Tongues ceased also, along with the other sign gifts
--Biblically ceased
--1 Cor. 13:8--"Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tonges, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

C.-Purpose Of Tongues: (Gk. word means "LANGUAGES")

* 1-To see why they ceased, we must first know WHY THEY WERE GIVEN ???

2-"Passkey" To Tongues (1 Cor. 14:21-22)
--"other tongues"==REAL LANGUAGES (see Acts 2:6)
--"I speak"--God at work
--"This people ** ISRAEL is in view
** Not Gentiles at all
** Quotation from Isa. 28:11-12

** "Yet they will not hear Me"
** Even such a display of Divine intervention will not rouse Israel out of her spiritual slumber
** Rejection of God's speaking to Israel is thus predicted by Isaiah.

--"Tongues are for a SIGN"
** Spectacular attention-getter, so that no excuse of Israel would be valid
** Jews are the sign-seekers, not Gentiles (1 Cor.1:22)

--"NOT to them that believe"==Fully trust
--sure of salvation & life in Christ
--Tongues aren't oriented to the saved & stable

--"BUT to them that believe not"
==Unbelievers; Unsaved
--Doubters; Not fully trusting
--Perhaps some are saved, but with big questions
--ILLUS--Doubting Thomas
--Need for some CONFIRMATION to bring their faith to maturity & confidence
--AND to convince them of a CHANGE in God's Divine dealing in inaugurating a new dispen.

--"Prophecy serveth" (PREACHING)
** Not for doubters
** But for sure believers so they can be fed
** Just the reverse of purpose for the gift of tongues

3-ILLUS--Proof that an alleged PASSKEY works in all the locks of a given building is not in the assertion that it will open any lock in the place. Rather---if it is a key that fits every lock---AND OPENS IT---then we have a genuine "PASSKEY"
Let's try our 1 Cor. 14:21-22 "Passkey" in the Book of Acts, and see if it opens every lock.

I.-TONGUES IN ACTS CHAPTER TWO:

A.-Details Of Inauguration Case:

1-VISUAL MIRACLE--Acts 2:1-3
--Rushing mighty wind
--Tongues as of fire

2-AUDITORY MIRACLE--Acts 2:4 ** "Other Tongues"=="Other than their native tongue or dialect
** ALL disciples & apostles were filled with the Spirit & spoke in other languages

--Acts 2:6, 8, 11
++ Hearing was in own language
++ Tongues were KNOWN languages
++ Fifteen languages listed; maybe more were heard, but at least 15 counted
++ Real languages as in 1 Cor. 13:1--"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels...."

TONGUES + WORKS of God 2:11

--IDENTICAL TERMS in the Greek text of 1 Cor. 12-14 & Acts

3-Tongues speaking dealt with WORKS OF GOD for which thanks were to be given (Acts 2:11; 1 Cor. 14:16), and not preaching of the WORD OF GOD, which followed

::::PRAISE

4-WORD OF GOD was preached by Peter (Acts 2:14+)

--Not thru those who spoke in tongues

--No mention in Acts 2:1-13 of the WORD

--Prelude to preaching to get attention

--Tongues not mentioned in 2:14 & following

--Tongues & prophecy are recognized as being SEPARATE GIFTS of the Spirit

--Same in 1 Cor.

--Therefore ** Tongues speaking was used to get people's attention

** Preaching (Prophecy) is for the dissemination of the WORD OF GOD

NB

B.-Passkey (1 Cor. 14:21-22) Applied:

1-Tongues were spoken to the JEWS (2:5, 14, 22,36;11:19

2-Heard the Lord THRU MEN OF OTHER TONGUES (Galileans were speaking to Jews)

3-SIGN given to Israel (the Jews)

--Acts 2:32-36

--"THIS" of 2:33 refers to "THIS SIGN" of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit

--For proof of Jesus' Messiahship, because He had prayed that the Holy Spirit be sent

4-Nation as a whole did not believe, though a number of Jews did turn to Christ

5-THEREFORE--The Passkey works perfectly

++ Men of "other tongues" speaking

++ Sign to Israel

++ Attracts attention to Christ and God's "new work" of the new dispensation

6-PETER was used of God to "open the door of faith"

--First to the Jews at Pentecost

--Apostle designated to be the one to open the sphere of profession

--Matt. 16:18-19

--Three uses by Peter ** Jews (Acts 2:36-41)

** Samaritans (8:14-17)

** Gentiles (10:34-48)

II.-TONGUES IN ACTS CHAPTER EIGHT:

A.-Details Of Extension Case:

1-Persecution in Jerusalem because of Saul

2-Scattering of disciples--Havoc among the christians

--Many left Jerusalem & share the gospel as they go

--Apostles remained in Jerus.

3-Philip goes to Samaria

--Deacon chosen in Acts 6

--Now an EVANGELIST (Acts 8:5+)

--Preached CHRIST (8:5)
--Many accompanying miracles wrought (8:6-8)
--Believers were baptized (8:12)
--One imposter---SIMON MAGUS

4-BUT
--The Spirit was not received by Samaritans when the believed the gospel
--W H Y N O T ??
--New sphere of profession now among the Samaritans (Half-breeds----Jew/Gentile mixture)
--How will they receive the Holy Spirit?
--Requires Peter to again use the "Keys of the Kingdom"
--Therefore---Acts 8:14-18

5-Case of the EXTENSION of the spiritual privileges of N.T. Christianity to these Samaritans:
--Gospel preached & believed
--People saved
--But not immediate recipients of the Holy Spirit
--That requires the presence & ministry of Peter exercising the "Keys of the Kingdom"
--A new sphere of profession is now "officially" opened to a new group of people---SAMARITANS

B.-Passkey (1 Cor. 14:21-22) Applied:
1-"W O O P S"----No tongues here at all!!
2-Why not?--Tongues not related to the Baptism of the Spirit
--Tongues not related to the Filling of the Spirit
--Tongues not related to receiving the Spirit
3-What was our "PASSKEY" for???
++ To Jews--Only 3 present (Philip, Peter & John)
++ SIGN to unbelieving & doubting Israelites
++ None of that kind present in Samaria
++ THEREFORE we find no tongues in this instance
4-See that our "Passkey" for tongues speaking occurrences works "in reverse" also
--No doubting Jews in Samaria
--No need for tongues to convince doubting Jews that genuine salvation has been ministered & accepted.

III.-TONGUES IN ACTS CHAPTERS TEN & ELEVEN:

A.-Details Of The Pattern Case:
1-Cornelius & household were GENTILES
--Italian born man
--Devout==Man of practical piety
--Feared God
--Gave alms to the Jews
--Prayed to God faithfully
--BUT he was still LOST (Acts 11:14)
2-Sequence of events:
--Peter sent for by Cornelius
--Peter's vision of new instructions concerning what is no longer considered "UNCLEAN"
--Vision repeated thrice
--Peter summoned & brought to Cornelius

--Peter takes 6 Jewish brethren along (10:23,45-46; 11:12)

(5)

--Peter preaches the same gospel to these GENTILES as to Jews on Pentecost in Jerusalem because he says: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth Him & worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him." (10:34

--While Peter Preaches

** Holy Spirit falls on ALL who hear & believe

** Jewish brethren are convinced that these ar genuine salvations

** Water baptism follows immediately

3-Tongues accompanied

--Acts 10:46

--Real languages spoken

--Spoke in praise of God ("magnify God")

--KNOWN languages, for the Jews understood

--Repetition of Acts 2 and no interpreter needed

4-So we are now seeing

--Acts 2--Inauguration Case with tongues

--Acts 8--Extension Case with no tongues because no Jews present who doubted

--Acts 10--Pattern Case with tongues

--Three occasions when Peter uses the "Keys of the Kingdom"

** For Jews

** For Half-breeds

** For Gentiles

That's all!

B.-Passkey (1 Cor. 14:21-22) Applied:

1-Until now Jews thought Christianity was for JEWS ONLY

--Peter learns the Gentiles are no longer considered "unclean" (Acts 10:28)

--Co-workers learn Gentiles are to be included (10:45 for they see the gift of the Spirit given and hear them speak in tongues (languages)

--Jews at Jerusalem hear of it (Acts 11:1-18)

2-Through men of other tongues--Gentiles spoke to Jews

3-SIGN to Israel to "open wider their horizon" and not to disbelieve what God was doing (Acts 11:18)

4-Therefore.....The Passkey works perfectly:

** Recipients of the Spirit, and so possessors of full salvation in Christ

** IDENTICAL with what the Jews received in Jerusalem at Pentecost

** Yet, not a "Gentile Pentecost", for Pentecost was not repeatable!!

5-WARNING--To make it appear that the receiving of the Spirit is a "second blessing" subsequent to salvation is to present a position contrary to the clear teaching of the Word

--RATHER--From Acts 10-11 onward we have a "NORMAL PATTERN" of the immediate receiving of the Holy Spirit at the moment of believing.

--That is "normative" hereafter

IV.-TONGUES IN ACTS CHAPTERS 18:24--19:7:

A.-Details Of Transition Case:

1-Apollos preaching in Synagogue of Jews in Corinth about CHRIST

2-Paul meets Ephesian "DISCIPLES"
- --Jews or proselytes to Judaism
- --Perceptive question by Paul (Acts 19:2a,b)
- --IGNORANT ** Of Finished work of Christ
  ** Of Holy Spirit being given (19:2c,d)
- --"Received" and "Believed" are both AORISTS, indicating past action
- --Knew only the baptism of John
- --Believers on O.T. salvation grounds

3-Paul preached the FULL MESSAGE of the good news
- --Acts 19:4
- --ILLUS--Model-T Ford style of O.T. salvation is superceded by the current deluxe model

4-Water baptism.....TONGUES followed as Holy Spirit is GIVEN
- --Acts 19:6
- --Real languages
- --Praising God
- --Separate from & different from preaching

5-Transition case--Not possible now
- --Possible then because of early Church in a time of transition from O.T. economy

B.-Passkey (1 Cor. 14:21-22) Applied:

1-Jews preached to other Jews

2-New message--Introduced to these Jews by Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles

3-Whom we believe???--Former ministers of John's message?
- --New preacher of a new message about Jesus Christ??

4-Tongues given as a sign that Paul's message was truly received & believed & that they now received both the Holy Spirit and the "CURRENT MODEL" of full salvation

5-Thus, all DOUBTERS are able to fully trust

6-Unger--"Tongues at Ephesus were a sign to the Jews that salvation was now possible for their race only on the basis of faith in Christ's redemption ministered to them by an outpoured Spirit." (P. 72)

7-THEREFORE...
...Our "Passkey" works perfectly

8-AND--This is the LAST case of tongues in the Book of Acts
- --Ch. 2::::INAUGURATION case
- --Ch. 10:::PATTERN case
- --Ch. 19:::TRANSITION case

CONCLUSION:

A.-Occurences Of Tongues:

1-Book of Acts--Chapters 2, 10 and 19
- --EXPERIENCE book of the New Testament

2-Book of 1 Corinthians:
--Same time period as Book of Acts
--Paul spoke in tongues himself (1 Cor. 14:18-19)
3-OMITTED from--Romans:::::::Doctrine of Salvation
--John::::::::Gospel of Salvation
--2 Corinthians--Corinthian believers' problem in this matter got straightened out, so no more reference to it
All other N.T. books too.
4-Lessons from occurrences of Tongues:
--Not essential to salvation
--Not a "BADGE" of spirituality; of salvation or of a "second blessing", because never so presented in Scripture
--Essential to interpret experience records in the light of doctrinal revelation.

B.-Review Of Principles:
1-Tongues in Acts are always a SIGN (2:4; 10:46; 19:6)

2-This sign is always to the JEWS and never to Gentiles and not in the Church for the benefit of the saved
--(a) Bestowal.

3-Double purpose of this sign to Jews
--(a)--Bestowal of the Holy Spirit on those who believe (including Gentiles)
--(b)--Change in the Divine economy
** At Pentecost---INAUGURATION
** At Caesarea----PATTERN (Gentiles are included on an equal footing with Jews)
** At Ephesus-----TRANSITIONAL "catch-up"

4-ILLUS--To expect this experience of tongues-speaking to be a permanent feature of Christian experience would be as logical as to make the marriage ceremony, the exchanging of wedding rings, and the wedding reception and the honeymoon to be REPEATABLE & PERMANENT & CONTINUOUS features of a normally established married life.
Rather---One wedding and one set of wedding rings are enough for the entire relationship, and they are not repeated
So with the gift of tongues-speaking
** Now that the Spirit is received at salvation, and
** Now that the 3 classes of people (Jews, mixed-breeds & Gentiles) are included in the Body of Christ
** NO LONGER A NEED for this "sign gift" to convince the doubting Jews of God's working in human hearts so as to bring SO GREAT SALVATION to all mankind through the gospel of Christ.

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®
"NOTEAR" ®

Calif ACCCent May - June 1975

THE FULL GOSPEL BUSINESSMEN'S INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP will hold its convention in Anaheim June 30-July 5. Announced speakers include Kathryn Kuhlman, Oral Roberts and Rex Humbard. We expect to cover and report this meeting so that believers may have first-hand information on how the Charismatic Movement is promoting ecumenism.

THE MISSOURI-SYNOD LUTHERANS WILL HOLD THEIR CONVENTION IN ANAHEIM, JULY 5-11. The battle here is over the Bible. Is it the Word of God or the words of men? Did the miracles really happen? Conservatives have waged a good battle thus far against the liberals and have won some notable victories. We pray they may not lose the war by preferring peace to purity. Watch the next issue of ACCCENT for a report

MELODYLAND'S CHARISMATIC SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY IS NOW PLANNING A SEPARATE ECUMENICAL RESEARCH ACADEMY to represent "every major branch of the Christian faith - Protestant, Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox." Here you have another example of how the Charismatic Movement is building the Ecumenical Movement. If the Charismatic Movement were truly of the Holy Spirit, they would be exposing the Ecumenical Movement - not aiding and abetting it.

CAL TENDENCIES. A recent brochure announces their sponsorship of a Sensitivity Training program jointly with the United Methodist Church. Peter Wagner and Ralph Winter of Fuller are announced speakers at the upcoming meeting of the American Society of Missiology, together with Roman Catholic and World Council leaders

Calvary Columbus 6/29/75 & 7/6/75

4/21/74 #264 - "I Know Whom I Have Believed"
#326 - 4 Hour Film A Foundation

Westbrae--4/14/74--#366--"Revive Us Again"
328--"Standing On The Promises"

Other Messages on Tongues - BIBLICAL RULES FOR TONGUES-SPEAKING - 1 Cor. 14 (3) (4) (5)
- WHERE ARE THOSE NINE GIFTS? - 1 Cor. 12:1-11 (6) (7) (8)

(8)

"The Preaching of Peter" Acts 2:14-41

Intro.---A.-It is not possible to examine all of Peter's Sermons.
1-not all given in the Scriptures by any means.
2-yet, too many given to examine them all.
3-Pentecost, Jerusalem, Council, Samaria, Cornelius, Jerusalem Church.
B.-First Christian Sermon--Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:14-41

I.--PENTECOST'S BACKGROUND

A.-Gospel accounts:
1-Mt. closes with the Resurrection.
2-Mk. closes with the Ascension.
3-Lk. closes with the Promise of the Spirit
4-John closes with the Promise of the 2nd Coming.
5-Acts summs all these up.
B.-Acts account.
1-Ascension & Commission
2-One accord & Matthias chosen.
3-Pentecost--10 days after Ascension
a-Baptism of the Spirit.
b-Praise & glorifying God in OTHER tongues.
c-attention of the city is attracted.--many people there for the feast.
d-Accusation--New wine.

II.-PETER'S SERMON (vigor & strength--contra. earlier denial)

A.-(2:14-15)-Not new wine--too early--fulfillment of Joel's proph.
1-illus--strength & conviction with which Peter preached reminds me of a story. Abraham Lincoln put it rather strongly, but effectively nevertheless. He said, "I do not care for cut and dried sermons. When I hear a man preach I like to see him act as if he were fighting BUMBLE BEES.
B.-(2:16-21) The Spirit had been promised.
C.-(2:33, 22-24) The Spirit was given because of the resurrection of Christ, whom they had killed.
D.-(2:25-31) Death, Burial, & Resurrection of Christ according to David's prophecy in Ps. 16---Peter had a BIBLICAL MESSAGE.
E.-(2:32) Personal testimony to the truth.---An eyewitness.
F.-Ascension & heavenly exaltation-(2:33-35)--Ps. 110
1-Biblical message
2-Illus--Jonah-3:4--"Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown"
G.-(2:36)--THE POINT OF THE SERMON
1-Work of God---Salvation of sinners thru death of X.
2-Jesus is Lord and Christ
3-Preached to the hearts of the people--ILLUS--Once, after a certain Philadelphia minister had completed the service, as he was leaving the pulpit, he was met by an old colored man, a former slave. The tears were rolling down his cheeks, and he said: "Oh Massa Allen! Dat was a heap good sermon you gave us today. I understood every word. You preached as if you was one of us niggers." The minister was delighted with the compliments. It was one of the best he ever had.

III.-PEOPLES' REACTION

A.- EFFECT
1-men of 17 nations heard the word of God.
2-Spirit convicted them of the truth of Peter's Biblical preaching.

3-They were PRICKED in their heart
4-They were MOVED to inquire, "What shall we do?"

B.-RESPONSIBILITY
1-Repent:
a-change mind completely
b-See Christ as not an impostor, but truly as the Son of God & their personal Savior.
c-ILLUS--Congo News tells of a very old woman who was being examined by the native pastor for baptism, and showed by her testimony that she fully understood the plan of salvation. When the day for baptism arrived, the old lady hesitated at the church door and said she must go and fetch something from her house. When she came back, she walked right to the front of the church, laid a small fetish on the ground, and then quietly took her place with the other women. Serious looks were on every face, for they all knew that the "Medicine" she had put there was "Lightning Medicine", the last thing that any of them were willing to give up. Her father had been killed by lightning years before, and she had never been without her fetish to protect her from the same fate. Having found Jesus as her Lord and Savior, she was willing to trust HIM FOR ALL.
2Christian Baptism
a-in Christ's name--contra John's Baptism
b-on the basis of remission of sins--Lk. 24:47
3-Receive the Spirit
a-as a gift --Permanently theirs.
b-as fulfillment of the O. T. Promise

C.-Privilege:
1-You --those who heard
2-your children--families
3-to all that are afar off--Gentiles
4-HOW---not family standing, but:
a-God's call---2:39
b-Man's call---2:21

D.-Reaction
1-ILLUS--When Spurgeon was criticized for a sameness in his message he admitted, "PERhaps they are right. It is true that no matter where I take my text, whether it be in the Old Testament or New, I immediately hit across country to Jesus Christ, and preach Him and His saving grace."
2-more words of explanation given.
3- 3000 gladly receive Christ & Christian Baptism as an outward proof of their faith.
4-Church of 120 becomes 3,120 in number.

Concl.
A.-The Same method applies today--
1*Biblical preaching brings conviction
2-Turning to Christ brings Salvation
B.-Biblical preaching and the people of God of one accord and in fellowship with Him are powerful in prayer so as to win many to Christ

"NEED A CHRISTIAN BE BAPTIZED?" Acts 2:22-41
Mt. 28:18-20 & Mark 16:14-16

(1)

"WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT WATER BAPTISM"

INTRO

A.-The Question:

1-Baptism is a **confusing subject** to many
2-See in the **Bible**
3 Important FACTS (NB)
--The PRECIDENT--Jesus was baptized by John
--The PRECEPT--Jesus commanded baptism for us
--The PRACTICE--Early Church thru Acts & Epistle
3-But what does it mean?
4-NEED A CHRISTIAN BE BAPTIZED ? — And WHY ?

B.-The Thesis:

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ?

1-First of all, Baptism is **not addressed to the UNSAVED**
GIVE GOSPEL
2-How about for the **Christian** ??
--**NO**; not in order to get saved
--**No**; not as a part of his salvation
--**YES**; to be an obedient child of God pleasing to the Heavenly Father
3-We hold that **every** truly born-again child of God **should take this step SOON after being saved**

C.-The Information To Confirm This Thesis:

4 ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
1-What is Baptism's MODE ?
2-What Is Baptism's MEANING ?
3-What Is Baptism's MOTIVE ?
4-PROP--Knowledge of the facts precedes proper action
--Induce right actions
--Encourage right attitudes

Who are Baptism's PARTICIPANTS ?

"To him that knoweth to do right and doeth it not, to him it is SIN" Jas. 4:17

I.-WHAT IS BAPTISM'S MODE ?:

A.-The Greek Word:

= To be identified with

1- Βαπτίζω == "IMMERSE" acc. to Greek lexicons
== "IMMERSE" acc. to classical Greek useage & also N. T. useage
2-**Transliteration** of Greek into English in KJV to avoid a confrontation with the Church of England, of which King James was titular head
*3-This led to **CONFUSION** today

B.-The Church Practice:

1-Greek & Russian Orthodox churches have **always** practiced immersion
2-Roman Catholic Church only began **sprinkling after** it became paganzied in the 7th Century
3-Early churches had **BAPTISTRIES** in their earliest buildings — Ephesus, Laodicea
4-Earliest **Church Fathers** unanimously referred to baptism as **by immersion**
5-CALVIN--(Institutes, II, Ch. 15, P.559) "The very word baptism signifies 'to immerse', and it is certain that immersion was **the practice** of the ancient church."

C.-Conclusion On Mode:
1-Water baptism is by immersion according to the meaning of the term
2-Water baptism is by immersion according to the testimony of early church writers
3-Water baptism is by immersion according to the practice of the early church

II.-WHAT IS BAPTISM'S MEANING??

A-Open Confession Of Sins Forgiven: — Acts 2:36-41

1-Acts 2:36--Faith in Christ is called for ; Peter's APPEAL
2-Act 2:37--EFFECTS ** Conviction of sin
** Response by hearers — "Men + brethren, what shall we do ?
3-Acts 2:38-39--Responsibilities
** Repent == Have a change of mind
** Be baptized --Symbol of change
--"For remission of sins"
=="Unto", "Because of", "AFTER"
** ORDER is clear here; Belief & then baptism
--Promises ** Forgiveness 2:38
** Gift of the Spirit
** Open to all (2:39) — YOU, YOUR CHILDREN, ALL that are afar off. Gentiles
4-Response--Acts 2:41
--"Gladly received His word" (FAITH)
--"Were baptized" (CONFESSION)
5-This is done in any Biblical baptismal ceremony today

B-Symbol of Union With Christ Thru Baptism Of The Spirit:

1-Spirit Baptism (Immersion; Identification) unites us to Christ--1 Cor. 12:13 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body..."
--Gal. 3:26-27
--Rom. 6:3-5
2-Same Greek term is used for water baptism as for Spirit baptism
* 3-Water does not accomplish Spirit baptism
4-RATHER; Water does symbolize that union which already exists
5-Example--Acts 10:44-48
6-What does Spirit baptism accomplish ??
--United to Christ and to all His Body, the true Ch.
--Union is once, for all, forever
--Vertical union; To the HEAD
--Horizontal union; To the MEMBERS
--Spiritual EQUALITY between men & women; young & old; rich & poor
--Accomplished by the Spirit
7-What does this mean in a believer's life?
--Rom. 6:4--"Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
* --NEW LIFE is expected to show because we are united to Christ thru the Baptism of the Spirit.

--Water baptism is our visible expression of this invisible union

III. WHAT IS BAPTISM'S MOTIVE??

Why should I be baptized?

A. Historically Speaking:

1-Commanded by Christ

--Mt. 28:19 ----------turn to it

"Go ye therefore into all nations baptizing them in the NAME of the Father & the Son & of the Holy Ghost"

--"Disciple"==EVANGELIZATION
--Baptize"==IDENTIFICATION
--"Teach"==INDOCTRINATION
--Three-fold task of the church
--Administer this baptism in the NAME of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost - The ONE True God
--Baptism is a matter of OBEDIENCE, not of salvation as seen in
--MK. 16:15-16 (READ)

And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, & preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth & is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned

--Lack of BELIEF condemns, not lack of BAPTISM
--Thief on the Cross was not baptized to be saved
--But those who HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY are commanded to be baptized by their Savior

2-Practiced by the Church

--Christ did not baptize Himself--Jn. 4:2
--Disciples did---Jn. 3:22
--Day of Pentecost---3000 baptized
--Philip's converts---Acts. 8:12
--Ethiopian Eunuch----Acts. 8:36-39
--Paul----------Acts 9:18
--Cornelius & household----Acts 10:47-48
--Lydia's household--------Acts 16:15
--Philippian jailor & household----Acts 16:30-33
--Disciples of John at Ephesus--Acts 19:1-7

3-TWO ORDINANCES and ONLY TWO!

--Baptism ** Performed once only
** For "adult" believers
** Immersion in water
--Lord's Table ** Performed often
** Open to believers in fellowship
** Symbolic remembrance of the Lord
--BOTH witness to the corporate unity of the Church
** United to the Savior
** United to one another

B. Personally Speaking:

1-Obedience To Christ

--He commanded baptism
--That settles it for me
--I want to obey the One Who loves me & saved me
--Motive of simple gratitude and appreciation
--HEART response.

2-Continue The N. T. Pattern

--Acts 8:12--"But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."

--Acts 8:36b-38 (EUNUCH) (READ)
--We want to be BIBLE PRACTICERS as well as Bible believers
--Bible Church has a Bible pattern for its ordinances, in accord with the Word
--HEAD response to the facts of God's Word!

IV.-WHO ARE BAPTISM'S PARTICIPANTS?:

A.-The Baptizer:

1-Any ordained Minister of the Gospel --Pastor
--Evangelist
--Bible Teacher
--Chaplain
or other Church Leader — ELDER/DEACON

2-Some believe in the Deacons doing it; Certainly the administration of Biblical ordinances should be by BELIEVERS

3-In relation to the CHURCH, for it is a Divine ordinance of the LOCAL CHURCH. Not a private issue

B.-The Baptizing:

1-Various places --Baptistries in churches from very early days (Ephesus, Laodicea, etc.
--Creeks, rivers, ponds or lakes
--Camp swimming pools
--Oceans

2-No difference & no Biblical word of preference of the place

3-EXCEPT that it is to be a PUBLIC TESTIMONY before the assembly of the brethren

C.-The Baptized:

1-Not infidels --No case of such UNbeliever baptism in Scripture
--No confession of FAITH by a denier of the Faith

2-Not INFANTS
--No case of infants being baptized can be shown from Scripture
--Infants could give no confession of PERSONAL FAITH
--BAPTISMAL REGENERATION is not taught; A confusion of an ordinance of God with the grace of God

3-W.B. RILEY--"No pool or font was opened in the New Testament for infidel, imbecile, or infant for the very simple reason that Baptism signifies what neither of these has experienced----namely, 'death to sin and the resurrection to walk in newness of life', through the exercise of personal faith."

4-WHO THEN?--"ADULT" believers
--Not just those over age 21 or over 12 years
--ANY who are genuinely trusting Jesus Christ and know it and show it
--Old enough to be sure and to REMEMBER this act of obedience
--No Biblical basis for a WAITING PERIOD of instruction, probation, or observation (Acts 8)

5-Used on the Mission fields as a BADGE OF TRUE DISCIPLESHIP ---------ILLUS--In India where being baptized means being cut off from all of the old life personally and legally.

7-NEEDS:--To understand Baptism as a COMMAND of Christ
--To realize Baptism's MEANING from the Word
--To appreciate Baptism's PLACE as an ordinanc
of the Local Church ordained of God
--To OBEY the Word in this as "unto the Lord"

5

CONCLUSION

A.-The Question Re-Asked:

1-What does the Bible teach about WATER BAPTISM?
2-Need a Christian be baptized?
3-Confusion on this is unnecessary
4-ANSWER----------YES ! !!

B.-The Information Re-Stated:

1-What is Baptism's MODE ???--Greek word means IMMERSION
--Church practice has been immersion
--Church writers confess immersion

2-What is Baptism's MEANING ???
--Open Confession of sin's already forgiven thru faith in Christ's shed blood
--Symbol of union with Christ by the baptism of the Holy Spirit

3-What is Baptism's MOTIVE ???--Commanded by Jesus Christ
--Practiced by the true local churches throughout Church History
--Desired by obedient disciples

4-Who are Baptism's PARTICIPANTS ???----Adult BELIEVERS

C.-The Thesis Reaffirmed:

1-Need a Christian be baptized ??
--NO, not to get saved,
--NO, not as a part of salvation
** --YES, to be an obedient child of God pleasing to His heavenly Father and honoring to his wonderful Savior

2-HEART demands it----------EMOTIONS
HEAD demands it----------FACTS
WORD demands it----------OBEDIENCE

D.-The Question Applied:

1-Those NOT YET baptized as believers
--READY NOW ??
--Your head has been informed today
--Is your heart responding ???
--COMMITMENT TO DISCIPLESHIP
--"Pledge of allegiance"
--No longer "OF THE WORLD"
--ILLUS---A writer in the Ladies Home Journal told the story of a little girl, who, though she was ignorant of the terms of theology, had a very certain idea about

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BAPTISM that was not alien to the fact.

She lived on a large CATTLE RANCH here in the West, and of course was familiar with the process of branding stock, so that they would be easily identifiable as belonging to that particular man or ranch.

Following her conversion to Christ and her baptism someone asked her WHY she was baptized and what it meant. She replied: "YOU SEE IT WAS THIS WAY, I WAS JUST A MAVERICK ROAMING THE PLAINS. Then I was saved and the Pastor put the MARK OF JESUS ON ME so that everyone will know that I belong to the Savior.

2-Those already baptized:
- --Still CONFESSING that your sins are forgiven ??
- --Still WALKING in newness of life??
- --Still EVIDENCING unity in the body ??
- --RENEW YOUR "Pledge of Allegiance"

Now! HERE! TODAY!

3-Results--Christians strengthened individually
- --Church strengthened together
- --Easier to stand in the face of the unsaved at work or school

Westbrae--10/12/69--#115--"There Is A Fountain" 300
Chinese Camp-9/3/70 #402--"Trust And Obey" 469
Westbrae-1/31/71 #436--"I Am Resolved" 23 blue
Lookout Bapt. Ch., WV. 10/2/83 #343--"Follow On"
O.K.B.C – 5/5/85 or Footprints Of Jesus 467
Harper Heights Baptist – 2/19/06

"THE RESURRECTION VIEWED FROM TODAY" Acts 2:24; 2:14-36
or 4:32-33
"THE RELEVANCE & REASON FOR THE RESURRECTION"

INTRO:

A.-The Picture:

1-ILLUS--A missionary in Turkey wished to teach a group of people the truth of the resurrection of Christ. He said: "I am traveling, and have reached a place where the road branches off in two ways; I look for a guide, and I find two men; ONE DEAD, and the other ALIVE. Which of the two must I ask for directions, the living or the dead?"

"Oh, the living," replied the people with one voice.
"Then," said the missionary, "why send me to MOHAMMED, who is dead instead of to CHRIST, WHO IS ALIVE!?"

2-Today we will find our questions about the future answered by the LIVING WORD of God as it describes the LIVING SAVIOR

B.-The Points:

1-Outline:

I.-The RELEVANCE Of The Resurrection:
II.-The REASONS For The Resurrection:

2-Prop:--Stimulate our minds
--Prepare our hearts
--Dual preparation for the Easter Season

I.-THE RELEVANCE OF THE RESURRECTION:

A.-The Problem Stated:

1-Christianity has dominated Europe since 325 AD with the Edict of Milan (Edict of Toleration)

2-Europe has dominated the world
+-Nations in which Christianity flourished became prosperous
+-Imperialism, Colonialism, Missionary activity
+-Non-Christian nations attained lesser political freedom & economic strength

3-Historic Crisis today
--Formerly dormant nations are EMERGING & GRASPING for power in political arenas
--Silent millions are shedding shackles
** Of illiteracy
** Of famine
** Of disease
** Of poverty
** Of isolation
** While other millions are succumbing to these same shackles----often because of the imposed system of COMMUNISM

--New Nations
--New Alliances ++In Europe
++In North Africa & Near East
++In Far East & Latin America

--New demands for a hearing.....AND FOR P O W E R !!
--These now outvote Europe in the UN

4-By the inexorable process of birth, Christians are losing the political & social leadership of society

B.-The Method Of Solution:

1-NOT suggesting that we go into a BIRTH-RATE RACE

2-Current Methods that are also inadequate:
--Military might alone
--Ecumenical amalgamation
--Political solutions
--Coalition of denominations
--Social programs of reform

3-TIME Magazine for 4/12/76--"...a possible, if intangible alternative to education and genetic engineering may lie in spiritual renewal." (P. 29)

4-Merrill Tenny: "Effective strategy for survival does not lie in devising new weapons for exterminating enemies, but in a re-examination and re-affirmation of basic theology." (P. 14, "The Reality Of The Resurrection)
--NOT by demonstrating for causes
--NOT by lobbying for laws
--NOT by fighting for territorial enlargement
--Vance Havner--"Our Lord did not carry a placard into Jerusalem to incite insurrection against Rome. The early Christians did not specialize in reforming the social order. They were the salt of the earth, and like salt they noiselessly revolutionized human history by the influence of the gospel in human hearts. It is a sad day for the church when it gets confused about its message, mission and or method." (Salt & Pepper, P.)
--RATHER...by the dynamic of TRUTH ** Proclaimed
** LIVED !!

5-2 Cor. 10:4-5--"(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty thru God to the pulling down of strong holds:)casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

6-Much.....yeah, most of Christianity is TOO PARALYZED to effectively cope with the problems of the day

7-No firm resistence to materialism & paganism can ever by offered by a Christianity which has BARTERED ITS CONVICTIONS for an insipid geniality

8-Any reassessment of theology--Begin with an AFFIRMATION of the historic faith
--Rather than denial or dialogue

9-The contrast between a vital faith & an empty superstition is apparent in the N.T. Paul, the best-known missionary in the first century encountered widespread materialism & skepticism --TEMPLES to false gods flourished
--Unblushing IMMORALITY of a depraved populace
--INDULGENCE had become the highest good
--Futility was the PREDOMINANT MOOD

10-Keynotes of the 1st century culture were:
** SEX
** SOPHISTICATION
** SUCCESS-----sounds like the 20th century, doesn"t it??

11-Y E T, these men "turned the world upside-down" with the message of the RESURRECTED CHRIST

12-The gospel of Christ came to an age & a culture which were alien ...like ours...and infused a new dynamic!!

C.-The Validity Declared:

1-The historical evidence supporting the resurrection is STILL VALID --Just as the physical phenomena of bygone generations demonstrate the latest discoveries in physical law
--JUst so the theology of the resurrection is STILL APPLICABLE because life & death have not ceased to be vital issues.

2-Gospel of Christ began with the message of RESURRECTION
--Predicted in the Gospels on 19 separate occasions
--Demonstrated after death of Christ by empirical evidences (sight, touch, hearing)
--Manifested to multitudes ** Over 500 at 1 time
** 17 appearances
--Foundation of the message of the Book of Acts (2:24, 32; 4:2, 10, 33;10:40; 13:30, 33,37; 17:3, 31; 24:15, 21; 26:8)
--Warp & woof of the doctrine of the Epistles

3-Gospel is based on a FACT, not on a WEB of arguements

4-Without participating in the resurrection life of Christ, existence is PROGRESS TO DOOM

5-But there's Good News:
GOD HAS ALREADY ACTED to deliver us from doom.

6-MerrillTenny: "The resurrection is relevant to the human need of purpose & assurance. Though it occurred 19 centuries ago, its inherent nature of continuing life makes it timeless. The EVENT is fixed in history; the DYNAMIC is potent for eternity." (P. 19, The Reality Of The Resurrection)

II.-THE REASONS FOR THE RESURRECTION:

A.-Because Of Who Christ Is: (DEITY!)

1-Member of the Godhead
--Jn. 8:58--"Before Abraham was, I am"
--Isa. 9:6--"Everlasting Father"=="Father of Eternity"
--Thus, He is eternal and MUST LIVE

2-Death could have dominion only once
--Rom. 6:9--"Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him."
--Heb. 7:25--"Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come to God by Him, seeing HE ever liveth..."

3-When the penalty was paid, death could not hold Him
--Acts 2:24--"Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it."

4-AS GOD, Jesus Christ had to rise from the grave!

B.-To Fulfill Prophecy: (LITERALLY)

1-Prophecies of Resurrection in the O.T.

--Ps. 22:1-21 followed by 22:22--"I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee."

** Death by crucifixion in 22:1-21

** LIFE on the other side of the grave in 22:22

--Ps. 16:10--"For Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption."

** Declared in Acts 2:25-31 & 13:35 to be MESSIANIC

2-Prophecies of Resurrection in N.T.

--Lk. 9:22--"Saying, the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day."

--At least 5 other prophecies of the resurrection in Luke

--Some 19 times all told in the 4 Gospels

3-Prophecies of WORK AFTER DEATH

--Ps. 22:22--"I will declare Thy Name unto My brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee."

--Davidic Throne to be occupied:

** Isa. 9:6--"...the government shall be upon His shoulders..."

** Lk. 1:31-33 (Throne of His Father, David)

4-A FAVORITE STORY of mine:

One of the many interesting incidents that come out of the annuls of old England is that of the conversion of two great men who were skeptics. One was the eminent GILBERT WEST. The other was LORD LITTLETON, famous English jurist and a light in the literary world.

They agreed that Christianity should be destroyed, but they further agreed that in order to destroy it, two things were necessary. They must DISPROVE THE RESURRECTION of Jesus and EXPLAIN THE CONVERSION OF SAUL in a way that met the demands of skepticism. There was a task for each of these master minds, and each accepted his task. WEST assumed to task of getting rid of the resurrection and LITTLETON would dispose of the Scripture that had its setting on the Damascus Road. They took ample time----a year or more----and then came together to compare notes.

When they met, BOTH WERE CHRISTIANS, each confessing to his conversion as a result of his own research. The resurrection fact withstood the test of unfriendly but honest investigation, as did also that of Saul's conversion. BOTH FACTS STILL STAND. There are so many things---tremendous realities---which cannot be explained without them.

C.-To Provide Justification: (FULL ACCEPTANCE)
1-Justified by the death of Christ
--Rom. 3:24-25--"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation thru faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past..."
--Rom. 5:9--"Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him."
2-PROOF of our justification is the Resurrection of Christ
--Satisfaction of God is thus seen
--Sacrifice was accepted by the Father
--Rom. 4:25--"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."
3-ILLUS--A deal is made when the price is paid. Others know the deal is made when you spend the money, but the transaction has been consummated before that. The spending is but the visible proof of the completed transaction.
So it is with the DEATH of Christ, which paid the price of our justification, and the RESURRECTION of the Savior proves our justification. Resurrection shows visibly that God has considered our salvation a consummated transaction in His sight.

D.-To Impart Life: (ETERNAL LIFE)
1-Meets the needs of man who is DEAD in trespasses & sins
2-Life-giving spirit--1 Cor. 15:45--"The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening (life-giving) spiri
3-Present GIFT of new life
--To those who trust in the Savior to the deliverance of their souls from sin & death
--2 Cor. 5:17
--Col. 3:1-4--
4-This is PERMANENT--Heb. 7:23-25--"And they truly were many priests because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death, but this Man, because He continuethfor ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."
5-ILLUS--A dear saint was once dying, and another who sat with him said, "Farewell, brother, I shall never see you again in the land of the living."
"Oh", said the dying man, "I shall see you again in the land of the LIVING that is up yonder, where I am going. THIS is the land of the DYING."
How I long for all who are here today to KNOW that YOU have this life--
--You can have life today by trusting the BESTOWER OF THIS LIFE, Jesus Christ
6-John 14:6

E.-To Impart Power: (SUPERNATURAL)
1-Clearly enunciated:
--Mt. 28:18--"All power is given unto Me in heaven and

--Phil. 4:13
--John 15:5--"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth fruit: for without me me can do nothing."

2-POWER for life, godliness and service are not "resident" in us, but imparted to us
** Source is the Risen Savior
** Supply is by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8)

3-ILLUS --The friends of Mary Slessor, the missionary in Africa were amazed when they saw that she, a weak woman, had been able to mold savage chiefs to her will.

One of the Chiefs explained: "You have evidently forgotten to take into account the woman's God."

F.-To Be Head Over His Body, The Church: (DIRECTOR)

1-Exalted over all things
--Phs. 2:9-11--"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him & given Him a Name which is above every name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God."
--TOTAL EXALTATION
--Three realms (heaven, earth, & under the earth)

2-Especially to the Church
--Eph. 1:22-23a--"And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body..."
--Intimacy of relationship is set forth
--RESURRECTED HEAD of the Church
--Director of our lives
--We're out of joint if this is not true of us
--Expected to be in subjection to OUR HEAD

3-Christ is the "MANAGING DIRECTOR"of the Church

4-Meanwhile, He maintains a personal interest & contact with you as an individual

G.-To Be Our Pattern: (FORERUNNER)

1-The resurrection of Christ was a WHOLLY NEW THING
--Lazarus & others came back to physical life
--These all died again
--Resuscitations to physical existence for a time
--They did not have glorified bodies
--CHRIST ALONE has a glorified body fitted for eternity

2-Christ's resurrection is the pattern for ours
--Rom. 8:29--"For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren."
--Phs. 3:30-21--"For our manner of life is in heaven from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body..."
--1 John 3:2--"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

3-ILLUS--In the days of Queen Mary in England, there was once a stake erected for the burning of two martyrs at the stake for their faith in the Lord Jesus in these days of Catholic persecution of believers.

One was a blind man and the other was lame. Just as the fire was lit, the lame man hurled away his crutch and turning round, said to the blind man, " COURAGE BROTHER, THIS FIRE WILL CURE US BOTH!!"

So can the righteous say of the grave, "Courage, friend, the grave will cure us of all; we shall leave our infirmities behind us, and be LIKE JESUS."

4-Christ is the first of the new order:

--1 Cor. 15:20, 23--"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. ..But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming."

--Since Christ---the first section of the chain of resurrection---has risen, we who are inseparably linked with Him, MUST RISE likewise !!

--Heb. 6:19-20--"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus,..."

5-ILLUS--The ancients chiselled on the ROCK OF GIBRALTER the words, "ne plus ultra"----"NO MORE BEYOND". For years these words warned sea-faring men of the apparent danger of going too far out to sea. One day, men sailed beyond the straits of Gibralter and the words of warning to discover a new continent.

Later, men climbed Gibralter and chiselled away "NE", leaving "PLUS ULTRA".

Two thousand years ago, the Lord Jesus sailed through the straits of death, and on the third day He came back with the message: "plus ultra"--"MORE BEYOND". This, then, is the word of hope that Easter brings!!

CONCLUSION:

A.-The Reasons:

1-There is no doubt WHY Christ died---for the SIN of the whole world
---To redeem the LOST

2-There is no doubt THAT Jesus Christ was RAISED from among the dead!!
--Testimony of the Scriptures
--Testimony of the best Christian scholars
--Testimony of even worldly historians

3-There is no doubt of WHY CHRIST WAS RAISED again:
--Because of Who He is---DEITY
--To fulfill prophecy----LITERALLY
--To provide justification------FULL ACCEPTANCE
--To impart life----------ETERNAL LIFE
--To impart power-------SUPERNATURAL

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--To be Head over His Body--------DIRECTOR
--To be our Pattern----------FORERUNNER

B.-The Relevance:

1-B U T---all of this is meaningless to you UNLESS you accept this death for sin & this resurrection to provide justification as YOUR VERY OWN

2-Facts are not enough, even though they be the truth

3-Must be made P E R S O N A L to you

4-Put yourself into 1 Cor. 15:3-4--"Christ died for my sins according to the Scriptures; and He was buried, and He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures;"

5-ILLUS--Little girl ran to meet her Daddy as he returned from the mailbox with a letter in his hand.

"DOES IT HAVE MY NAME ON IT?", she asked

6-The gospel of Christ does have your name on it, if you will believe it in simple faith

7-The resurrected Christ
--A fixed fact of history
--A dynamic potency for eternity
--THE ONE personal ground of hope
--The needed message for a confused world

8-Let us--BELIEVE the message;
RECEIVE the Person;
SHARE the Good News

9-This gospel "turned the world upside down" before when it was obsessed with ** SEX
** SOPHISTICATION and
** SUCCESS

10-The Resurrected Christ can do it again:
--Thru you
--Through me
--In this 7th decade of the 20th century

4/15/73--Westbrae--------#212--"Crown Him With Many Crowns"
4/11/76--Calvary, Cols. #498--"Wounded For Me"
#113--"Tell Me The Story Of Jesus"

Eph. 1:19-23

INTRO:

A.-Fingerprints According to the FBI:

1-~~200~~ 300 million Americans are "**filed**" in Washington D.C.

2-~~80~~ 130 million persons for identification purposes

3-~~17~~ million persons for **criminal** acts

4-Over ~~4~~ million in Los Angeles alone

5-No two sets exactly alike

6-**RIPLEY** was **wrong** on this a few years ago when he thought he'd found two that were identical

B.-Identification Thru Fingerprints:

1-Criminals **identified** from Washington in less than **one hour**

2-**Others** +-Amnesia victims can be identified
+-Missing persons can be traced

3-Fingerprints are reflections of **INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITIES**

4-Means of positive & unerring **identification**

C.-Spiritual Parallel to Fingerprints:

1-QUESTION: How to distinguish truth from error??

2-Package on the outside often covers poison within

3-GOD'S **CHURCH** has "**fingerprints**" for identification
----Not distinguished by **NAME** of Ch. sign
----Not distinguished by **personalities** in the pulpit
----But acc. to a BIBLICALLY REVEALED patter

D.-The True Church:

1-It is INVISIBLE + Spiritual
--1 Cor. 12:13--"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body whether we be Jews or Gentile whether we be bond or free; & have been made to drink of One Spirit
--Eph. 1:22-23--"And God hath put all things under His feet, & gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

2-Define it--**BODY** OF CHRIST

3-True Church is to manifest itself in the world in a **TANGIBLE WAY**

4-ILLUS-When we hear people discussing the INVISIBLE CHURCH and paying **little** attention or **no** attention to the VISIBLE CHURCH, I think of **2 colored boys** in the days when the airplane was a novelty.

While they were hoeing corn down in Alabama, an airplane flew over them, and they were startled, as it was the first one they had seen. One boy, leaning on his hoe, turned to the other & said, "AH SHO WOULD **HATE** TER BE UP YONNER IN DAT AREOPLANE."

The other wone, also leaning on his hoe, replied, "Well I sho would **hate** ter be up yonner WID OUT IT."

E.-The Visible Church:

1-Today some talk about belonging to the INVISIBLE CH

ON OVERHEAD

but they need to realize that the **invisible** Church is--in its fullness--**ALSO** A VISIBLE CHURCH. It must manifest itself in the world.

2-**Paul to Titus:**

--Tit. 1:5--"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city as I had ordained."

- **Can't set** an INVISIBLE Church **in order**
- --Hard to ordain invisible elders & deacons in an INVISIBLE CHURCH
- --Obviously talking about **something VISIBLE**!!
- -Sometimes **church officers** are **invisible** on Sunday nights and Wednesday nights, but generally they aren't invisible on Sunday mornings.
- --Officers and members SHOULD **BE VISIBLE** in the visible Ch.

NB 3-NEW TESTAMENT--**Books** written to **visible churches**

--Revelation speaks of **7 visible churches** of that day in Asia Minor

Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, Thessalonica

I.-THE CONVICTIONS OF A TRUE CHURCH:

A.-The False And The True:

1-**How** shall we **tell** a true church from a false church?

2-How can we **distinguish** the genuine from the counterfeit??

- --Is it in a name??
- --Is it in a history??
- --Is it in the academic degrees of the preacher??
- --Is it in the form of the service?

3-Let's **look** to **the WORD** for our guidance

B.-The Fingerprints Of The Visible Church:

1-Acts 2:42-47--**READ** IN UNISON

- --Apostle's Doctrine (1)
- --Fellowship (2)
- --Prayers (3)
- --Godly fear (4)
- --Witnessing (5)

FIVE ELEMENTS

2-"Continued steadfastly"--Vital expression

- =="Adhered firmly"
- =="Obstinately persisted"
- --Staunch & strong in these
- --Solid foundations of the visible Church

3-The word "CONVICTION" is an interesting word. We get the word "**convict**" from it, and a convict is one who is in a prison because **he is convicted** of something.

4-**We need CONVICTS in the Church**, who are convicted of something;;;;;;;;;;;

Convicted of these fingerprints of the VISIBLE CHURCH.

II.-THE FINGERPRINTS OF A TRUE CHURCH:

A.-MIDDLE FINGER--Steadfast In The Apostle's Doctrine:

DOCTRINE

1-Doctrine=="Teaching"; Tit. 2:1--"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine

2-Teaching--Of the Apostles was ORTHODOX
--Anything else was HETERODOX - WRONG?

3-Bible is our ONLY INFALLIBLE RULE of faith & practice
-No doubt of its authenticity
-No doubt of its authority
-No doubt it is our ONLY SURE NORM

THE BASIC TRUTH

4-CARDINAL DOCTRINES of the Bible
--Inspiration...2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21
--Deity of Christ...Col. 2:9; He was the center both of their affection and their doctrine

THE SAVING PERSON

--Gospel of Grace...1 Cor. 15:1-4 — THE MESSAGE OF LIFE
--Regeneration ** John 3:3-6
** Favorite text of Wesley. When he'd be asked why one needed to be born again, he'd just quote the text again & again
** Born INTO grace; Grow IN grace
--Coming Judgment
--Reality of heaven and hell
--Doctrine of Trinity:
** Athanasian Creed. "..we worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity; neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance; for there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost; but the Godhead of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is all one; the glory equal, the majesty coeternal. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God."
***Back in 1955 the week before Christmas was anythin but "merry and bright" for ADLAI STEVENSON. It began with a somewhat embarrassing discussion of his personal religious beliefs, prompted by the fact that Stevenson--A UNITARIAN (one who denies the deity of Christ, and therefore of the Trinity)--had quietly joined a Presbyterian Church. After some Unitarians had accused Stevenson of deserting his church, 4 pastors--2 Presbyterians & 2 Unitarians--made public a letter to him asserting that he can belong to both churches "without inconsistency." (TIME, 1/2/56)
That letter implies that Presbyterian ministers are UNITARIAN, but I want to tell you that NO TRUE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL IS UNITARIAN, and that a church that is not trinitarian is NOT A CHURCH at all
** Dr. Robert South (1634--1716) has said of this doctrine of the Trinity: "As he that denies it may lose his soul; so he that too much strives to understand it may lose his wits."
--Return of Christ
--NARROW MINDED;;;; --YES, but Biblically so!!
--While a congregation has a right to believe what it wishes, when it does not believe the Bible as the

Word of God and that what it teaches is authoritative, then it should NOT be called a CHURCH, but a RELIGIOUS CLUB. Liberty for unbelief belongs outside the Church

5-Doctrine is knowable--Jn. 7:16-17--"Jesus answered them & said, My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent Me. If any man will do His will, he shall know the truth whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself."

6-Doctrine is to be taught & continued in
--2 Tim. 2:2--"The things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also."
--How is it in YOUR CHURCH ???
--How is it WITH YOU ??
--COMMITTED to the Apostle's doctrine ??

FELLOWSHIP

B-RING FINGER--Steadfast In The Apostle's Fellowship:
1-Def. ==Fellowship== "Having in common"
--Not just social intercourse
--Not just "several fellows in the same ship"
--But a VITAL RELATIONSHIP --Commonality!
--Horizontal because it is first vertical
--1 John 1:3--"That which we have seen & heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us and truly our fellowship is with the Father & with His Son, Jesus Chr.

2-Implications of fellowship
--Continuance as a pattern of life
--Sympathetic understanding shared
--Joys & sorrows in common
--All of life is OPEN!!
--Tertullian recounts that when the Roman government became suspicious of the early church, government spies were sent into their services. The spies returned with the report that the Christians were a peculiar people. They did not have idols. Instead they worshipped one by the Name of JESUS who was absent. Then they told how those C Christians loved one another & how they had fellowship with one another. THAT SHOULD BE THE MARK of being a true believer in all ages.

3-ACTIVE PARTICIPATION--Acts 2:44 ** "Together"; "Common"
--Heb. 10:25--"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: & so much the more as ye see the day approaching."
Full Wholehearted Can't be accomplished by ABSENTEES

4-NEW Christian Life--New Nature
--New Savior & Lord
--New Hope of His coming
--New calling unto separation
--New privilege of sharing our faith
Things are DIFFERENT now!
YES!

5-THREE EXPRESSIONS of this FELLOWSHIP:
1--Baptism--2:41
2--Breaking of bread--2:42
Seen in the CONTEXT
These CORPORATE ACTS

--1 Cor. 10:16--"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (Communion=="FELLOWSHIP" (5)

--Elements of communion bring Christ's death to remembrance of the believer

--"As the Jewish Altar commemorated the Death of Christ before He came the first time; so the Lord's Supper commemorates the death of Christ until He comes again. L. S. Chafer

--HOW OFTEN ??
** Daily (2:46)
** 1st day of week (20:7)
** "As oft" (1 Cor. 11:26)
** Matter of Christian Liberty — MONTHLY here

(3) --GIVING (2:44b-45)
** Enough for every need; NO LACK !!
** Heeding the words of John the Baptist (Lk.3:11)
** Heeding the words of John the Apostle (1 Jn. 3:17
** Heeding the words of Paul (2 Cor. 8:7-11)
** ILLUS--Barnabas (4:36-37...Freehearted & Joyful)
** ILLUS--A man prayed fervently every morning at family worship for the poor of the community, but he was never known to GIVE ANYTHING to the poor.

2 Coats — World's goods ABOUND

One morning at the conclusion of family worship, after the usual prayer had been offered for the poor, his son said, "FATHER, I WISH I HAD YOUR CORNCRIB."

"Why?, my son" asked his father.

"Because then I'd answer your prayer myself."

--Today we see some who are considered devout, upright, faithful christians who take their places at 11:00 AM & then at 12:00 they pull down the shades of their souls, not to be raised again until the following Sunday. And if it happens TO RAIN, or AUNT NELLIE comes for her annual visit, the FAMILY REUNION is scheduled, or if SATURDAY NIGHT was especially demanding----well----then they may not show up again until several weeks later.

--SUCH ACTION IS NOT the kind of steadfastness in the Apostles fellowship of which the N.T. speaks

Heb. 10:25

PRAYER

C.--THE LITTLE FINGER--Steadfast In Prayer:

1-All too "LITTLE"; May we strengthen our "LITTLE" finger like a concert pianist does---til it will break 3/4 inch plate glass

2-HOW ?----By practice !! — PARTICIPATE !

3-Very important; our source of POWER

4-The voice of a great saint of the 15th century reaches us today with the bold fact that "The church goes forward on its knees"

5-Great need for MORE PRAYER if we hope to go forward

6-E. M. Bounds: "When we rely on organization, we get what organization can do; when we rely on education, we get what education can do; when we rely upon eloquence, we get what eloquence can do; and so on. Nor am I disposed

to undervalue any of these in their proper place. But, he added impressively, when we rely on prayer, WE GET WHAT GOD CAN DO."

7-How did the early church meet problems in persecution??
--By fighting back??
--They did not!
--By social action or clever strategy ??
--They had none
--They met it by PRAYER
--Acts 1:14; Prayer of expectation
--Acts 1:24; Prayer for guidance
--Acts 2:1; Prayer for power
--Acts 7:60 & 12:5; Prayer for needs
--Acts 16:25; Prayer of praise
--Acts 5:41-42; Prayer of thanksgiving for the privilege of suffering
--Though they went with little faith (Acts 12), they did go in prayer & God heard their prayers AND DELIVERED
--The greatest asset of the Church today is in prayer; How tragic it is if we have bankruptcy in this area in this crucial hour of our history
8-God help us to see a REVIVAL OF PRAYER-concern

D.-INDEX FINGER--Possessed By Godly Fear:

1-Acts 2:43
2-Finger that POINTS--Upward to God
--Inward to our own selves
3-"Fear"--Subject of considerable misunderstanding
--Not cowardice
--Not mere alarm
=="A religious attitude of reverence toward God & anxiety not to offend Him which manifests itself in voluntary & humble submission to His will."
--In essence; HOLDING A PROPER VIEW OF THE PERSON AND POWER OF GOD
--1 Pet. 2:17-"Fear God"
--2 Cor. 5:11--"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men..."
4-Need for BALANCE--Believe in the LOVE of God
--Also be convinced of the FEAR of God in our own attitudes
5-ILLUS--Annell Froehner
6-Evidence of the POWER OF GOD in our lives living out the indwelling Christ (Acts 1:1)

III.-THE THUMBPRINT OF THE TRUE CHURCH:

A.-Evidences Of A Church's Steadfastness:

1-Unity & Joy--Acts 2:46
--No petty differences upsetting things
--That is CARNALITY
--Prompt settlement of problems when they arise (Acts 6:1-7)
--Eyes on the LORD, and not on men!

2-Praise to God--2 :47a
- What --For what they had; food, fellowship & salv.
- Who --Offered praise to the SOURCE of all blessings
- --Gave GOD the credit
- --ILLUS--Some years ago in Germany, a young man lay upon the operating table of a hospital. A skilled surgeon stood near & a group of students stood round about. Presently, bending over the patient, the surgeon said: "My friend, if you wish to say anything, you now have the opportunity, but I must warn you that your words will be the last words you will ever utter, for I must now remove your cancerous tongue." Think well, therefore, what you wish to say."

You can readily imagine that such a statement at such a time would give pause to anyone. The young man therefore waited, apparently lost in deep thought. A deep solemnity settled over the faces of the onlookers. What words would he choose for such an occasion?? The students bent eagerly forward. Some time passed, and then the lips parted at last. At the sound of his voice you could have seen the tears swimming in the eyes of those present, for he said: "THANK GOD FOR MY SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST."

--THAT.....That is praise!!

3-Having favor with all the people
- --2:47b
- --NOT that they were ACCEPTED, as is proven by 4:3
- Def. --"Favor"=="The power of a godly live"
- --Need for a CLEAR-CUT TESTIMONY is thus seen
- --ILLUS--Blind man in John 9 who was healed & then gave his testimony clearly: "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." (9:25)

4-Souls saved--2:47c
- --Present participle: "Such as were being saved"
- --FOLLOWS the existence of the other things previously presented — Can't exist w/o other finger prints.
- Outgrowth
- --GOD'S ORDER is vital to be discerned
- * Many are trying to do this without the other items in "God's formula" for Church ministry
- --God works THRU BELIEVERS as a result of God having already worked IN BELIEVERS. !!!
- !!!
- --"Added to the church"
  - ** Growth by leaps & bounds; not by limps and jerks
  - ** All born again ones are "added to the Lord."
  - ** These saved ones have a responsibility that they should be also ADDED TO THE CHURCH.
  - ** Only born again church members
- -To accomplish this we learn that the Apostles majored on PRAYER AND THE WORD (Acts 6:4)
- --The Historian Pliny wrote to the Emperor Trajan--"...so many believe in Christ that the temples of pagan worship are deserted."

B-Pressure Of This "THUMB PRINT":

1-Completes the identification of the true VISIBLE Church
2-This how an impact is registered on a visible community
3-ARE WE LEAVING THIS MARK ??
4-Church has been called to be a WITNESSING CHURCH
5-Only way for the world to get His message
6-Early Church did it
7-2 Cor. 5:20--"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Task of ALL believers.

CONCLUSION:

A-Resume' Of Five Fingerprints:

1-Unswerving Doctrine
2-Unbroken Unity (Fellowship of brethren)
3-Unceasing Prayer
4-Unending Praise
5-Unlimited Influence (Witness of the power of a godly life)
6-And this led to UNPARALLELED GROWTH (2:47)

B-Application For Today:

1-These marks:::
This church:::
God's blessing:::

are biblical
is responsible

PERSONAL PARTICIPATION BY US

2-Only true of the Visible Church
if they are personally true of us!!!

3-ILLUS--Dr. James H. Brooks, a great preacher of the past generation, told the story of one of the personal workers in the Church where he was Pastor in St. Louis:

A man came to the personal worker all heartbroken and said: "I am a helpless sinner and there is NO HOPE FOR ME at all. I have prayed; I have vowed until I am sick of unavailing efforts. I THINK I'LL GIVE UP."

The personal worker turned to the man and asked him: "If Jesus Christ were here on earth in bodily form and visible to your view, WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

The dispirited man looked at him in amazement & replied that he would go at once to Jesus.

Then the worker pressed him further and asked, "WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO JESUS?"

The man said, "Well, I would tell Him just what I've told you, that I am a helpless sinner and I would ask for forgiveness and ask Jesus Christ to save me."

At this point the personal worker had a question of tremendous import & he asked, "AND WHAT WOULD JESUS SAY??"

The man thought a moment, but did not reply. Again the worker asked the same question----and then a third time, "AND WHAT WOULD JESUS SAY??"

Finally a smile crossed his face and he replied: "Jesus would say 'I FORGIVE YOU.' YOU ARE SAVED!!"

(9)

4-My Friends--------Jesus Christ is not visibly here in Person today. He is not visible, but THE CHURCH IS HERE IN HIS STEAD. ——— And JESUS CHRIST is our message of hope.

Perhaps the world has difficulty in telling which is the false and which is the true church, because we, as Ambassadors, are not making the FINGERPRINTS we should.

But Christ has said that we are ambassadors, and with these fingerprints, we say IN HIS STEAD, that Jesus Christ will forgive you if you will come to Him. Therefore, "we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Invitations

1. Salvation — BELIEVE HIM + be saved
2. Church Membership — IDENTIFY YOURSELF w/ His Church.

OVERHEAD TRANSPARENCIES

Westbrae--11/29/64 — 11/26/72
Spring Branch--8/17/66
Chinese College Camp--8/31/70
Atwater--9/22/69
Roseville--10/22/72
Lakewood Bapt — Sunnyvale — 11/28/72
Calvary Columbus — 10/27/74
San Fernando, Trinidad — 10/27/75
Point Fontaine, Trinidad — 10/30/75
Daniels Missi Bapt — 7/3/77
Lower Falls Bapt. Ch. — 7/10/77
College Bapt. Ch, Blacksburg — 7/31/77

Hymns — 16 — "For the Beauty Of The Earth" (1)
225 — "The Church's One Foundation" (2)
366 — "Revive Us Again" (3)
156 — O Word Of God Incarnate (1)

OKBC — 3/22/87
Fiji — 4/13/98
Harper Heights Bapt. Ch — 4/3/05

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

"USE OF THE LORD'S DAY"

GODLY USE OF GOD'S DAY

Acts 2:32-47

Ps. 33:12; Prov. 14:34; Lk. 6:46

1 Sam. 2:12-34

INTRO: A.-What Are You Doing Sunday?:

1-"What are you doing Sunday?" How frequently we hear this question asked

2-Answers are many--golfing
--fishing
--hunting
--working
--painting the house
--remodeling
--washing & ironing
--Visiting the relatives
--caring for the yard
--washing the car

CRONK

Watching FOOTBALL on TV

3-Every once in a while, however, we hear someone reply, "I'm going to church."

4-Where did the idea of Sunday as a different day for a different set of activities originate anyway?

5-Like all good things we have, it CAME FROM GOD!

6-Jas. 1:17--"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning"

7-W. B. TREVELYAN--"The attempt made in connection with the French Revolution to set apart 1 day in 10 as a day of rest, instead of 1 in 7 ended in FAILURE. Bodily rest, & that apparently in the proportion of 1 day in 7, is needed to prevent toil from becoming mechanical, to keep men from having their best powers submerged, & to secure freshness & originality in work." (Sunday, P. 202)

8-ILLUS--A carpenter, when a companion questioned the correctness of some work he was doing on a building, pulled out a notebook & looked at it. "I am obeying instructions," he said. "I'm not the contractor, & I'm going by the book. But a little later, when he was ridiculing his friend for the latter's refusal to undertake certain work on Sunday, he was surprised to receive his own reply: "I am going by the Book. Someone else is responsible for the final outcome, all I have to do is obey instructions. If that is the safest way to do when you are building a house, it is the safest way to do when you are building a life."

New #

B.-Already Seen (Message on "THE LORD'S DAY" under Ps.92):

1-7th Day Sabbath for ISRAEL

2-1st Day Lord's Day for the CHURCH

3-KEITH L. BROOKS--"The church stands not at the FOOT of Mt. Sinai, but at the MOUTH of the Open Tomb. The resurrection is the fundamental truth upon which Christianity stands and the Lord's Day is a weekly commemoration of Christ's resurrection on that first day of the week." (Tract, The Sabbath Question)

Outline

4- PROP. — To see the Lord's Day in history of the Church + see its proper use by sensitive christians

5

ing with a man who insisted that he could worship God as fully and really in the mountains as he could in a church on Sunday. Roosevelt's retort was short and pointed: "Perhaps you can, but no one would ever suspect you of it"

PROBLEM
x Sports on Sun.
x Difficult prob.
x Q - Does it interfere or pre-empt sp. use of the day?

2-Widespread disregard for Sunday
--Spiritual declension in Europe from this
--Europe has now become a MISSION FIELD
--Infects all areas of life — A nation that loses its Sunday, loses its soul.
--ALL sacred things gradually go out of the life
--We're rapidly following a similar course in the USA

3-DR. LIDDON says: "It is not wise or reverent to suppose that all religious duties of Sunday can properly be discharged before breakfast, & that the rest of the day may be spent as we like. No christian whose heart is in the right place will think like this. Later opportunities of public prayer and instruction in the faith & duty of a christian will be made the most of, as may be possible for each." (Easter Sermons, "The Lord's Day")

4-ILLUS--A gentleman once came to Dr. Somerville, & said: "My son is going to go away to South America. He will not be within the reaches of religion & the church. I know he will have no Lord's Day there, and he is to be gone 3 years. Now I want you to pray for him, that he not lose all the good disposition toward the gospel which he now feels."

Dr. Somerville looked at him & said; "Aye, you are going to put your sons head into the mouth of a lion, & then come to me for me to pray, 'May the lion not crush him'."

5-Christian home training
--Qualms of conscience when first violated
--Then seared & calloused as time goes on
--Later easier & easier to disregard God
--NOW, many of you have been saved.....
--THUS, God would have you to walk in NEWNESS OF LIFE!

CONCLUSION: A.-This Message:
1-The Lord's Day in question---No valid questions
2-The Lord's Day in worship----Together in God's house
3-The Lord's Day in usage------Faithful & joyful, as unto the Lord Himself

B.-Principle:
1-Sam. 2:30b--"...them that honor me I will honor and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

2-∴ Let's practice a WORTHY WALK

HYMNS - Holy, Holy, Holy - (20)
I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord - (230)
May Jesus Christ Be Praised - (1)
Special - "What Shall I Give Thee Master"
"I've Found A Friend" #269

Westbrae 10/4/64
6/9/68

"THE THUMBPRINT OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH Acts 2:41--3:12

(1)

INTRO:

A.-Previous Message--FINGERPRINTS:

DOCTRINE

1-MIDDLE FINGER--"apostles' doctrine"
--Strength
--True church is a TEACHING church
--Takes a stand ON, WITH and FOR all God's Word teaches
--Steadfast continuance in doctrine
--That's why God has ordained a Pastor-Teacher as the resident leader of each local congregation
** More than to marry the young & bury the old
** More than a shepherd of the flock
** ALSO an instructor of the saints
--A primary function of God's local church is TEACHING !

FELLOWSHIP

2-RING FINGER--Fellowship & intimacy are symbolized
--Sharing of life in a close heart association
--Active participation by all who believe
--3 Expressions of fellowship in corporate acts
(a) Baptism--2:41
(b) Communion--2:42
(c) Giving--2:44-45
--Steadfast continuance in close commonality between and among believers--CARING!
--An important function of the local church

PRAYER

3-LITTLE FINGER--Prayer has a "little" place in the church in every age of its history
--Needs to be STRENGTHENED !!
--God has ordained ** That believers pray
** That He answers prayer
** That He works in response to prayer
--Great need for MORE PRAYER if the work of God is to have impact on lives
--Prayer is a vital part of a local congregation's ministry

FEAR/REVERENCE

4-INDEX FINGER--Pointer
--Deals with fear, godly reverence & awe
--Came upon the people of God
--Prompted by the ministry of their apostolic leaders
--Evidence that God is being properly responded to in His congregation when people hold a proper view of God

(5)

B.-Point Of Previous Message:

1-Prop: We must KNOW these "fingerprints" of God's church and measure our local church by that standard

C.-This Message:

1-Deals with the THUMBPRINT of the visible church

This message was used 2/29/87 at O.K.B.C. as a follow-up and conclusion of one the previous sunday in which I covered only Points I & II of "FINGERPRINTS OF THE VISIBLE CHURCH"

I used this as a lead-in to Communion and a time of soul-searching.

13--O Day of Rest and Gladness
156--O Word of God Incarnate —or #60 "Cleanse Me"
355--I Owe Everything to Jesus
62--Near The Cross.

4/10/05 - Harper Heights Bapt. Ch.

"USE OF THE LORD'S DAY" or "GODLY USE OF GOD'S DAY"

Acts 2:32-47 or 1 Sam. 2:12-Ps.33:12;Prov.14:34;Lk.6:46* 34

INTRO:

A.=What Are You Doing Sunday?:

1-Over 3000 years ago when God spoke to His people thru Moses on Mt. Sinai, He knew the inbred tendency of His people to forget God & to depart from spiritual reality; So in the 10 Commandments He laid down in law form a PRINCIPLE which He Himself established at the time of creation: "Six days shalt thou labor & do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God..." (Ex. 20:9-10a)

2-God established this 7th day of REST for man's good. When bodies energies are wasted in honest hard work for a week, man needs a day to relax & recuperate from physical exertion. We can also readily understand the value psychologically. Under the stress & strain of a workaday world, man needs a day when he can pull back from it---and regain his perspective & poise.

3-But most of all, the child of God needs such a time to draw apart for spiritual renewal:

--For WORSHIP of God
--For FELLOWSHIP w/ Saints
--For INSTRUCTION from the Word
--As well as for bodily rest & change.

4-God knew we would not find it easy to pull ourselves away from all the things around us to worship Him. See the goodness of God, then, in laying down a simple PRINCIPLE that we believers need one day a week especially for God---one day when we talk together about God, read books about God, think and study about God, wrestle with grand concepts until our vision is FILLED WITH GOD.

5-What is happening in America today to this day of worship? What is happening in your own life when Sunday rolls around??--THE ANSWERS ARE MANY:

--Golfing
--Fishing
--Hunting
--Boating
--Skiing
--Painting the house
--Doing the ironing or washing
--Remodeling
--Visiting the relatives
--Caring for the yard--Wa
--Washing the car
--Watching sports on TV

6-Every once in awhile, however, we'll still hear someone say: "I'm going to Church"

--That idea that SUNDAY IS DIFFERENT came from God
--A different day for different use
--Jas. 1:17--"Every good gift & every perfect gift is from above, & cometh down from the Father of

lights with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

7-W. B. Trevelyan--"The attempt made in connection with the French Revolution to set apart 1 day in 10 as a day of rest, instead of 1 in 7 ended in FAILURE. Bodily rest, & that apparently in the proportion of 1 day in 7, is needed to prevent toil from becoming mechanical, to keep men from having their best powers submerged, & to secure freshness and originality in work." (SUNDAY, P. 202)

8-ILLUS--A carpenter was working when a companion questioned something he was doing. Pulling a notebook out of his pocket & checking his instructions written in it, he said: "I AM OBEYING INSTRUCTIONS. I AM NOT THE CONTRACTOR OR THE FOREMAN------I JUST GO BY THE BOOK."

A little later as they sat together eating lunch the carpenter was ridiculing his friend for his refusal to go with him to the lake for a fishing jaunt on the following Sunday---and he was surprised to receive his own reply: "I AM GOING BY THE BOOK. GOD IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OUTCOME----ALL I HAVE TO DO IS TO OBEY INSTRUCTIONS."

My friend, if that's the safest way when you're building a house-----then it is also the safest way when you're building a life.

B.-Previous Message--"THE LORD'S DAY": (In my Bible--Mt. 12)

1-SEVENTH Day Sabbath-----Given by God to ISRAEL

2-FIRST Day Lord's Day----Given by God to CHURCH

3-Keith L. Brooks--"The Church stands not at the FOOT of Mt. Sinai, but at the MOUTH of the Open Tomb. The resurrection is the fundamental truth upon which Christianity stands & the Lord's Day is a weekly commemoration of Christ's resurrection on that first day of the week." (Tract, The Sabbath Question)

4-Outline of this message:

I.-THE LORD'S DAY IN QUESTION:
II.-THE LORD'S DAY IN WORSHIP:
III.-THE LORD'S DAY IN USAGE:

5-Proposition:--To see the Lord's Day in the history of Christ's Church
--To see the proper usage of the Lord's Day by spiritually sensitive christians.

I.-THE LORD'S DAY IN QUESTION: (All good things get challenged)

A.-The Accusations:

1-Arise from--Seventh Day Adventists
--Seventh Day Baptists
--Some Christian Adventists

2-TWO CLAIMS for a change in the 3rd century from the observance of the Sabbath by Christians to Sunday observance---
--Constantine changed the day of worship from Sabbath to a Sunday Lord's Day in 313 AD
--Roman Catholic Church changed the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday by its own perrogative

B.-The Answers:

Reverse these

1-The change was not due to the Roman Catholic Church, for it had no cohesive & authoritative structure until the 7th century, when Gregory I (590-604 AD) was the FIRST generally regarded & universally accepted POPE of Romanism. Before that, the Roman Catholic Church neither had nor claimed such legislative power.

2-Change was NOT DUE TO CONSTANTINE,

--"Sunday" was a weekly festival to the sun for worship of the sun

--But it was part of an EIGHT DAY weekly calendar and not a 7 day calendar

--Therefore they could not change the 7th day Sabbath to Sunday so as to have a day of rest or worship every 7 days

--Keith L. Brooks--"Christians of that day, following without break the Jewish reckoning, held to their FIRST DAY of the week which they had been keeping since the resurrection of our Lord Constantine, having become a professing christian, legalized this day, forcing it upon the whole Roman Empire as the legal day of rest. Later this resulted in abolishing of the pagan NUNDINAE ("rest day"). Thus, instead of changing the Christian rest day from Saturday to Sunday, as the Adventists claim, this Roman did the very opposite: he put over on the Roman Empire the day Christians were keeping." (Tract, The Sabbath Question)

--Contantine's EDICT OF TOLERATION in 313 AD only recognized what was already true.

3-Quotations from Church Fathers:

--IGNATIUS--"Christians no longer observe the Sabbath, but live according to the Lord's life, by which our life has sprung up again through Him." (Written right after the death of the Apostle John)

--DIDACHE--"But on the Lord's own day, gather yourselves together, and break bread and give thanks." (75-100 AD)

--EPISTLE OF BARNABAS--"Your present Sabbaths are not acceptable to me, but that which I have made when giving rest to all things I shall make a beginning of the 8th day...that is the beginning of another world. Wherefore also we keep the 8th day with joyfulness on which Jesus rose again from the dead." (120 AD)

--GREGORY, NAZIANZEN, & MELITO OF SARDIS-- All of whom used the expression "The Lord's Day" as referring to the FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, & tell us that that was the day on which Christians met to glorify God and to worship the Lord Jesus Christ. (170 AD)

--JUSTIN MARTYR--"On the day called Sunday, all who live in the cities or in the country gather together in one place, and the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets are read, as long as time permits; then when the reader has ceased, the President verbally instructs & exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and as we said be-

fore, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought and the President in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings ...succors the orphans and widows...and all who are in need. But SUNDAY IS THE DAY on which we hold our Common Assembly, because it is the first day of the week on which God made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day arose from the dead." (100-167 AD)

4-Theodore Zahn, a great writer on N.T. criticism has well said: "It never occurred to any christian of the first three centuries to regard Sunday as a continuation of the Sabbath, and even in the 4th & 5th centuries there are only uncertain beginnings of such a thought." (P. 218)

5-S Q--No truth to the contention that the early church continued to observe the Jewish Sabbath beyond the earliest days of TRANSITION in Acts 2, 3, & 5

--Early & Universal recognition that the work of a FINISHED REDEMPTION demanded a new day of worship.

C.-The Appeals:

1-It is absolutely imperative that those who would enjoy God's BEST in life set apart at least 1 day a week to exalt the Lord

2-There are 3 BASIC REASONS for this

--FIRST--The Body needs it

** We are not machines; we are HUMANS, so designed that periodic rest & change are obligatory

** Even the finest machine cannot continue to function without an occasional "tune-up" & repair

** Our bodies demand REST for 1 day out of 7 for good health

** NEWS CHRONICLE article "Uses Of The Weekend" gives the medical opinion that, "From a physical point of view--if from no other--it is a mistake to make Sunday like other days. A genuine effort should be made to avoid work. The commonest error at the week-end is to overdo recreation. Many... wear themselves to a shadow every Sunday." (P. 16, WHY SUNDAY, by A London Journalist)

** Sir James Chrichton Browne--We doctors are now constantly compelled in the treatment of nervous diseases to prescribe periods of absolute rest & complete seclusion. Some periods are, I think, ONLY SUNDAYS IN ARREARS." (P. 16, WHY SUNDAY)

--SECOND--Man is more than a BODY; He is a SOUL as well!!

** To a man or woman whose mind has been occupied for 6 days, the opportunity to think of something else on Sunday saves the mind from over-concentration

** Officials of mental hospitals say that most people whose minds give way have had the mind unbalanced by the quiet forces of monotony, rather than the crushing power of tragedy.

** A BIT OF QUIET so as to refresh & ready for a new week ahead is essential to our minds

** Constructive change of thought and activity patterns; A TONIC to the mind or soul of a believer

** "Sunday is a supreme opportunity for the practice

of the art of living. It is a Divine tool for the shaping of human character." (P.28, WHY SUNDAY)

--THIRD--Man has a Spirit also

** That man is more than a BODY, we've seen, for he is also a SOUL. However, he is more yet------ Man is a SPIRIT as well !!

(1 Thess 5:23)

** God never intended Sunday to be merely a day for the needs of the body and soul. The Spirit needs nourishing, nurturing & strengthening also.

** Just as the Sabbath was to be kept "HOLY"=="Separate", so also the Lord's Day needs to have a separate & different employment

** All the great values & virtues of life have to be CULTIVATED with more care than the gardener does his roses

** Dr. J. D. Jones, the eminent English preacher: "I have never known anyone who had become by indulging in Sunday gaames any the better Christian for it, but I have seen a gradual decay of religion in the hearts of men and women who have done so." (P. 32, WHY SUNDAY)

3-How many there are who faithfully refrain from working on Sunday. They never fail to REST THE BODY. But they are sadly lacking in the fulfilling the demands of their souls and spirits.

4-ILLUS--I am reminded of one of the parties which crossed the USA back in the Gold Rush Days. Many other parties pressed on across the plains and mountains 7 days a week One other party chose as Captain a godly man from the congregation of Dr. A. Pierson.

The party was greatly annoyed on the first Sunday as they saw 1700 people pass in front of them, but they not only passed that 1700 but a week further 2,200 who were traveling 7 days a week.

Moreover, when that party actually reached California, they were ready to start work at once, while the 7-day-a-week-travelers arrived so fatigued that they were unable to commence work for several weeks.

5-The first day of the week should be a time when we take the entire family to church TO BE STRENGTHENED THRU THE WORD of God. It is a fact that in the USA over 40 million youngsters do not attend Sunday School, & that only 1 out of 3 adults attends church with any degree of regularity

6-SUCH NATIONAL FAILURE to give God the place He deserves on Sunday is a NATIONAL TRAGEDY. America has almost 250,000 churches, yet millions of Americans have no acquaintance with the inside of them. HOW LONG can we expect to continue with such neglect of God's Day?

II.-THE LORD'S DAY IN WORSHIP:

A.-The Purposes Of Church Meetings:

1-To "hold forth Christ"--To the LOST--Proclamation
--To the SAVED--Edification

2-Worship of our God

3-Service by INSTRUCTION in the Word
4-Comfort & stengthening in the Lord thru fellowship & God's Word taught

B.-The Method Of Church Meetings:
1-"TOGETHER"--ALL together with regularity
--Characteristic of the early Church
--Acts 2:1, 46; 4:31-32
--As a "CALLED OUT" assembly; That's the meaning of the word "Church" (εκκλησια)
--On the first day of the week
--ALL ELSE takes a SECONDARY PLACE
--ILLUS--

A certain Governor of Surinam, a small country on the Northern part of S. America, once asked his negroes why they always wanted to go to church in order to sing and pray TOGETHER, when they could do so privately at their own homes.

They were standing near a coal fire, and a Negress answered: "Master, separate these coals and they will die at once, but what a pleasant fire they do make when they all burn TOGETHER."

--Going to Church is not simply the act of going to Church. IT IS MORE. When you go to the House of God, YOU TESTIFY that you have a love for the Word of God; YOU PREACH to the non-christian that he is not just a beast of burden, but a HUMAN BEING------rational and spiritual.
--Merely going to Church will save no man, but NOT GOING to church leads to the damnation of many a man------and his family as well.

2-Method has not changed, though we have many organizations & segments to the Church now. God still expects His people to be gathered TOGETHER FOR WORSHIP

4-Regularity--NO ??
--Fairly regular ??
--If not regular.....then WHY NOT ??
--God wants all together, & that REGULARLY !!
--A Pastor hears many excuses
--QUESTION:::"Can those excuses satisfy God?"
--What about Rom. 14:5-13 ??
** Don't make major issues out of secondaries
** Don't cause others to stumble
** Don't misjudge others
** Don't allow your knowledge that EVERY DAY is a worship & study day to rob you and others of a SPECIAL DAY weekly when you GATHER TOGETHER with the saints.

Are you one of them?

5-WHY THIS "Together"-ness??
--Honoring to the Lord
--Power to the Church
--Blessings to the believers
--EVERY SUNDAY unless "providentially hindered"
--And...remember that Sunday...like every other day is 24 hours long----So honor the Lord with a FULL DAY!!
--Each & every truly born-again believer needs to have a

Church Membership

SPIRITUAL HOME, and to be a participating member in its ministry & fellowship
--Reasons may occasionally hinder from total regularity
--But EXCUSES indicate indifference !!

C.-The Content Of Church Meetings:
1-N.T. Shows the Lord's Day as a day of ceaseless activity
2-Not a day--Of Family Reunions
--Of Excursions to beach or mountains
--Of work, except for essential business or emergencies
--Of Athletics & recreation
--Of study and paper-writing
3-Proper Content for Sunday:
--Bible-centered instruction
--Christ honoring testimony
--Opportunity for Spirit-led giving
--Corporate worship, praise & singing
--True fellowship with both MEN and GOD
4-Thus--HOLD the principle of consecration of time, goods, and self
--AVOID the encroachment of legalism & external regulation of a Puritan SABBATARIANISM
5-The Church today does not seem to have the BACKBONE to defend its own holy things from secular intrusion

III.-THE LORD'S DAY IN USAGE:

A.-Observances Of The Lord's Day:
1-FAITHFUL in attention to this duty
2-And also JOYFUL in this privilege
3-Ps. 118:24--"This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it"
4-Selfish use--Leads to spiritual wandering
--Leads to spiritual leanness of soul
--Leads to paths of sin
--Leads to God's chastening to bring us back
--THEREFORE the Council of Elliberis (305 AD) in Canon 21 threatened suspension from Communion to any person living in a town who shall absent himself for 3 Lord's Days from Church
5-Godly use--Leads to obedience to God's Word
--Leads to worship & praise
--Leads to testimony
--Leads to growth in spiritual things
--Leads to prosperity in the things of the Lord
--Ps. 77:13--"Thy way, O God, is in the Sanctuary: who is so great a God as is our God."

EXAMPLE

6-Lk. 4:16--And He (Jesus) came to Nazareth where he had been brought up: and as His custom was, He went

into the synagogue on the sabbath day,.."
--If Jesus Christ NEEDED THIS....
--SO DO WE !!
--A Sunday spent in a truly Christian home is not dull or morbid
--What our children will do is greatly influenced by OUR EXAMPLE

7-ILLUS--Dr. Talmage told of a man 99 years old. He said: I went across the mountains in the early days of this century (the 19th). Sunday morning came. We were beyond the reach of civilization. My comrades were planning to spend the day in games.

I said: 'NO, I CAN'T JOIN YOU. IT IS SUNDAY."

They laughed and said, 'WHY, THERE ISN"T ANY SUNDAY HERE.'

"OH YES THERE IS!', he said, 'I BROUGHT IT WITH ME OVER THE MOUNTAINS.'"

Let us be sure that wherever we go, we take Sunday with us, so we honor the Lord, wherever we are!

8-W. B. Treveyan--"...we are not surprised to find that there is no express statement of our Lord having laid down detailed regulations with His own lips as to the observance of the Lord's Day, or of His having uttered any christian fourth commandment. The observance of a day of worship & rest might have been of little moral value had it been laid upon the Church as an external obligation, instead of being the outgrowth of a living character, and the utterance & expression of christian joy. Men observed the first day of the week SPONTANEOUSLY and NATURALLY as the expression of the new life which they felt within them, and it took its place among the institutions of Christendom." (SUNDAY, P. 138-39)

9-In this light one must agree:

"One of the most monstrous crimes against childhood is the creation of an irreligious environment by the increasing secularisation of the Lord's Day." (WHY SUNDAY, P. 44)

B.-Objections To The Lord's Day:

1-Sundays with nature--Beautiful, but not edifying
--Enjoyable, butn not worship
--Relaxing, but no testimony
--CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE (Heb. 10:25; Acts 2)
--ILLUS--Teddy Roosevelt was once talking with a man who insisted that he could worship God as fully and really in the mountains as he could on Sunday. Roosevelt's retort was short & pointed: "PERHAPS YOU CAN, BUT NO ONE WOULD EVER SUSPECT YOU OF IT."

2-Widespread disregard for Sunday:
--Spiritual decline in Europe from this
--Europe has now become a MISSION FIELD
--Infects all areas of life
* --The nation that loses its SUNDAY, loses its SOUL.
--ALL sacred things gradually go out of the life
--USA is rapidly following a similar course
--PROBLEMS ** Sports on Sundays--DIFFICULT problem
** Question--Does it interfere with or preempt??

3-Dr. Liddon says: "It is not wise or reverent to suppose that all religious duties of Sunday can properly be discharged before breakfast, & that the rest of the day may be spent as we like. No Christian whose heart is in the right place will think like this. Later opportunities of public prayer and instruction in the faith and duty of a christian will be made the most of, as may be possible for each." (EASTER SERMONS, "The Lord's Day")

4-ILLUS--A gentleman once came to Pastor Somerville & said "My son is going to go away to South America. He will not be within the reaches of religion and the Church. I know he will have no Lord's Day there, and he is to be gone 3 years. Now I want you to pray for him, that he not lose all the good disposition toward the gospel which he now feels."

Dr. Somerville looked at him and said: "Aye, you are going to put your son's head into the mouth of a lion, and then cometto have me pray: 'May the lion not crush him.'"

5-Christian home training:

--Qualms of conscience when first violated
--Then calloused---and seared as time goes on
--Later EASIER & EASIER to disregard God
--Now...
...many of you've been saved
--Thus...
God would have you walk in newness of life

CONCLUSION:

A.-This Message:

1-The Lord's Day In Question:-----No valid questions
2-The Lord's Day In Worship:---TOGETHER in the House of God unless providentially hindered
3-The Lord's Day In Usage:--FAITHFUL & JOYFUL, as unto the Lord Himself

B.-Principle:

1-First Samuel 2:30b--"...them that honor Me will I honor and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed."

2-Therefore:

Let us practice a worthy walk before Him

Westbrae--10/4/64 #20--"Holy, Holy, Holy"
Calvary 6/9/68 #1--"May Jesus Christ Be Praised"
Columbia 1/21/73 #269--"I've Found A Friend"
3/4/76 or
#230--"I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord"

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

Acts 2:36-41

ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH RELATED TO DISPENSATIONALISM

I: ISRAEL'S SPECIAL "ORDINANCES" OR RITUALS:

A. - Circumcision - Gen. 17:9-14

1- Followed Abram's faith in Gen. 15:6
2- Applied only to Males
3- Begun for Abram + his household males
4- Performed thereafter on the 8th day after birth 17:12
5- Note [redacted] on significance of the 8th day BLOOD CLOTTING
6- Sign of a spiritual relationship between Jehovah + Abr, Isaac + Jacob — EVERLASTING COVENANT — 17:13; Lev. 12:3 - INITIATION into the covenant
17:11 "token"
7- Circumcision restored - Josh. 5:1-9 - To take away the reproach of Egypt
Ex. 13:12-16.
8- Circumcision of Jesus - Lk. 2:21 - Lev. 12:3

B. - Sabbath - Day Of Rest

1- Recorded of God on 7th day of Creation week - Gen. 2:1-2 GOD ONLY
2- Never given to man until during the Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 16:23) as a gracious provision of rest on the journey to Sinai. (16:23-30)
3- Incorporated into the Law (Ex. 20:9-11)
a - Legal requirement
b - More detailed than any other commandment.
c/ - Given only to Israel under the Law + for life in the land of Israel.
NEVER to the CHURCH.
4- Invested with the character of a

** SIGN in Ex. 31:12-19, esp 17 "between me and the children of Israel for ever." It related to the "perpetual covenant" (31:16) with Abraham. Failure to observe Sabbath was enforced with a DEATH penalty (32:10) TO BE "KEPT" - 31:14, 16 +32:18

5- Presumptuous sin was warned of in Num. 15:30-31 + the death penalty was prescribed. An example in the form of a violation of Sabbath follows in 15:32-36 for the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath

6- Issue was of a DAY SET APART for Israel No connection with either Gentiles or [redacted] Church

** 7- Only one of the 10 Commandments not repeated in the N.T. + not made a part of divine revelation to the Church

C: Passover And Other Feasts:

1- Inaugurated in Egypt (Ex. 12) as a TYPE (=Divinely purposed illustration of divine truth) regarding Israel's redemption from Egypt
   a- By BLOOD + faith w/ Passover Lamb
   b- By POWER + obedience at the Red Sea

2- Ritual of Passover (See my Bible Notes opposite P. 83 in SRB) DETAILS
   A:- STANDARD of the Lamb
   B:- SLAYING of the Lamb
   C:- SUPPER of the Lamb

3- Results of Passover (See my Bible Notes opposite P. 82 of SRB)
   A:- ONE SACRIFICE; Many Memorials TO REMEMBER Parallel the death of Christ
   B:- NEW BEGINNING for Israel - New Calendar - New Walk - 2 Cor. 5:17

C.- PROMISE BRINGS ASSURANCE — SAFETY for the redeemed (3)

D.- JUDGMENT UPON EGYPT

* E.- DELIVERANCE does not end one's problems, but embarks one upon a pilgrim way!!

4- Passover was limited to the circumcised (males) + their families Ex. 12:43-49, so this was a "closed communion" as far as unbelievers were concerned.

5- Followed by Feast of Unleavened Bread + this was also elevated to the status of a SIGN between Jehovah + Israel (Ex. 13: 1-12 — esp. 13:9 +16

6- Three Feasts became the "HIGHLIGHT TIMES" for Israelite males wherein they were to come up to Jerusalem as an act of worship, obedience + fellowship (Ex. 23:14-19;

① Passover — Unleavened Bread
② First fruits or Pentecost
③ Ingathering or Tabernacles

7- Only relations between the Passover + the Church are:

a- HISTORIC — Christ was crucified at the time of the Passover Sacrifice in A.D. 32 — BASIS OF OUR SALVATION

b- TYPICAL — Paul writes in 1 Cor. 5:7-8 that Christ is the fulfillment for the Church of that which the Passover Lamb symbolized for Israel

D.- SUMMARY:

1- Israel had 3 ordinances which held the status of SIGNS of RELATIONSHIP between Jehovah and the nation descended from Abraham, Isaac + Jacob

① — Circumcision
② — Sabbath
③ — Passover - Feast of Unleavened Bread

2- Not even one of these, let alone all of them, have significance between God and His Church, which is a separate entity. - ENTIRELY SEPARATE ENTITIES

II. - THE CHURCH'S SPECIAL ORDINANCES OR RITUALS

A. - Ordinances Proposed By Various Ones:

1 - Baptism
2 - Mass, Eucharist, The Lord's Table, The Lord's Supper
3 - Foot washing
4 - Marriage (Matrimony)
5 - Holy Orders
6 - Extreme Unction
7 - Confession
8 - Penance
9 - Confirmation

NINE in R.C. Ch.

B. - Four Tests For Ordinances:

1 - An ordinance of the church must have been instituted by Christ, since He is the Church's Foundation, Savior, Lord and Head. Nothing can be His ordinance for His Church without His authorization.

2. This excludes confirmation, penance, extreme unction and confession.

2 - Such an ordinance must not be merely done by Christ or encouraged as an example, but be directly commanded to the Church. This excludes foot washing, which was given as an example, but not as a commandment.

3 - Any ordinance of the church must be equally applicable to all believers. Holy Orders and Matrimony would exclude some from each, so are not equally applicable to all believers.

4 - Church ordinances must have been regularly practiced by the believing Church through the centuries. ONLY believer baptism and communion

qualify

C.- Believer Baptism:

Four General Principles

1- Administered only to believers old enough to believe Knowingly.
2- Administered only by immersion as a symbol of the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord.
3- Administered under the authority of a local church
4- Generally administered only once as an open testimony of faith in Christ as personal Savior and testimony of possession of new life in Christ.

5- Exceptions generally allowed for second baptism
a- When previously baptized as an unbeliever.
b- When previously baptized by an unscriptural mode of baptism.
c- When unable to remember the occasion of the previous baptism by reason of it being performed at an early age, and desiring in "adulthood" to reaffirm the baptism previously received.

MEANING → 6- TESTIMONY OF NEW LIFE

D.- Communion / The Lord's Table / The Lord's Supper:

1- Administered by Church officers and under auspices of a local church
a- In Church services
b- In homes to shut-ins
c- In nursing homes
d- In hospitals.
2- Administered with some frequency in the light of 1 Cor. 11:26 — "as oft"

a- Every day in Catholic Churches
b- Every quarter in many old-line denominational churches
c- Every month in most fundamental churches
d- Occasionally on some other schedule pattern
e- On special occasions
- Christmas eve
- New Years eve
- Easter sunrise service
- Conventions of churches

No reason to look unfavorably on these if related to the local church

Administered with biblically proper elements
- Unleavened bread
- Unfermented grape juice

3- Administered to those who have examined themselves as to their being in fellowship at that time, so that they do not partake "unworthily" (1 Cor. 11:27-32)

4- Administered to believers who partake of the elements together as a symbol of Christian unity (1 Cor. 11:33)

5- Administered "until He comes" (1 Cor. 11:26)

6 as a TESTIMONY OF CONTINUED FELLOWSHIP + WITNESS.

E.- Summary:

1- The distinction between Israel and the Church is clear in the separate ordinances authorized to each of these very different entities.

2- Always keep in mind the pivotal verse 1 Corinthians 10:32:
"Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God."

Do not fail to distinguish Israel from the Church.

6/9/93 Preparation
6/[illegible]/93 - CMI, South Africa
3/14/04 - Hilltop Bapt. Ch.
3/26/06 - Harper Heights Bapt. Ch.

HYMNS - #424 - "Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord"
414 - Have Thine Own Way, Lord"
436 - Take My Life, And Let It Be"
#261 "I Know A Fount
#255 "Jesus Paid It All"
#262 "My Jesus I Love Thee"
#577 "Abide With Me"

"BACK TO BASICS" Acts 2:42-47
or Read Acts 2:32-47
"THE SUCCESS OF THE BIBLE CHURCH"
or
"THE BIBLE CHURCH IN A HOSTILE WORLD"

INTRO:

A.-Worldly Philosophy Of Success: = Worldly Success

1-The history of America is a STORY OF SUCCESS that almost defies description
- Freedom from foreign tyrrany
- --Wide open spaces
- Unlimited horizons
- --Abundant natural resources
- Opportunity for all
- --Victory in wars
- Prosperity in peace

2-Produced a "**SUCCESS ORIENTATION**"
- --Bigness and Size
- --Financial security
- --Power, position, prominence
- --Accoutrements of success (Cars, Homes, Clothes, Bonds Stocks, Real Estate, Country Clubs)

3-TRAGICALLY this **reasoning of the world** has **rubbed off** on many a sincere christian

4-Many Christians are equating worldly success with spiritual success
- NUMBERITUS
- Publicity ratings
- Size of membership, buildings or budgets
- Salary goals
- Popularity

5-AND--These criteria have become **an influence** upon the Church of Jesus Christ
- --In many cases they've been adopted lock, stock and barrel....

...and often without thinking about it.

6-Desperate need for the Church and for Christians today to GET **BACK TO BASICS !!**

B.-Christ's Church In Action: = Biblical Success

1-Not enough to have mere "motion" or "success"

2-Rather--Purposeful action
- --God-directed pattern

3-THEREFORE--We need to **seek** and **find** the BIBLICAL PATTERN
- We need to orient our thinking to think God's thoughts after Him

4-Since the Church is the **ONLY** INSTITUTION in this age spoken of from Matthew to Revelation as **entrusted** with God's work today....

5-Then we need to examine--The N.T. for our answers
- --The "**MODEL CHURCH**" in Acts 2 to see WHAT IT IS LIKE.
- --The ingredients that were its characteristics

6-So that we can survive...and serve...as today's **BIBLE CHURCH** IN A HOSTILE WORLD.

C.-Characteristics Of A Model Church:

REVERSE

2-UNITED IN HEART --(Acts 2:44; 4:32; Eph. 4:1-7) → "one heart + of one soul"
--In faith
--In baptism
--No factions or parties → "together"
--United as a CHRISTIAN FAMILY
--Acts 4:32
--The **household of faith**

1-STEADFAST IN TRUTH --(Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:14-16)
--In Doctrine--No use for the shifty generation that pleads that its views are "PROGRESSIVE"
--In Fellowship--Quick to see their own failures, but slow to criticize others' faults
--In the Ordinance of the Lord's Table
--In Prayer--True Church is made up of praying christians

3-CHARITABLE IN GIVING --No financial problems - 2:44b-45; 4:34-37
--**EVERYBODY GAVE**, and well-nigh gave everything
--Trading their **silver** for precious **souls**
--2 Cor. 9:6-8

4-JOYFUL IN SPIRIT --(Acts 2:46-47; Eph. 5:18-21)
--It was their **singleness of heart** that made them **happy** christians
--Not divided between Christ and the world
--Being **wholly** the Lord's, they rejoiced IN HIM

D.-How To Produce A New Testament Church: — BIBLICAL PATTERN

1-Seen its characteristics just now
2-Need to "look inside" to find out..
..."what made it tick"
3-OUTLINE:
I.-THE MESSAGE Of The Bible Church:
II.-THE METHOD Of The Bible Church:
III.-THE MINISTRY OF The Bible Church:
IV.-THE MANNER Of The Bible Church:
4-Prop--See it from New Testament era
--**Produce it NOW**, here, in this Church
--Because we're still in God's era of the N.T. CHURCH.

I.-THE MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE CHURCH:

God is still able to do this today!

A.-Introductory Remarks:

1-Church had a **SIMPLE CREED** to present to the Lost
2-Didn't argue theories or intricacies of doctrine before "swine", to whom these "pearls" would have been wasted
3-Hewed to the line of the "apostle's doctrine" (2:42)
4-They lived in the days before the Canon of Scripture was completed, as we now have it.

B.-Ingredients Of The Message Of The Bible ChurcH: — FOUR-FOLD

1-**MESSIAHSHIP** Of Jesus--Acts 2:36
--Acts 5:31
--Acts 9:20-21
--Acts 17:3

--Acts 18:28
--**ALL** disciples **gave witness** that Jesus of Nazareth was the long-awaited MESSIAH of Israel & LIGHT to the Gentiles
--Acts 8:4--"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word
--**EACH** CHURCH MEMBER was expected to give personal loyalty, reverence & obedience to HIM — People with a Message

2-RESURRECTION Of Jesus--Acts 2:24
--Acts 2:32
--Acts 4:2, 33
--Acts 10:40
--Acts 13:30, 33, 37
--Acts 17:31
--TEN TIMES in the 16 chapters of Romans
--Resurrection was presented as PROOF of Jesus' deity
--Resurrection was presented as PROOF of Christ's sacrificial atonement for sin being ACCEPTED by God — People with a Hope

3-**RETURN** Of Our Lord--Acts 1:11
"Jesus is Coming Again" — --Acts 3:20
--Acts 10:42
--Acts 15:16
--Disciples believed & taught that He Who had ascended to heaven was in due time to come back to earth & to reign as King
--This "**BLESSED HOPE**" supported them in the midst of peril, privation, persecution & prison.

2:38
3:19
20:21
4- Repentance

5-Wm. A. Mierop--"If pastors will proclaim nothing more and congregations will accept nothing less than the **plain**, **pure** & **powerful** Word of God, churches will be thriving instead of dying, advancing in place of retreating, succeeding rather than failing. Today more than ever we need to tell the Truth, the whole Truth & nothing but the Truth. Should it not be clear as to exactly what is meant by the Truth then let it be understood that it is the unadulterated, undiluted & unmutilated Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; which gives the guilty sinner a **full pardon** for the confession of sin and acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior. The sacred desk should be a place from which is heard **no uncertain sound** but which preaches Jesus Christ as the Son of God, Savior and Lord.

"A minister **should leave** the pulpit who does not tell the story of Jesus and His love. A congregation is not true to Christ unless it **makes a minister leave** its pulpit if he has already departed from the faith. A church to survive must have an unimpeachable love for the Word of God."

II.-THE METHOD OF THE BIBLE CHURCH: — TWO-FOLD!

A.-Witnessing Without--QUANTITATIVE INCREASE:

1-The weapon of the Church thru which the world was (& is) to be won was the WITNESSING OF ITS MEMBERS
- a-As numbers of converts multiplied
- b-The numbers of witnesses multiplied

2-Every member **felt his responsibility** to actively further the work of the Lord
- Andrew found Peter (John 1:40-42)
- Philip found Nathaniel (John 1:44-49)
- And the **chain went on**.....
  ...**to us**....and beyond!! Thank God!

3-Personal concern & sense of dutiful obligation characterized EACH BELIEVER

4-Began with family, friends, neighbors, & acquaintancees

5-ILLUS--Gadarene Demoniac
- --Mk. 5:19--"Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but said unto him, Go home to thy friends, and **tell them** how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

6-THIS HAD PRIORITY--
- --All could do this
- --Any could bear witness
- --Service that began the very day of their salvation
- --ILLUS--Genevieve Mott, who has contacted EVERY SINGLE PERSON whom she has ever known, and has given them the gospel

B.-Witnessing Within--QUALITATIVE INCREASE:

1-The building of the Church was not merely in numbers
- --That is important
- --That ought to be done
- --But that's **not** "the whole show"

2-CHRISTIAN EDUCATION in the early Church was a **vital part** of the program

3-Christ gave a **TEACHING** COMMISSION (Mt. 28:19-20)
- --Groups of pupils in classes under skilled teachers for the study of God's Word
- --Led to a **spiritually qualified laity**
- --Acts 17:11--"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

4-So effective in **ORALLY** presenting the truth---without any textbooks---because of
THE BURNING IMPRESSION of Apostles making an **indellible impact** upon their hearers.

NB

5-No greater testimony to the place & importance of the teaching ministry in the early Church has been given than the tribute of the eminent Church Historian, Philip Schaff:

"It is a remarkable fact that after the days of the Apostles no great missionaries are mentioned until the opening of the Middle Ages. There are no missionary

societies, no missionary institutions, no organized effort in the ante-Nicean age. Yet in less than 300 years after the death of the disciple John, the whole population of the Roman Empire, which then represented the civilized world, was nominally Christianized."

6-H. Clay Trumbull concluded, "This was because the divine, approved plan of child-reaching and child-teaching methods of Christian activity was adhered to by the immediate successors of our Lord."

7-TREMENDOUS HOMES for Jesus Christ.

III.-THE MINISTRY OF THE BIBLE CHURCH:

A.-Basic Question:

1-Wm. A. Mierop--"What is the function of the Christian Church? Speaking negatively, it is not to be a social rendezvoux for the community where socialites may have their weekly teas & annual fashion shows. The church is not to be a club house for the men to display their brains or brawn. The visible church is not to be a fourth rate non-taxable restaurant which competes with the licensed & taxable restauranteur on the pretense of raising money for the church.

"The function of the church positively speaking is to preach the Gospel of our Lord and Savior and teach the Word of the living God both abroad and at home." (June 1946, ETERNITY)

B.-Unity & Joy (Acts 2:46):

Experience Christ

INSIDE

1-"INSIDE" View of the Biblical Church
2-Could "camp" here & show responsibilities
3-But let's not just..
..."stand & bounce the ball", but rather, let us move on for God.

C.-Praise (Acts 2:47a):

Exalt Christ

UPSIDE

1-Let's not forget this essential!!
2-Needed by Pastor ....and by the people
3-GOD is to get our praise
4-This is the "UPSIDE" View of the Church

D.-Favor (Acts 2:47b):

Express Christ

OUTSIDE

1-"Favor"=="Power of a godly life"
2-their testimony had IMPACT!!
3-Must have contact if we are to have impact
4-This is the "OUTSIDE" View of the church
5-In spite of persecution
- -From rulers
- -From governments
- -From religious leaders
- -The Bible Church has always had its existence in a HOSTILE WORLD !!

6-By the end of the 3rd century following Christ there were over 5 million believers in the Roman world
7-One historian records that "...the church lifted empires off their hinges & turned the stream of the

centuries out of its channel."

E.-Souls Saved (Acts 2:47c):

ETERNAL SIDE

1-This is the "ETERNAL" Side of the Church
2-Daily additions--To the family of God
--To the number of believers
--To the local church in Jerusalem
3-CHURCH GROWTH--By leaps & bounds
--Not by limps, jerks & dribbles
--God's Church G R E W !!
--Christianity spread like wildfire
4-Who did what??????--**Apostles** majored on prayer & the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4)
--**Believers** went everywhere "gossiping the gospel"

Both were Essential

5-Pliny wrote the Emperor Trajan: "...so many believe in Christ that the temples of pagan worship are deserted."

IV.-THE MANNER OF THE BIBLE CHURCH:

A.-The "Climate" In Which Spiritual Success Was Achieved:

1-The Church was **TRIED**....and well-tried !!
--Tried by fire
--Tried by imprisonment
--Tried by banishment
--Tried by confiscation of property
--Tried by slander
--Tried by the wrach
--Tried by crucifixion
--Tried by contest with wild animals
2-Y E T, the Church proved Christ's words that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
3-Later **the Adversary** of our souls introduced:
-False doctrine from outside
-Heresy and divisions from the inside
-Hypocrisy among believers
-Fanaticism among those who became lopsided (= Sects)
-Worldliness of some
--And.....it was not very much later, unfortunately!!
4-Still, it was true that the **BIBLE CHURCH** was "unshaken as the eternal hills, immovable she stands"

B.-W H Y Could The Church So Stand & Stay So True??:

1-Reasons recorded by **Gibbon**, the 18th century scholar who chronicled "The Decline And Fall Of The Roman Empire"
2-REMEMBER, Gibbon was **no friend** to Christianity, but he was distinctly antagonistic !
3-Yet he saw **4 reasons why** Christianity grew so rapidly in the ancient world
4-We need to--**Know** those 4 reasons
--Return to them with a vigour
--**Hold high** the flag of Christian valour

C.-The FOUR REASONS---The "Manner" Of The Church:

1-**THE INFLEXIBLE ZEAL & ENTHUSIASM** OF THE CHRISTIANS

--They took the teachings of Jesus & the Apostles at face value — Didn't "interpret away"
--They refused to **compromise** with any pagan religion or secular code
--ENTHUSIASM was contageous
--John 4:24--"God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."
--A later historian comments:
"They were absolutely happy, always getting into trouble."

2-THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE FUTURE LIFE:
--Even among the most brilliant of the Greek & Roman writers, ignorance, hesitancy & professed **insincerity** about immortality are found
*--Because Christians could speak with CERTAINTY about that which the world was uncertain, they were able to gain a hearing
--After a hearing....God gave a **heeding** in many hearts
--Very faint & feeble words being spoken on this subject **today** also
--**WE HAVE THE ANSWERS!!**
--Surely we ought to be dogmatic
bulldogmatic
English-buldogmatic !
--God's Word tells us What's Ahead

3-The Miraculous Power Ascribed To The **Early Church**:
--Acts 4:33--"With **great power** gave the apostles witness..."
--Marvelous **miracles** were wrought by the disciples to demonstrate the truth of their assertions
--Some of these are recorded in the N.T.
--Doubtless there were many **more**, or else Gibbon would not have included it, for he admits he sought some other explanation
--THE HOLY SPIRIT was at work **in** them & **thru** them!
--Record of Acts is full of miraculous working
--Miracles as sign-gifts have **ceased**
--But God still does work in supernatural intervention
--No greater miracle than that of a
SAVED SOUL + A TRANSFORMED LIFE

4-THE PURE, AUSTERE MORALS OF THE CHRISTIANS:
--They would not compromise
--Pagan immoralities did **not entice** them
--They abandoned sins when they were converted
--Lives became exemplary
--Exhibited a **standard** of **virtue** unknown to the ancient world.
--The virtuousness of their way of life was beyond the understanding of their contemporaries
--Made these used to the immorality of some religions & the "Mysteries" of other oriental religions see that there was **something** pure in true believers
--Paul calls this "the mystery of godliness" as it is exhibited in believers' lives
--Believers' aim----**TO BE CHRIST-LIKE** !

--Patterns of the "old life" were discarded----ruthlessly done away with

CONCLUSION:

A.-The Church's Action:

1-Must be God's Church
2-Must meet God's standards
3-Must move God's way
4-Wm. A. Mierop--"Wherever there is an organization of the Lord's people **determined to do His work** without stint either physically or spiritually, it can expect to be owned and prospered by God....Half-hearted, perfunctory eye-service or lip-service never deceived anyone, especially God."
5-ILLUS--Hezekiah
--2 Chron. 31:20-21--"And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the Lord his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered."

B.-The Church's Pattern: = BACK TO BASICS

1-**Message:**--Messiah
--Resurrection
--Return
--We **dare not tamper** with this message; JUST PREACH IT!
--1 John 1:3--"That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you..."
Repentance

2-**Method**--Witnessing WITHOUT===Evangelism
--Witnessing WITHIN===Teaching
--Let's get back to basics
** Do our job
** Do it **God's Way**

3-**Ministry**--Unity & Joy
--Praise of God
--Favor==Testimony
--Souls being saved
--Where are **YOUR TROPHIES**??

4-**Manner**--
--TOTALLY "**All-Out**" for Christ!!
--What about you??
--What about your Church
--What about your participation
--Local congregation is **no stronger than you are**!!
--"The American Church is full of religious stowaways & hitch-hikers who are just going along for the ride, while the faithful few do all of the uphill work."

5-WHAT IS YOUR DECISION??
--World may not call you "SUCCESSFULL"
--Hebrews 11's catalog is not impressive to worldlings
--But they are included in God's **HALL OF FAITH**
--These didn't operate on the "Success" principle, but on the "**FAITHFULNESS**" principle
--How about YOU??

"THE LEADING OF THE SPIRIT" Acts 8:26-40
Rom. 8:14-16

INTRO: A.-ILLUS. Of James M. Gray:

Dr. James M. Gray, the well-known Bible teacher & head of Moody Bible Institute, once told about his long convalescence following a serious illness. His doctors urged him to change his surroundings, making a trip to a place like England.

The thought of the visit was thrilling to contemplate. Then, just before his departure, he sustained another unexpected attack. Although deeply disappointed, Dr. Gray still felt there was perhaps something the Lord wanted to tell him while he was on his back.

A few weeks later, he couldn't but wonder as newspaper headlines emblazoned the tragic news that the ship on which he would have sailed struck a reef & sank almost immediately with the loss of many lives.

The Lord, Who had helped him in the past, had once again perfectly directed his way, protecting him from physical death. No wonder the Psalmist said of the Lord, "But as for God, His ways are perfect."

B.-Scriptural Principle:

1-Rom. 8:14-16

2-8:15-16 speaks of FAMILY RELATIONSHIP
- --Not a spirit of bondage
- --But a spirit of adoption
- --We cry: "Abba, Father"
- --Spirit bears witness with out spirit
- --We are the CHILDREN of God (teknia)

3-Thus we see an inner witness of our family relationship in Christ

4-But there is also an OUTER WITNESS
- --8:14
- --Led by the Spirit
- --Such ones are the SONS of God (uios)
- --This is an evidence of maturity in the family as capable of guidance in our lives
- --This is what Dr. Gray was experiencing --GUIDANCE as God's mature SON

C.-Scriptural Example (Our Message):

1-The Spirit's Leading Of The Christian
- --Spirit led Philip to the PLACE-----8:26-28
- --Spirit led Philip to the MAN-------8:29-30a
- --Spirit led Philip to the SCRIPTURE--8:30b-35

2-The Spirit's Leading To Become A Christian
- --Spirit led Eunuch to FAITH---------8:36-37
- --Spirit led Eunuch to OBEDIENCE-----8:38
- --Spirit led Eunuch to JOYFUL EXP.---8:39

3-PROP: We want to see clearly that it is the office-work of the Spirit to lead the child of God in his walk of faith, & to guide the sinner to place his faith in Christ as Savior.

I.-THE SPIRIT'S LEADING OF THE CHRISTIAN:

A.-The Spirit Led Philip To The PLACE:

1-Acts 8:26-28

2-Philip had been in Samaria by Divine appointment

3-Philip now receives new orders
- 8:26
- New orders don't always include all of what is ahead & all of what will be expected of him
- FAITH is involved in any move in response to the Spirit

4-The communication
- The Spirit can speak for Himself (8:29)
- But He may also use intermediate agents, as an angel of the Lord here (8:26)
- "ARISE AND GO"
  - ** So also to Ananias (9:11) to go to Paul
  - ** So also to Peter (10:20) to go to Cornelius
- It would surely require unmistakable leading from God to induce a man to leave such a work as occupied Philip in Samaria
- Yet, the Head of the Church, in wisdom, moves his honored servant from the scene of his early successes
- Few can endure the pitch of such experiences for very long

5-ILLUS
- Elijah on Mt. Carmel had to have his "sanitarium" of the wilderness
- Similarly, Philip was moved so he could continue in 2 decades of obscurity, but in faithful ministry as a sharer of the gospel

6-NOTICE
- Immediate obedience:
- "And he arose and went"
- Desert place is not a place of lonliness when in fellowship with the God Who leads, even when it is AWAY from those with whom we have deep & close associations
- Place of God's leading may seem strange, but is always right for our utmost usefulness
- So with Philip, we see him led of the Spirit to the PLACE of God's appointment

7-ILLUS
- During World War II a newspaper article suggested that the early stages of the North African campaign were slowed down because the enlisted men were not always sure that their officers were masters of the situation. This produced hesitancy at times in obeying commands.
- Philip knew that his Lord was Master of the situation, & he went, as under sealed orders, yet confident!

B.-The Spirit Led Philip To The MAN:

1-Acts 8:27-30a

2-This was a highway to a desert area; therefore lightly traveled, but not deserted.

3-Doubtless there were several caravans that passed with many persons in each

4-DIVINE APPOINTMENT--Specific man
--Ethiopian Eunuch (DETAILS about him)
--Specific servant
--Philip, the messenger (DETAILS also)
--God arranges the pathway of BOTH
--Specific caravan
--Specific man with spiritual need
--Specific servant with the message

5-Acts 8:29-30a him"

6-Philip's obedience was IMMEDIATE--"Philip ran thither to/

7-ILLUS--D. Stuart Briscoe tells the story that 3 years ago he was driving in Germany, headed for Luxembourg. He saw a man who was obviously English, standing by the side of the road, wanting a ride. Since Briscoe was in a German car, the hitch-hiker asked: "Do you speak English?" He replied wryly, "Yes, a little. Hop in if you like.

The hitchhiker congratulated Briscoe on his English, admitting that it was very good. When he found that Briscoe was born & reared in Great Britain, he wanted to know what brot him to the continent.

Briscoe explained that he was a Bible teacher whose purpose was to tell people about the Lord Jesus Christ. Immediately the hitchhikers interest quickened, and he said: "This is a strange thing. I have been praying for years. A few minutes before your car came along, I found myself praying. Isn't that strange? I have been all over the continent of Europe with a friend who is a militant atheist. If anyone ever mentions the word 'God', he will fly into a rage & tell them in no uncertain terms to be quiet. We had a disagreement just a few minutes ago, and he drove off and left me. About three years ago some friends of mine went away on a holiday. When they returned they told me some of the same things you're now telling me, except they couldn't explain it too well----but one thing I remember was that they said they were 'CONVERTED'---would that be the right word?"

Briscoe replied that it was indeed the right word, and asked if his new friend had been a change in his compatriots when they had become "converted"? He said, "Indeed there was!" "In fact, he added, they'd been to some place called CAPERNWRAY HALL"

To this Brother Briscoe stated that he, too, was associated with Capernwray-------and as their conversations went on, it became apparent that there had been a DIVINE APPOINTMENT which brought these two together, for the hitchhiker trusted Jesus as Savior, and he, too, was "CONVERTED" !

Indeed, God does know what He's about in arranging the circumstances so the needy soul is brought into contact with the ready messenger !

8-So, BOTH Philip & the Eunuch were PREPARED for this meeting
--Eunuch knew ** Emptiness of Judaism's worship
** Emptiness of his own heart
** Lack of satisfying answers to ?s
--Philip knew ** The Savior
** The Scriptures
** The fulfillment in Christ

--AND.....God led them together!

C.-The Spirit Led Philip To The SCRIPTURE:

1-Acts 8:30b-35

2-"Understandest thou?"
- --Rather an unorthodox approach
- -Augustine--"The N. T. lies hid in the O. T."
- -BUT the light of the Spirit is needed to enable us to see & apprehend it.

3-"How can I, except some man should guide me?"
- -Jesus described the teachers of His time as blind leaders (GUIDES) of the blind
- -Term "Guide" is used repeatedly in reference to interpretation & authoritative teaching
- *--Same word as John 16:13
- -NEEDED:---A man to guide
- -God makes use of human instruments

4-The Scripture--Isaiah 53

The Passage
- --Vicarious atonement is its theme
- --Delitzsch--"All the utterances of the N. T. regarding the Lamb of God are derived from this prophecy."
- --Emphasis of passage is on SEVERITY of suffering

5-The Question--8:34
- --"OF WHOM?"
- --Everything depends upon that question and its proper answer!
- --Saw the suffering Savior in prophecy, but was apparently not clear on the historic PERSON to Whom these prophecies refer
- --Isaiah may not have known either
- --1 Peter 1:11-12
- --But now the answer is clear
- --JESUS IS THE KEY to man's enigmas

6-The Answer--8:35
- --Philip had no difficulty in knowing about Whom the Scripture spoke, & he did not hesitate
- --ONE INTERPRETATION only
- --It is interesting that the Spirit led Philip to be stationed on the Road to Gaza so that the Eunuch had read to the 53rd chapter when Philip joined him
- --Oh, to be so full of Jesus & so acquainted with the Word that every Scripture would become full of meaning of Him
- --Philip began at the Scripture at hand & went on for all Scripture speaks of Him
- --ILLUS.--"All roads lead to ROME"
- --So, all Scripture reveals Christ
- --I Cor. 2:2--"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, & Him crucified"
- --Lk. 24:27--"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."
- --No need to seek another starting place to preach Jesus----one was already prepared

7-"Preached unto him Jesus"
  =="Told him the glad tidings"
  --8:4, 12, 25
  --Jesus is the only adequate object of FAITH

8-SUMMARY--The leading of the Spirit for the Christian
  --Led to the PLACE
  --Led to the MAN
  --Led to the SCRIPTURE

Trust the Spirit of God to so lead your day by day!

II.-THE SPIRIT'S LEADING TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN:

A.-The Spirit Led The Eunuch To FAITH:

1-8:36-37

2-How long it took--Not known in this case
  --Varies with different individuals
  --That is the job of the Spirit to bring conviction of sin & faith
  --We need to be patient, helpful & persevering

3-It would appear that Philip instructed the Ethiopian, not only in the OBJECT of faith (Christ), but also in the CONFESSION of faith (thru water baptism)
  --Parallel in Acts 2:38--"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, & be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for (after) the remission of sins...
  --Repent...Believe....Be baptized
  --THUS, when the water came in view, this prompted the Eunuch's question

4-"See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?"
  --Immediacy of faith and of obedience
  --True conversion will include both
  --Accepted Christ without delay
  --Acted upon his new convictions
  --Very practical question:---HAVE YOU
    ** Any sp. convictions
    ** Acted upon them?

5-Faith's confession
  --8:37 is not in the best mss.
  --But it is in accord with Scriptural usage of expected faith & Biblical practice
  --8:37 is quoted by Irenaeus, who lived 115-202 A.D.
  --Examination of genuineness of one's faith is to be expected
  --Open & clear-cut confession is normal
  --HAVE YOU given open confession of YOUR FAITH ?

6-ILLUS---It is interesting to realize how some of the great experiences of life are really affected by small things, at least as they appear on the surface.

One man tells how a pair of socks changed the course of his existence: "I was expecting to take a short boat trip with some friends, but 2 days before that I met with an accident while chopping wood. The axe slipped & cut my foot. The blue dye in my socks poisoned the wound so that I had to stay near home & forget the trip with my friends.

While they were gone on their trip, a powerful preacher came to our town. I had become so tired of staying

ome, I decided to attend his meetings. The minister's message hat night touched me deeply. As a result I surrendered in faith to Jesus Christ. I had needed a vital change. New desires and purposes took hold of me. I was determined to seek an education so that I could live more usefully for my Lord."

Think of it, just a pair of socks was used by the Spirit of God to lead a man to faith in Christ! Incidentally, that man became President of the U.S.A.--James A. Garfield -- who loved to give open testimony to his personal faith in Christ.

B.-The Spirit Led The Eunuch To Obedience:

1-Acts 8:38

2-Faith and Baptism go together!

3-Faith is inward, and Baptism is outward in evidence of that inward change

4-Baptism is a matter of OBEDIENCE

5-Biblical pattern--Mt. 28:19-20

--Evangelization — Conversion to Christ

--Identification (with Christ & His church) — Conversion to Church

--Indoctrination — Conversion to Controlled Life

--??--Where are you in this scheme of progress?

How many conversions have you had?

6-F. F. Bruce--"When a convert was formally admitted to christian fellowship by baptism, he made a public confession of his new faith, probably in response to a definite question." (P. 190)

7-Baptism is a sign of OBEDIENCE in Scripture

--Rom. 1:5--"By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name:"

--Rom. 16:26--"But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:"

--Water baptism is ordained of God for this purpose (of obedience) and ought not to be minimized in our sight

--A matter of serious & immediate concern

8-WHO could be led by the Spirit to this obedience?

--W. B. Riley--"No pool or font was opened in the New Testament for infidel, imbecile, or infant, for the very simple reason that Baptism signifies what neither of these has experienced---namely, 'death to sin and the resurrection to walk in newness of life', through the exercise of personal faith."

--The true believer in Christ is expected to be led to this obedience

C.-The Spirit Led The Eunuch To Joyful Experience:

1-Acts 8:39

2-Philip was "caught away"

--Same word used for Rapture in 1 Th. 4:17

--Evangelist's work was done

--Evangelist was removed so dependence would be on the Holy Spirit

--How we ought to rejoice in those who led us to Christ

--But we dare not be dependent upon them
--Having been introduced to the Savior, Philip's presence was no longer required
--Human teachers have their place--and an important one--but we have to beware of an inordinate attachment which displaces the Lord
--"The soul that has found Jesus, can thereafter easily dispense with every other (human) guide"

3-"And he (the eunuch) went on his way rejoicing"
--Imperfect tense
--He was so full of his new-found joy in Christ that he had no eyes for other things
--Christian faith is characterized by MUCH JOY
** 8:8
** 8:39
** 5:41
** 13:52

4-What is the sphere of proper joy?
--IN the Lord
--Phs. 3:1--"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord...."
--Not in circumstances or blessings, but in the Lord Himself
--BY the Spirit
--Rom. 15:13--"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost."
--Gal. 5:22--"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy...."

CONCLUSION:

A.-Re-Emphasis:

1-Salvation is an individual matter
--Often "one by one"
--Occasionally in groups or clusters.
--But always by individual decisions

2-Leading is an individual matter
--Not always the same for every christian
--Not always the same for the same person at different times
--Requires constant sensitivity to the Spirit

3-Personal work is an individual matter
--Nicodemus by night
--Woman at the well in afternoon
--Zacchaeus up a tree
--Bartimeaus at town's outskirts
--Paul out of a crowd
--Cornelius when Peter was sent for
--Lydia at a prayer meeting
--2 Tim. 4:2--"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season...
--How long since you--INDIVIDUALLY--were so employed?

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®
BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

B.-Recapitulation:

1-The Spirit's Leading Of The Christian
- --Spirit led Philip to the PLACE
- --Spirit led Philip to the MAN
- --Spirit led Philip to the SCRIPTURE

2-The Spirit's Leading To Become A Christian
- --Spirit led Eunuch to FAITH
- --Spirit led Eunuch to OBEDIENCE
- --Spirit led Eunuch to JOYFUL EXPERIENCE

This is the ONLY area the H.S. leads the unsaved

3-The points--Believer led to USEFULNESS
- --Believer reaches out to the sinner in his need of Christ
- --Spirit guides the sinner to faith

4-If the outreach of the gospel of Christ is hindered, it is because some christian is not willing to go and be used as the agent of the Spirit

5-THEREFORE--Let us yield ourselves to the Spirit so we may be led

Westbrae--5/19/68 Holy Ghost, With Light Divine 146

Calvary Columbus 5/4/75+ Where He Leads I'll Follow 39

6/8/75

6/2/68 - 2nd half "He Hideth My Soul" 255

Not Known well → "I've Found Real Joy" 235

"HOW TO BANISH CONFUSION" Acts 9:1-21 (1)
or
"PAUL'S PATTERN OF OBEDIENCE"

INTRO:

A.-Last Message: (See Acts 22:1-16--Paul's Progress Pattern")

1-Four stages in Paul's progress pattern
--(a) Conviction — Process
--(b) Conversion — Point
--(c) Consecration —
--(d) Confusion

2-Similar stages for all true believers
-Time periods will vary
-Experience details will vary
-But the sequence is [redacted] predictable except for order of (c) + (d)

B.-Next Questions:

1-H O W do I move ahead steadily in this progression?? ??
Especially, H O W do I minimize the experience of confusion??
2-These are important questions
3-The questions need answers in each of our lives
4-The answers are found IN THE BOOK as we look at the record---I.-FOUR OBJECTIVE ELEMENTS IN RIDDANCE OF CONFUSION:

II.-SIX SUBJECTIVE ELEMENTS IN RIDDANCE OF CONFUSION

5-Prop: We need to know how God has planned and provided for our deliverance from confusion so that we can cooperate with His provision.

I.-FOUR OBJECTIVE ELEMENTS IN RIDDANCE OF CONFUSION:

A.-Clarification Of OBJECTIVE ELEMENTS:

1-This means that these elements are outside of the individual -Whether SAUL/Paul
-Or you
-Or your spouse
-Or me.....

2-They are universal & uniform, and are dependent only upon God's provision, not on the actions or reactions of the new Christian

B.-Element # 1--HELPFUL BRETHREN: (Acts 9:10-18, 25-30)

1-Ananias -Different man from man of same name in Acts 5
--Permanent resident of Damascus (22:12)
--Devout man who had a good testimony (22:12)
--Obedient & responsive to God (9:10, 17
--Wary of becoming involved with Saul (9:13)

-Capable of being reassured (9:15-16)
-Possessed of the prophetic gift to see the future, so as to foresee what Paul would become (22:14-15)
-Yet, no evidence he was Pastor, Elder, Deacon or any other office in the Church of Damascus
-OBEDIENTLY CAME to Saul at the home of Judas, a Jew from the synagogue (9:11)
-Greeting ** "BROTHER SAUL"
** Response of faith to God's speaking
-Became INVOLVED in the life of the new convert
** Guiding
** Instructing
** Encouraging
** Probably it was Ananias who baptized Saul, though that is not explicitly stated
-Oh, for more godly brethren like Ananias to be actively involved !!

2-Unnamed Helpful brethren--9:25 OTHERS
--Helped Saul escape Jewish people who sought to kill him so as to stifle his witness

3-Barnabas -Saw that disciples in Jerusalem did not trust Saul (9:26)
-Reached out in trust & openness to endorse Saul to the Apostles (9:27) Took the initiative
*--VOUCHED FOR Saul when others kept their distance
--Tremendous & continuing impact upon this new Christian's life in days & years thereafter

4-Others also--9:30
--Not named , but active
--Delivered Saul from a plot against his life
--Counseled him to return to Tarsus

5-Parallels in my life--Rev. Nelson Warner
--Lou Krichbaum Reiter
--Vasta & Joe Owens
--Jane Foster
--J. Ellwood Evans
--Harlan J. Roper
--Henry Hawkins
L.E. Thomas
Harold Freeman
Lester Pipkin
AND in yours also

Oh, how we need these HELPFUL BRETHREN!

C.-Element # 2--REALIZATION OF GOD'S PLAN:

1-Chosen to KNOW God's will
2-Chosen to SEE that Just One
3-Chosen to HEAR the voice of His mouth (22:14)
4-Chosen to BE HIS WITNESS==To BEAR MY NAME (22:15; 9:15)
5-Chosen to SUFFER for My Name's sake (9:16)

6-All five of these elements are common in our experience also, though none of us are APOSTLES
-Saul was a "chosen vessel"
-So are we
-God had a specific plan for Saul's life as a believer
*--He has one for each of us also
-It took time for this to unfold & be understood by Saul
-It will progressively unfold for you too !

7-Calvin H. C. Probasco--"The will of God is not static, but dynamic" (3)

8-Amy Carmichael--"Across the path of nature leads on the will of God"

GREAT NEED 9-Valuable to have a mature counsellor who can advise us and encourage us to know God's plan & then to do it !!

10-God does have a plan for your life as surely as He had one for Saul

11-He has led me to know His plan for my life and He wants to do the same for you.

12-MACAULAY--"We may not all bear His name before kings as Paul did, but we are asked to bear it before our own households, our neighbors, our workmates, our friends, and it is only our earthly habit of regarding face & rank & title that makes that seem less honorable than the urgent witnessing before Kings. Indeed, the one whose witness brought QUEEN VICTORIA to the assurance of salvation was not one of her notable clergymen, but an obscure & humble servant of the Lord, JOHN TOWNSEND.

Preaching is neither the only nor the main way of bearing the Lord's name. His name is laid upon every believer, to bear it in all his conversation, in all his conduct. Our manner of life can greatly honor and exalt the precious Name, but it can also drag it down to dishonor & reproach." (ACTS, P. 101)

D.-Element # 3--EMPOWERMENT BY THE SPIRIT:

1-Four instantaneous & universal ministries of the Holy Spirit
- (1) Regeneration
- (2) Baptism
- (3) Indwelling
- (4) Sealing

5th 2-Also there is THE FILLING (=Empowering) of the Holy Spirit
- --Occurs first at salvation
- --Interrupted by sin
- --Restored to operation by meeting God's condiditions
- * --FORMULA:
  - Grieve not (by doing things known to be wrong) Sins of Commission
  - + Quench not (by refusing to do things known to be right) Sins of Omission
  - + Walk in the Spirit (by conscious dependence) Make Progress
  - = "BE FILLED" with the Spirit

3-Seen in Saul--9:17
- * --Empowerment is provided by God
- ▷ --No shortage of power for holy living & effective service — No danger of a BROWN-OUT!
- --Enablement of the OMNIPOTENT God

4-Privilege--NOT by baptism, ch. membership or Golden Rule
--BUT by keeping clean & following God's Word

5-This is the POWER OF GOD at work after salvation to keep us clean & to empower or enable us for effective service

6-Filling of the Spirit--Not a feelable experience
--Not a "second blessing"
--Not evidenced by tongues speaking
--Simply God's power available as we meet His stated conditions

7-QUESTION:
"Am I Filled"??--YES !!
--Not a matter of pride
--But a matter of obedience to known truth & so fulfilling God's conditions

8-Same power is provided for as for Saul and for your PASTOR \ US

E.-Element # 4--TIME TO MATURE:

1-We live in a day of "INSTANT" products--Coffee
--Mashed potatoes
--Postal Instant Press
--Overnight Express of mail & packages

2-We expect similar INSTANTANEOUS results in our spiritual lives
--But there are many hangover ideas from our before-salvation lives
--And there are glaring inconsistencies between what we know and what we do
--And there are a multitude of things we have to learn...
.....gradually !!
--So, maturity is NOT instantaneous !!

3-Maturity is a GROWTH PROCESS
--It requires passage of time ——— lots of time! - Acts 9:19, 22
--It takes a gradual DEVELOPMENT
** Newborn child----------Helpless in mother's arms
** 10-12 months----------Crawling on floor
** 14-16 months----------Walking around the house
** 2 years----------RUNNING
** 3 years to 25 years------Up & Down; Developing stability
** 26 + years====ADULTHOOD-----Continuing development, growth & maturity all one's years!

--Christian life has its development stages also
Seen in
** 1 Jn. 2:12--"little children"
** 1 Jn. 2:13--"fathers"
** 1 Jn. 2:14--"young men"

4-See this in Saul--9:21-22
--Insert the 3 years in Arabia (Gal. 1:17-18) between 9:21 and 9:22
--9:22"But Saul increased the more in strength (in the Word)" added in some MSS

5-Sometimes we expect too much of our new converts.!!!
--We thrust them into public responsibilities too soon
--Programming the "newly planted" for disaster
--Warning of I Tim. 3:6 "not a novice"

6-NOTE--Four Objective Elements In Riddance Of Confusion
(1) Helpful brethren
(2) Realization of God's plan
(3) Empowerment of the Spirit
(4) Time to mature

NEEDED BY ALL OF US!

Become God's SACRED AGENTS in the lives of others

--In all of these:
** They are EXTERNAL to the new convert
** They are DEPENDENT upon the contribution of others
--So----let us determine to be involved in the lives of the confused, to lead them to stability !!

II.-SIX SUBJECTIVE ELEMENTS IN RIDDANCE OF CONFUSION:

Reach out to HELP!

A.-Clarification Of Subjective Elements:

1-We cannot control the previously presented OBJECTIVE elements

NB * 2-Our cooperation with the SUBJECTIVE elements will be both essential & determinative of our progress
- --We can influence our speed of progressing
- --We can create a climate which delays our progress out of confusion
- --Carnal Christian who does not progress can even STUNT HIS DEVELOPMENT
- --Produces a case of "arrested development"

3-SAD to see those who profess salvation, but their lives are characterized by confusion long after others have moved on to maturity

*** 4-HOW can we cooperate in the riddance of confusion ??

Some fall by the wayside

SIX ELEMENTS

B.-Element #1--PERSONAL PRAYER : (Acts 9:11)

1-"Behold, he prayeth" (9:11)
2-DEF--"Prayer is human need reaching UP for Divine help" J. C. Macauley
- --REAL PRAYER !!
- --Reassurance to Ananias that Saul was a converted man
- --Not by praying are we saved, but the really saved do pray !!
- --Saul had to leave the place of the Pharisee and join with the breast-beating sinner and seek the mercy of God (Lk. 18:9-14)---BREAK W/ HIS PAST

3-Fellowship contact with God
- --Pour out our heart needs to Him
- --Sense His response to us
- --Expected to be a vital part of the Christian's experience
- --NOT something a believer "works up to" after a number of years
- --NOT reserved for the mature
- --God wants fellowship from us, before service from us
- --DO IT NOW !

4-What is involved in Prayer?

5 Parts
- --A==Adoration
- --C==Confession
- --T==Thanksgiving
- --S==Supplication (Personal needs)
- --I==Intercession (Others' needs)

5-When am I to pray??--"...men ought always to pray, & not to faint" (Lk. 18:1) 6

6-Where am I to pray??--ALONE when in private
--PUBLICLY with others who are saved
Alone and with someone!
--Not "either...or" but "both...and"

C.-Element # 2--BELIEVER BAPTISM! (Acts 9:18)

1-SIGN or SYMBOL of a break with the past
--Not a "warmed over Judaism" to become a Christian
--But a NEW LIFE in Jesus Christ
--Outward evidence of an inward reality TAKE YOUR STAND

2-Both God and Paul attached importance to believer baptism
--22:16
--A matter of commanded obedience
--Believer is to be openly identified as a Christian
--Expected of EVERY BELIEVER

3-H O W ??--Various practices ** Immersion
** Sprinkling
** Pouring
Denominational teachings

--Biblical meaning is "to be identified with"
--Only method which fulfills our identification with Christ's death, burial & resurrection is by IMMERSION
--Speaks of death to the old life and involvement in newness of life
--Identified with Jesus as the Son of God and our own PERSONAL SAVIOR

4-BADGE of initiation into the family of God; EVIDENCE of obedience to God's commands FIRST PUBLIC ACT!

5-Pattern seen in Saul is that believer baptism should follow SOON after conversion for every one of us

D.-Element # 3--CHURCH FELLOWSHIP: (Acts 9:19, 28)

1-Open identification with the brethren
--LOCAL CHURCH
94 times in N.T.
-New spiritual family to provide us spiritual support
--An IMMEDIATE NEED !!
--Strengthen the convert & teach him God's ways when he faces new enemies: ** The world system
** The flesh of the old nature
** The Devil and demonic opposition

2-Lester E. Pipkin: DEF.
"A local church is an independent group of baptized believers in Jesus Christ voluntarily united in a geographical area who subscribe to the authority of the N. T. in all matters of faith & procedure & have organized themselves in accordance with N. T. teaching for the purposes of worship, instruction, fellowship, service and evangelism."

3-Tom Skinner--"The church is an outpost of heaven planted on earth to reveal what heaven will be like."

4-Linked with the people of God--Ananias-----9:10-17
--With the disciples---9:19, 25
--Barnabas--9:27
--Apostles-----9:27b-28
--Brethren--9:30

SUPPORT GROUP

5-What the CHURCH IS:

"A hospital for healing
A school for instruction
A gathering for fellowship
A sanctuary for worship
Open arms for helpfulness
An open door for service
A vehicle for cooperation
A parade ground for discipline
A recruiting center for soldiers of Christ
A playing field for the game of life, and
A manufacturing plant for godly saints.

6-What the CHURCH IS NOT:

A rest home where the saints live on old-age pensions;
An ampitheatre where saints watch performances, or
A display case for Christians who have "arrived".

7-Local Church is **the local expression** of God's eathly family
--Need to be a part of it !!
--Sign of involvement with the people of God COMMITMENT REQUIRED!
--METAPHORS ** BODY of Christ
** TEMPLE of the living God
** FLOCK of God
** BRANCHES of the Vine
--No such thing as a "Lone Ranger Christian" who is uninvolved in God's CHURCH FELLOWSHIP
NB --To be uninvolved is to be DISOBEDIENT !!
--We need "one another"

E.-Element # 4--OPEN WITNESS: (9:20, 22, 29)

1-No delay--9:20 "straightway"
--Returns to the Synagogue
** Known as a persecutor of Christians
** Warm & hearty reception by the Jews
** Accepted by them as a ZEALOT
2-Took his NEW MESSAGE back to the old crowd
3-Did not know much yet,
But hetold what he knew
--"he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God"
--SON OF GOD was Saul's theme
--Never got over this truth
--29 times in Paul's 13 letters
--23 times in John's letters also
--Let his stand as a Christian be known to all
--9:21, 22, 29
4-To be a "CLOSET CHRISTIAN" is to have no useful or helpful testimony
5-Come out openly with your testimony--At home with family
--In neighborhood
--At work
--With relatives

F.-Element # 5--SPIRITUAL GROWTH: (Acts 9:22)

1-We talked earlier about TIME to mature;
Now we need to face MATURITY itself

2-**Strength spiritually** is IN THE WORD
--Some MSS add this phrase "in the Word" in 9:22
--Certainly that is the sense of Saul's strengthening
--In **physical** growth there are **3** important elements
** FOOD
** EXERCISE
** REST
--**Parallel** in the **Christian realm** also — 3 of these for a CHRISTIAN
** FEEDING on the Word of God
** EXERCISING in sharing the gospel with others
** RESTING through prayer and worship
-In **Saul's case**, he was in **ARABIA** for 3 years
Re-orienting himself to what he already knew from the O.T., but with a Christian perspective
NEW REVELATION given him by Christ
INTEGRATION of all that truth into his life & daily practice — Gradually

3-Biblical concept of Growth — KEY VERSES
--1 Pet. 2:2--"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby."
--2 Pet. 3:18--"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Chris t

-PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT
--Sumner Wemp--Physical growth can be seen and enjoyed, and so can spiritual growth."
-Imput of others into our lives
-Personalization of truth into our daily lives through struggles & problems we face

4-If a Christian is growing daily in the Word...
-Unsaved will be "amazed" (9:21)
-Opposers will be "confounded" (9:22)
-Opposition may really heat up (9:23-25)
-**But**, by that growth a Christian is **being conformed** to the Image of Christ (ROM. 8:28)

5-ILLUS--Doris Salter, in her booklet Talks on the Christian's Growth, (P. 9) wrote:

"Some years ago we were shown thru the **magnificent library** of a **Canadian millionaire**. He sought to impress us not only with the number, variety & rarity of his books, but also with his knowledge of their contents.

"But **where** is the **BIBLE**?" we asked. "The greatest Book in all the world is missing."

His head went down. "I think there is **an old one somewhere** which belonged to my mother," he answered, recalling other days.

"**Sir**," we suggested quietly, our hearts going out to this learned yet needy man, "**why don't you** get out your mother's old Bible and **begin to read** it? It will **do more for your soul** than all these other books in your library put together. It is THE WORD OF GOD."

IMP. *

6-CHRISTIAN, what are you reading? What are you reading most? Are you giving the choicest of your time & strength to gaining an education or to earning a living, and leaving your **Bible neglected** on the shelf?

Are you making sacrificial provision for your temporal life and making none that you are "STRONG IN THE WORD" of God?

G.-Element # 6--DEDICATION DECISION:

1-Talked about this in the previous message as CONSECRATION

2-Timing--Saul made this decision immediately: "Lord, WHAT...?" (9:6)
--David Nelson was like that
--Most Christians find that this decision of heart is the culmination of a growth in knowledge & obedience that concludes in a CRISIS EXPERIENCE
--Thus, for most of us the order is:
CONVICTION
CONVERSION
CONFUSION
CONSECRATION
--POINT OF TIME
PATTERN CHANGE

3-What is involved??
--Rom. 12:1-2
(1) --YIELDING of the BODY once and for all
(2) --STOP taking one's mold or standards from the world
(3) --BEGIN the process of renewing of the mind which issues through the Word and the Spirit into a transformed life

4-QUESTION:: Have you made this dedication decision? ?
** Like Saul at salvation ??
** Like me at a subsequent time??

5-If not before now--NOW is the best possible time
--TODAY is when this decision ought to be made in your heart before God
--Will you respond to Divine beseeching?
--Rom. 12:1-2

SECOND most important decision of your life!

CONCLUSION:

A.-Restatement:

1-FOUR OBJECTIVE elements in riddance of confusion:
--Helpful brethren
--REalization of God's plan
--Empowerment by the Holy Spirit
--Time to mature

2-SIX SUBJECTIVE elements in riddance of confusion:
--Personal prayer
--Believers baptism
--Church fellowship
--Open witness
--Spiritual growth
--Dedication decison

B.-Reinforcement:

1-Four stages in progress pattern for most of us Christians:
(1) CONVICTION
(2) CONVERSION
(3) CONFUSION
(4) CONSECRATION

2-The way out of confusion has been presented today

3-Different people// Different needs// Different decisions are required today

C.-Requirement:

1-Won't you respond NOW ??!! Each of you
--Point where you realize the Holy Spirit is dealing with you, personally
--So that you may progress out of YOUR CONFUSION

2-PROPOSITION restated: God has planned and provided for our deliverance from confusion so that we can cooperate with His provision

3-Don't delay// Decide today !! — What decisions would God have YOU to make?

8--"That Beautiful Name"
24--"I Will Praise Him"
374--"Take Time To Be Holy"

5/31/87--O.K.B.C.
8/26/87 - Limerick Chapel
3/17/89 - Caldwell, OH. - Wayne Smith
4/12 + 26/89 - Grace Gospel Ch, Beaver
6/13/92 - Bible Conf - Taupo, NZ
8/2/92 - Fremont, CA - East Bay Bible Ch.
9/11/95 - Hilltop Baptist Ch. also 1/19/95 — 4/20+27/08
7/30/95 - Twin Cities Bible Church, Nitro, WV.
2/11/96 - Dunedin Brethren

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL — Acts 9:1-17

INTRO: A.-Contrasts:
1-Acts 8--Extension of the Gospel--Thru Philip
2-Acts 9--Opposition to the Gospel--Thru Saul (or Paul)

B.-See In Saul:
1-Man who had consented to Stephen's death--8:1
2-Man who wrought havoc in the church--8:3
3-Man who sought to extend that opposition to the church to the farthest realms--9:1-3
4-Let's look at the record of his conversion to Christ

I.-TWO LITTLE WORDS----THAT TELL A BIG STORY:

A.-"And"=="But":
1-Acts 9:1
2-Contrast thus shown between Chapters 8 & 9 very clearly
3-Moves from conversions to oppositions

B.-"Yet":
1-Paul is at the zenith of his hatred
2-Read Acts 26:9-12
3-"breathing out"--hatred was his very life & breath; 9:1
4-Anger & hatred against disciples of Jesus
5-Religious inquisition--against men
--against women
6-ILLUS--Man eating tiger once it has tasted blood. Becomes a menace to society. So with the intense nature of the man Saul. Persecution becomes his very breath
7-Nonetheless----"There is one indication that the young persecutor had moments of pause & doubt. When the Lord appeared unto him on that day of all days, a significant sentence fell from the divine lips: 'It is hard for thee to kick against the goads' No goads are used on oxen only when they give signs of stalling, & it is far easier for the most stolid ox to keep going than to fight against that sharp-pointed weapon that urges him on. So when remembrance of Stephen's unanswerable reasoning, or of his angelic & triumphant countenance, or the invincible testimony of some of his victims, gave him pause in his desperate course the goads of pride, prejudice, fanaticism, would urge him on; and, rather than face these with frank reasoning & open inquiry, he dashed forward yet more fiercely, raging with fresh hate." MACAULAY--P. 96-97.

II.-TWO BLESSED TRUTHS (emerging from the conversation)

A.-Explanations of Unbelief:
1-A.C. Gaebelein--"Renan in his Les Apotres (The Apostles) says that it was an uneasy conscience with unstrung nerves fatigue of the journey, eyes inflamed by the hot sun, a sudden stroke of fever which produced the hallucination. And this nonsense is repeated to this day. Others of the critics have stated that it was a thunderstorm which over-

took him, & that a flash* of lightning blinded him. In that lightning flash he imagined that he saw Christ. This is preached by some of these critics, who occupy pulpits. Again, others have tried to explain his vision by some physical disease. Jews and others have declared that he suffered from Epilepsy, which the Greeks called 'the holy disease.' This disease, they say, put him into a state of ecstasy, which may have greatly impressed his Gentile hearers. In such an attack he imagined to have seen a vision and heard a voice. All these and other opinions are puerile inventions from the Father of lies. The fact is, the conversion of Saul is one of the great miracles and evidences of Christianity." P. 168

B.-Conversion Of Saul:

1-A miracle of grace
2-Requires the supernatural work of God
3-With.....or....without signs accompanying
4-Sovereign choice of God
--not all who journeyed
--just Saul was converted
5-God makes a boni-fide offer of salvation to all men
6-God makes a sovereign choice of one here
7-God was no more, nor no less sovereign in His choice of Saul than He was in His choice of me
--Hemmed around by sovereign grace
--hemmed in by sovereign grace
8-CHRYSOSTOME--"Christ, like a skillful physician, healed him when his fever was at the worst."

C.-First Of Two Blessed Truths--Bowing Of A Proud Spirit:

1-Shows unmistakably that JESUS IS LORD
2-"Why?"----The Lord's question
3-"Who?"----Paul's question
--Answer:--"I am Jesus whom thou persecutest"
--The person he beholds, shining out of heaven surrounded by the glory-light, which of old & dwelt in the midst of Israel, can be none other but Jehovah. And so the prostrate Saul addresses him as LORD"
Quote
--Reminds of Deut. 6:4--"Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD"
--Jesus and LORD are the same Person
--Phs. 2:6--"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:"
--"What infinite grace! Stephen, the saint of God beheld an opened heaven and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the next who sees heaven opened and behold s the Lord and hears His voice is the chief of sinners." Gaebelein--P. 167
4-"What"--"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"
--words of capitulation
--Saul surrenders
--doesn't ask "WHICH", but "WHAT"?
--There is no value in owning His title if we do not submit to His will
5-The 3 accounts (Acts 9, 22, 26) have differences of de-

tails, but no disagreements.
6-Command of God---"Arise and go..."
7-Reaction of Paul
--Voice of authority heard
--No reply of "not so"
--Not to one whom he called "LORD"
--Most illogical and inconsistent of all Peter's illogical and inconsistent words was Peter's "Not so, Lord

D.-Second Of Two Blessed Truths--What Touches Believers Touches Christ:
1-Every stone that bruised the body of Stephen had struck Jesus, the Lord! Every manacle, every chain that he had fastened on the wrists and ankles of the saints were laid on Jesus, the Lord! No wonder the crime of his persecutions haunted him all his days till he challenged the world to produce a greater sinner than himself.
2-1 Cor. 12:12--"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is The Christ."
3-Parallel in Zech. 2:8---"...he that toucheth you (Israel) toucheth the apple of His eye."
4-No wonder the crime of persecuting the church plagued Paul all his life
5-1 Tim. 1:15-16

III.-TWO MARKS OF THE RENEWED MAN:

A.-Changed Man Is A Man Of Prayer:
1-Praying man from his youth
2-But formalism of prayer doesn't count with God
3-This was real prayer
4-Had been as Rom. 10:1-4
5-Had to leave the place of the Pharisee and join the breast beating sinner and seek mercy---Luke 18:9-14
6-"Behold, he prayeth"
--guarantee to Ananias that Saul was a changed man
--men are not saved by praying
--but it is a sign that something is taking place, or has taken place in the heart.
7-Prayer is human need reaching up to Divine help"--MACAULAY
8-God wants fellowship from us, before service from us

B.-Changed Man Is A Chosen Vessel:
1-9:15-16
2-2 Cor. 4:7--"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."
3-Not saved just to be saved.....PAUL...or....US ! !
4-ILLUS--Divine Purposes seen inPaul, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, Whitefield, Moody, Hudson Taylor, ...and you!
5-Use of a chosen vessel--may be in a conspicuous place
--may be in an inconspicuous place

6-ILLUS--Scotch woman's cup from which Queen Victoria had drunk---or her own water glass--equally good for the purpose.

7-BEAR WITNESS--9:15

--Paul--before Gentiles, Kings & Israel

--You men--before businessmen & co-laborers

--You ladies--before neighbors & tradesmen

--You Young People--before school chums & neighborhood friends.

--ALL OF US BEFORE ALL PEOPLE

--Those who know us are the easiest ones to win....if our life is what it ought to be ought to be

--MACAULAY--"We may not all bear His name before kings as Paul did, but we are asked to bear it before our own households, our neighbors, our workmates, our friends, , and it is only our earthly habit of regarding face, and rank & title that makes that seem less honorable than the urgent witnessing before Kings. Indeed the one whose witness brought Queen Victoria to the assurance of Salvation was not one of her notable clergymen, but an obscure & humble servant of the Lord, John Townsend....Preaching is neither the only nor the main way of bearing the Lord's name. His name is laid upon every believer, to bear it in all his conversation, in all his conduct. Our manner of life can greatly honor and exalt the precious name, but it can also drag it down to dishonor & reproach" P. 101.

8-Bearing Christ's name involved suffering & persecution

9-2 Cor. 11:23-31--cited as evidence of Paul's apostleship later.

10-2 Cor. 12:9--Channel of Paul's power was through his weakness as a suffering saint.

11-Phil. 1:29-30---Believer's privilege

CONCLUSION:

A.-Salvation Appeal:

1-You may be "yet" in your sins as Saul was, but God can & will save you if you TRUST HIM

2-God said: "Where art thou?"

--To Adam in the Garden

--To Saul on the Damascus Rd.

--To you.....now!

--Each deserves WRATH----but God wants to extend grace

3-ILLUS--Once in a while one reads a story in the papers with a real lesson attached. So it is with the account of how "Slim" saved his friend from death. Let the man who was saved tell it in his own words. He works for a power company; he and his gang repair the lines, set new poles, & so on.

"Sometimes new poles are green, & water-soaked, & will conduct electricity. A short time ago my gang was sent to replace a pole that had been badly burned. The new pole to be set up was wet & green, the street was wet, & overhead was a high line carrying 33,000 volts. We were hoisting the new pole up thru the wires to a place where it could be dropped in the hole dug for it. I had thoughtlessly seized the but end of the new pole as it swung clear of the ground & was guiding it into place when suddenly one of the boys made a run for me & knocked me sprawling. I arose from the street wet, muddy, & ready for a fight.

He pointed aloft to where I saw the new pole had hit the 46 lower high-line wire. I also saw instantly that had he not taken such a quick action in knocking me clear of the pole, I would have been a 'goner!"

Does God not often have to strike down sinners, as He did Paul on the Damascus Road, that He might get them to listen to His voice, and so become saved from the wrath to come? God often must knock us away from our foolishness to keep us from permanently injuring ourselves.

Blessed Quietness — Westbrae — 10/13/63
Blessed Assurance

Acts 9:36

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

INTRO: A.-Place In Scripture for Women In God's Work:
1-Often needs re-evaluation
2-Often needs guidance
3-Not in capacity of being Church Leaders as officers
4-But women have been created with a desire to serve
5-Jesus Christ recognized this & accepted women's aid
--Mt. 27:55
--Mk. 15:40-41
--Ex. 35:25
6-If guided, this desire to serve can significantly contribute to the local church
7-If not guided, then we'll find women "doing what comes naturally"----handwork without evangelization.

B.-Scriptural Balance:
1-Ladies' helpfulness toward God's servants has been much appreciated....& has glorified God
2-But, N. T. does not confirm that this is the primary task of women in the church
3-Acts 9:36, 39--Dorcas--"..a woman bubbling over with helpful activities and the practice of charities," and over whose corpse "all the widows stood...weepi & showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them."
4-"WHITE CROSS" work was a part of their service, bu it is nowhere indicated that it was the principle part of their service.
5-Program of Missions for the church is not put on women only
6-This is the task of the CHURCH
--Phs. 4:15-16
--Acts 11:29-30
--2 Cor. 8:1-4
--Ladies had a part!

C.-Avoid Imbalance: (Define)
1-"White Cross" is not the same picture today a past due to--high duties in some countries
--changing needs on various fields
--government restrictions
--limited usefulness
2-Thus, re-evaluation is often needed
3-Moreover, there may well be those who've sp whole lifetime of service, sewing quilts, m clothes & rolling bandages for "the uttermo but cannot account for ONE soul that's beer the Lord thru her personal effort thru the work of the Church
4-Such cases have been practicing Acts 1:8
5-Acts 1:8
6-Scripturally we begin at "our Jerusalem" to the uttermost parts.

III.-WOM

A.-P
1-
2-1
3-S

B.-Fitti
1-N. T
2-Mean well
3-Some tor
4-Some aid
5-Since sure th interest
6-I want---
--your interest
--your ear
--your service
7-AND--you can count on mine, too
8-I'll be glad to help in programming, projects & advice

...ness we're
...me now express my

I.-WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP AND EVANGELISM:

A.-Women Were Active According To The N. T.:
1-There is a "woman to woman" and "woman to
which only women can do.
2-If they fail to do it----
3-ILLUS--Rom. 16:1-3
--Phe

IV.-WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP AND THE CHURCH:

A.-The Church Constitution:
1-"Section 1: All Departmental Organizations of Westbrae Church shall be under the control of the Church and its Executive Board. Included among these organizations are the following:...Section 4: Women's Missionary Society. The Women's Missionary Society shall effect its own organization and program. The officers shall be members of Westbrae Church."

B.-One Program---Many Parts:
1-Women's Missionary Society is under the Church's jurisdiction
2-Women's Missionary Society is under the Pastor's supervision
3-Women's Missionary Society working on local church approved program & projects
4-Women's Missionary Society finances appearing as a part of local church giving.
5-Women's Missionary Society reporting to the Church
6-This provides--
---things honest in the sight, not only of the Lord, but of all men
---a pulse of activity being known and felt by all
---official recognition of the WMS as a vital part of the whole church's work
---opportunity for joint rejoicing in the good hand of God in all progress & results.

LMS — Westbrae — Oct. 17, 1963

VI. TOOL #6 MUST CAST THEM FULLY ON THE LORD: 8:39-40

A. Area Of Frequent Failure:

(6)

1-Often there is no follow-through + discipling. — We've had HOLES in our bags.
- --Security
- --Cleansing & forgiveness
- --Bible reading daily
- --Open confession in baptism
- --Church attendance & membership
- * --THESE ARE NEEDED !!

2-Sometimes there is the creation of a "Party spirit" or the "Building a Kingdom" for self, not Christ
- --1 Cor. 1:11-13
- --1 Cor. 3:1-4, 21-23

3-IMPOVERISHMENT of the convert if we make personal disciples only of them

4-Let them be- APPRECIATIVE of their father in the faith BUT ALSO...
- --DEPENDENT upon the Lord

B. Area Of Fulfilling Trust:

1-Philip was caught away so the Eunuch's faith would be with full dependence upon the Lord Himself (8:39)

2-This produced---"and he went on his way REJOICING"

3-ILLUS--Girl I witnessed to on a Chicago to L. A. flight several years ago
- --She trusted Christ as her own Savior at 35,000 ft.
- --I had about 1 more hour to instruct her in the faith & to turn her eyes upon the Lord alone
- --Never saw her again, but I believe she was so cast upon the Lord as to be able to continue with joy

CONCL: A. Bystanders Can Be Lifesavers:

1-You don't have to be "helpless" in the face of the desperate spiritual needs of unsaved friends, neighbors, relatives & co-workers

2-You can take these simple "must" items & turn them into tools for spiritual rescue operations

B. Will You: ?

6 Tools

1-Yield to the Spirit's leading in your life ??

2-Proceed with tact to talk about that person's spiritual needs ??

3-Use the Scriptures as you authority ???

4-Present Jesus as the ONLY ANSWER ??

5-Follow thru to decisions----------Rev. 3:20

6-Cast them fully upon the Lord?

7-If you will, you can become an effective SPIRITUAL LIFESAVER

WANGANUI Bible Ch, NZ - 7/5/92
Salina Bible Ch, PA - 10/21/98

Westbrae--6/9/68--
① ② A Passion For Souls
I've Found A Friend - 269
③ I Am Praying For You - 195

Calvary Columbus - 6/15/75
Evergreen Bible Ch., Vancouver, WA - 7/28/81
Merriam Christian Chapel, IND - 11/10/81
Lookout Baptist Ch., WV - 10/9/83
Old Kanawha Bapt. Ch - 3/24/85
A.B.C. Chapel - 1/16/85

Grace Gospel Church, Huntington - 3/3/85
Maroa Bible Ch, Maroa, Il. - 7/30/89
7/8/90 - Princewick Bapt., Coal City, WV
7/29/90 - Grace Gospel Ch - Beaver, WV
8/19/90 - Bible Center Ch, Charleston, WV

3-If people are to be effectively witnessed to, we must present Jesus !!
4-FAITH IN HIM is the issue ! — The CENTRAL Issue

V. TOOL #5--MUST FOLLOW THROUGH TO DECISION: 8:36-38

A.-Preparations For Decision:

1-Led of the Spirit
2-Proceeding with tact
3-Using the Scriptures
4-Presenting Jesus Christ
5-This foundation is ESSENTIAL !
6-L. S. Chafer---"Give them something to believe" !
7-Without this preparation, no serious decision can be expected to be rendered, so MAKE IT CLEAR !!
8-BUT, all this preparation leads to.....

B.-Proceeding To Decision:

1-No decision-----No results.....it's that simple
2-ILLUS-Like a contract
- Without a signature, it is NOT VALID !
- Decision of the will to accept Christ as SAVIOR from sin and only hope of heaven is the putting of a signature on the dotted line.

3-This is where the EXCHANGE takes place
- You give Him your sins
- He gives you Himself, and the gift of eternal life is included along with forgiveness, justification, sanctification, etc.

4-You know, it's amazing how many people are just waiting for somebody to confront them, somebody to talk to them about Christ !
5-Ought not to be content--To go to church
--To sit in a pew
--To give our gifts
--To "Let the preacher do it"
--WE AS CHRISTIANS MUST CONFRONT PEOPLE WITH CHRIST
EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

6-ILLUS--One day in Chicago Hubert Mitchell picked up the telephone & called a friend, a Mr. Godwin. He wasn't in at the time, but the man who answered seemingly wasn't in a hurry to hang up the receiver. So they just chatted awhile. During the conversation Pastor Mitchell asked him casually, "By the way, friend, do you happen to be a Christian?"
He heard a fast "No" over the reciever. Then after a moment, he heard, "But I'd like to be." A few verses of Scripture quoted, a few questions answered, and a short word of prayer, and the unseen man at the other end of the line sincerely received Christ as Savior right there on the telephone.
7-Are we------are you----confronting people? !
8-Open confession expected--In words of acceptance
--In symbol of baptism
--In obedience of a changed life
9-Let's ASK those we deal with if they wouldn't like to make their decision right now !

(4)

3-BUT, Jesus Christ is alive from the dead & He offers
- Eternal life
- Abundant life
- Fruitful life
- Joyful life
- Jesus Christ is the key to all of man's questions and enigmas

4-ILLUS--Acts 4:5-12
--There is "no second" Name for salvation
--Christ is the ONLY answer !!!!
--Must be saved by HIM, if we're to be saved

5-Acts 13:22-23, 38-39

6-ILLUS--Rev. Kingscote Greenland visited a vacant house with a friend who desired to purchase it. The friend was particularly struck by the beauty of the room which he wished to turn into his study, but he objected to a cupboard in the corner.

"I will have to remove it," he said to the architect."

"No, you won't", was the reply.

"But I can do what I like if I buy the house," said the man.

"You cannot do what you like with that cupboard," answered the architect.

"Why not?" asked the prospective buyer. "Is it protected by a clause in the deed?"

"No," said the architect, "it is not in the deed; it is in the plan. You cannot take away the cupboard; it is part of the main structure."

SO IT IS WITH JESUS CHRIST. ! If we take away the Son of God, we destroy the whole structure of christianity. The person of the Son of God is built in for God's plan of salvation. It is central. It is structural. It is essential.

B.-He Is The PERSONAL Answer:

1-To the ARTIST, He is the One altogether lovely,
To the BAKER, He is the Living Bread,
To the BIOLOGIST, He is the Life,
To the BUILDER, HE is the Sure Foundation,
To the DOCTOR, He is the Great Physician,
To the FARMER, He is the Lord of the Harvest,
To the GEOLOGIST, He is the Rock of Ages,
To the JURIST, He is the Righteous Judge,
To the LAWYER, He is the Advocate,
To the NEWSMAN, HE is the Good News,
To the OCULIST, He is the Light of the World,
To the PHILOSOPHER, He is the Wisdom of God,
To the SCULPTOR, He is the Living Stone,
To the SERVANT, He is the Good Master,
To the STATESMAN, He is the Prince of Peace,
To the STUDENT, He is the Truth,
To the TRAVELER, He is the New and Living Way,
To the UNDERTAKER, He is the Resurrection and the Life

Anonymous

2-What is He to you.....personally? ? ?

(3)

3-Some cases of personal work will fit into the "general pattern" of what you can be taught in a soul-winners course ROMANS ROAD

4-Some cases will fit no mold!

5-Some are absolutely unique

6-Acts 8:30--Strange approach

--But it seems to have been tactful enough to the Eunuch

7-ILLUS.--Man I talked to as I hitch-hiked across western Nebraska, who laid a 45 pistol on his lap to let me know he didn't intend to put up with any funny business.

--Boy.....was I ever TACTFUL!!!

III. TOOL # 3 MUST USE THE SCRIPTURES: 8:32-34

A.-Standard Theological Approaches Today:

1-Philosophical theology
2-Psychological theology
3-Sacramental theology
4-Sociological theology
5-Liberal theology-----DENIAL
6-Very few with a BIBLICAL theology
* 7-Never seen anyone really saved by any message other than the gospel from the Bible
8-Not systems, opinions, or philosophies, but CHRIST!

B. Standard Biblical Approach For EVERY Day:

1-Philip's example--Acts 8:32-35
--Personally acquainted with Scripture
--Used it as his "tool" of presentation of Christ in an authoritative manner

2-Other examples--Acts 11:19-21 — Antioch
--Acts 13:5 — Barnabas & Saul on Salamis
--Acts 16:14 — With Lydia
--Acts 17:2-3 — Thess. synagogue
--1 Cor. 2:1-2 Paul in Corinth
--1 Th. 1:5, 2:13 Paul in Thessalonica

WHY?

4-Heb. 4:12-13 (READ in unison)

5-Give them * The Word of God AND (1) (2) DOUBLE BARRELED APPROACH
* Your personal testimony

BOTH *

6-Thus they'll see--Themselves as sinners
--God's provision of salvation
--Futility of life apart from Christ

IV. TOOL # 4 MUST PRESENT JESUS: 8:35

A.-He Is THE Answer:

1-Acts 8:35
2-Religions of earth offer DEAD leaders
--Mohammed
--Confucius
--Buddha
--Gandhi

B.-Practice Related To Spirit's Leading:

1-Gal. 5:16--"This I say then, **Walk** in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh"
--Shows this to be continuous & progressive

2-Gal. 5:25--"If we **live** in the Spirit, let us also walk ("Keep step") in the Spirit"
--Living with the Spirit's leading is **to affect** our **CONDUCT**
--We are to "**KEEP STEP**" with the Spirit in constant practice

3-**Philip** is an **example** of "**Keeping step**"
--Acts 8:26--In the place of Divine appointment, he receives **new orders**
--Acts 8:27--Immediately he responds in obedience
--Acts 8:29--Specific leading
--Acts 8:30--**Swift to obey** "**RAN**"

4-**Question**----------?? **Are we** that **eager** ??

5-**Voice of God** comes--Thru an angel (8:26)
--Thru the Spirit (8:29)
--Thru prayer
--Thru circumstances
--**AND** is **discernable** for the one who is **sensitive** and **listening**

Become "leadable" by being led

PRACTICE IT!

II.-TOOL # 2 MUST PROCEED TACTFULLY: 8:30-31

A.-The Wrong Way:

1-**Some begin by** "**tearing down**"
--Denominational backgrounds attacked
--Sinful habits denounced
--Questionable amusements assailed

NOT THE ISSUE!

2-This is **no way** to gain a hearing

3-**NOTICE**--Philip did not deal with what was **wrong** with Ethiopia's **paganism**
--Philip did not deal with what was **wrong** with **Temple** worship in Jerusalem now that Messiah had been rejected

4-These matters must **eventually** be dealt with, but they need to be **RESERVED UNTIL LATER**, when this one has already made his salvation decision

B.-The Right Way:

1-**TACT**--**Def.**--"The **sense of touch**; nice **discernment** as to **what is fitting** or expedient in dealing with others, so as **to win good-will** or **avoid giving offense**." New Century Dictionary

2-**ILLUS**--A woman walked into a store for a pair of shoes. The clerk seated her, and took her measure. "Lady," he remarked, "did you realize that **one** of your feet is **much bigger** than the other?"

The woman left in a **huff**, and went to another shoe store. A genial clerk met her at the door, and seated her. "Madam," he exclaimed, "**how remarkable**! Notice how much **smaller** this foot is than the other!".....

He sold her 3 pairs of shoes

(1)

"CONDITIONS OF EFFECTIVE WITNESSING" Acts 8: 26-40
Or
"BYSTANDERS COULD BE LIFESAVERS"

INTRO: **A. Bystanders Could Be Lifesavers:**

1-ILLUS.--Several years ago Readers Digest ran an article recounting a drowning in one of Missouri's State Park facilities. One of the park officials explained: "I told him that this was a treacherous pool & that several people had drowned in it, but he just dived right in, and since I can't swim, there was no way to save him when he got in trouble."

Most of the bystanders accepted the explanation, but a little girl spoke up. "Why didn't you go over to your car & get the spare tire to throw to the poor man?" she asked

Adults stood speechless while that little girl went on to recount half a dozen other ways by which the park official could have saved the swimmer. That child had taken swimming lessons, & had been taught what most of us adults have forgotten:----that lifesaving equipment is everywhere, IF WE TRAIN OURSELVES to see it & use it.

2-Other possible tools for lifesaving
- --Thermos jug
- --Foam plastic picnic basket or cooler
- --Air mattress
- --Beach balls
- --Wooden benches
- --Inner tubes, etc.

3-BUT, it takes presence of mind & WILLING INVOLVEMENT

Bystanders Can Be Life-savers!

B.-Spiritual Parallel:

1-Tools are essential to a successful completion of our tasks

SIX

1. --Spirit's leading
2. --Tact in approach
3. --Scripture, not just opinions or systems
4. --Present Jesus Christ
5. --Follow through to decision
6. --Cast them fully upon the Lord

2-Takes INVOLVEMENT

3-YOU, who are a bystander, can become a SPIRITUAL LIFESAVER

4-HOW ?!?!

5-Prop.---Let's look again at those "TOOLS" for the lifesaver, and observe the CONDITIONS OF EFFECTIVE WITNESSING

I. TOOL #1--MUST RESPOND TO THE SPIRIT'S LEADING: 8:26-30

A.-Principles Related To The Spirit's Leading:

1-Rom. 8:15-16--Every believer possesses the Spirit
- --Spirit witnesses that we are the CHILDREN of God

2-Rom. 8:14--Different dimension
- --Relates to SONS of God who evidence maturity of relationship
- --Seen in that they are led of the Spirit

0

INTRO:

A. God's Ways:

1-Large city works--8:5-25
2-Rural area works--8:26-40
3-Distinctions--Masses in the cities
--Individuals in the countryside
--BOTH are important
4-PERSONAL SALVATION is always the goal
5-Illus--A man in China, living in a completely unevangelized district, had a hunger & thirst after righteousness. One night he dreamed he saw a man in a distant market town selling books which told the WAY OF LIFE. He made his way to that market and saw the very man who had appeared in his dream This man was selling portions of the Scriptures The Chinese man purchased a GOSPEL of JOHN, and through reading it came to the knowledge of salvation in Christ.

B. God's Workings:

1-See a similar case in our passage today
2-Prop: God always meets a sincerely interested heart with the truth of our lovely Savior
3-Outline:
I.-The PERSONALITIES Involved
II. II.-The PROCEDURES Involved
III.-The PRINCIPLES Involved
4-Let's look first at...

I.-THE PERSONALITIES INVOLVED:

A.-The Bearer Of The Gospel--PHILIP: (8:26-27)

1-Details about the man
--Deacon in Acts 6 to serve tables in Jerusalem
--Evangelist in Acts 8 ** City of Samaria
** Desert Rd. to Gaza
●-Promoted thru faithfulness
2-Direction by God
--Led of God **Initiative is with God
**Philip was "in tune"; LISTENING
**Obedient to God's call
committed + involved → **Supremely interested in God's place for him at every moment
●-Sometimes led specifically contrary to OUTWARD CIRCUMSTANCES, but yet from the Lord
✶ ●-God's leading is NEVER contrary to the Word of God
--1 Sam. 15:22-- Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to OBEY is better than SACRIFICE, and to hearken than the fat of rams."
--No objection.....just obedience!
**Willing to serve God anywhere
**In city or in desert
** ANYWHERE !!
--Notice, no emphasis on numbers as "the issue"

3-Divine Method--A MAN — An Obedient Believer
--Angel of 8:26 couldn't evangelize, for that task was not entrusted to him
--Spirit of 8:29 could have, but did not
--Evangelization is committed to CHRISTIAN PEOPLE ONLY
--Are you being "GOD'S MAN" in evangelism ???
--How long since ??
--Philip was as willing to serve in an out-of-the-way place as he was in the spotlight, so....."HE AROSE..."

--Illus--Our airmen have to learn the principles which govern "FLYING BLIND" and practice them to be proficient so as to be able to "fly blind" instinctively in dependence upon the instruments and the instruction of others...
In like manner, we need to PRACTICE being led of God daily, so that when sight fails, then we are fully able to WALK BY FAITH ALONE !!

B.-The Receiver Of The Gospel--EUNUCH: (8:27-31)
1-His race--Gentile & black
--Ethiopia==All Africa south of Egypt
--Ps. 68:31 in microcosm:
"Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands unto God."
→ *-Equally needy of the gospel--JEW or GENTILE !
2-His religion--Proselyte to Judaism
--Had come to Jerus. to worship
--As a Eunuch, he could only enter the outer gate of the Temple
--Devout, but EMPTY — Left the same as he had arrived
--2 Cor. 4:3-4--But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them."
3-His Realm as Treasurer:
--High in the court
--Treasurer would be economic advisor to the Queen
--"Candace"==Title like "Pharoah" among the Egyptians
--Wealthy man
--UNUSUAL PIETY for a man of such high position in a heathen court
--Illus --An outspoken DUTCH PREACHER was asked to preach in the French Court in the 1700's, and he spoke on the Ethiopian Eunuch, noting FOUR SUBJECTS OF ASTONISHMENT:
(1) A courtier who reads the Bible
(2) A courtier who acknowledges his own ignorance
(3) A courtier who asks his inferior to instruct him, &
(4) Most surprizing of all, a courtier who is converted.

4-His reach to Jerusalem--Journied to worship
--A searching soul
--Heard of Jesus & "THE WAY" in Jerusalem

(3)

--Had gone to the Temple for answers, but GOT NONE THERE
--Painfully similar to many churches today
--Purchased a scroll of Isaiah in LXX; VERY COSTLY
--Now returning home.....with an empty heart

5-His Reading of Isaiah 53
--Read out loud as he rides in his chariot
--Evangelical Prophet--ISAIAH
--Evangelical passage--Chapter 53
--Philip Joins him & instructs him out of the Word
--Illus--We might consider Philip's approach rather impudent. If I were to sit next to the SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY on an airplane..... and leaned over and asked him: "DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE READING?"....
...that would be agreed to be an unusual method of approach, but unusual situations demand unusual methods.
And.....here was a man, the Ethiiopian Eunuch, who could be approached directly without offense.

* You see, the Holy Spirit can take a person only so far.. .....Then it takes A MAN to guide the needy soul to the Savior.

6-His response to questions:
--Attitude (8:31) shows him to be wide open to instruction
--Willing to ask questions (8:34)
--A Persian philosopher, on being asked by what method he had acquired such knowledge, answered: "By not allowing shame to prevent me from asking questions when I was ignorant."
NB
--BOTH Philip & the Eunuch were prepared by the Spirit for this interview.

C. The Theme Of The Gospel--JESUS: (8:30-35)
1-Prophetic Passage--Isa. 53
--ELEVEN references to substitution
--The Eunuch's question reveals that he was not deeply learned in the Jewish faith. For not yet had the meaning of this great passage been clouded over by diverse interpretations invented to cover the unbelief of the Jews. It was fully recognized in Judaism as a MESSIANIC PASSAGE.
Not until the 11th century of the Christian era has this been seriously questioned among the Jews. Then its application to Israel as a nation began to take hold & has continued until this day. Isaiah himself, Jeremiah, Hezekiah, Josiah and Job have variously been seen by the Jews as the subject of Isaiah 53.
THESE ARE ALL UNSUPPORTED INVENTIONS.
** --Philip introduced no novel interpretation in referring Isa. 53 to Messiah.

--What Philip added was that he showed from this Scripture that JESUS was the promised Messiah

2-Promises of Messiah:
--Found throughout the O.T.
--Fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth:
** Acts 10:36--"The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (He is Lord of all:)"
** Acts 10:43--"To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins."
** Acts 17:2-3--"And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and 3 sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is CHRIST."

3-POINT of any passage
--Preach JESUS from it.
--1 Cor. 2:2--"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."
--Lk. 24:27--"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."
--The book is L O A D E D with Him!
--Illus--Spurgeon--"Cut cross-country to Christ"
--Oh, that each of us be knowledgable enough to do just that from any passage.
--We need to saturate ourselves with the Word to be able to do so !!

II.-THE PROCEDURE INVOLVED--THE BIBLICAL ORDER:

A.-The Facts First: (8:35-37)

1-Biblical Message--Straight from the Bible
--Straight to the man
--Straight to his need
--"The Bible as it is, for man as he is."

2-Began where the eunuch was...
& took him where he needed to go.
Dealt with the BASICS !!

3-THEME is JESUS
-Acts 8:35
-1 Cor. 2:2--For I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

4-No time limit on preaching !!!
--When the heart is hot
--When the head is full
--When the listener is listening...

--Acts 20:7--"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."
--Acts 20:11--"When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even til break of day, so he departed."
--Might have preached ALL THE WAY TO AFRICA if water hadn't been sighted.

5-Leads to **QUESTION**:--8:36
--**What** is **needed**??
--**FAITH** is needed
--**Anything** more than that???---**No** !!
--Pettingill: "**Salvation** = Faith in Christ, plus **NOTHING**"

B-Then FAITH Follows Facts: (8:37-38)
1-**Def.** of **faith**=="Belief **founded on facts** or evidences"
--Natural response to facts
--**Not** a "**LEAP IN THE DARK**"
NB
2-**Decision** of faith--**The issue**
--Faith or belief
=**FULL TRUST** in Christ alone
--"with all thine heart"
--CHRIST as the **proper object** of faith
--**Illus**--Two men wandered over Nevada's mountains looking for silver. They found many veins, & one man who is a geological expert chips off samples of each outcropping & puts them in his pocket and goes on. After leaving one vein that looked especially rich, the second man slipps away and returns to **stake a claim**. He perfedted his title to that claim and became a MILLIONAIRE. Both men saw the same things, but **one** man **HAD FAITH** in the vein to make him rich. He trusted so fully that he **put all he had** into it. So also with Christ. He is able to make anyone rich with the riches of salvation & heaven, but they must **begin with faith** in Him.

NB
--Textual critics suggest that **8:37** is an interpolation, but it is **true to the sense** of the record, & I take it as accurate.

3-**Declaration** of faith
--True possessor of Christ as Savior will WANT to **confess Him openly** — Open Profession
--Have **YOU** made this decision ??
--Do you want to make it right now ??
--**No secret disciples**
--Mt. 12:30--"He that is not with me is against me; & he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."
--Mk. 8:38-- Whosoever shall be ashamed of me & of my words in this adulterous & sinful generation; of him

(6)

shall the Son of man be ashamed when He cometh in the glory of the Father."
--Eunuch's CONFESSION is **CLEAR-CUT** — OPEN!
--Before his entire retinue
** Maybe it wasn't easy
** But it surely must have left an impression on everyone
--Rom. 10:9-10=="That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy 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."

4-**Declaration visibilized**
--Faith **AND** water baptism
--These go together !!!
--Proper order is Faith and **then Baptism**
--**NEVER** baptism prior to faith
--Don't know the locality in which this took place, but that is not of great importance
--**SOON** after salvation is proper
--Contrary to the practice on some mission fields & in some denominations in the USA

C.--Then FEELING Is Evidenced: (8:39-40)

1-**Present** response--**Not** due to PAST wealth, position or religion (8:27)
--But **NOW** he is **REJOICING**....**WHY??**

2-**Proper** order--**Facts** presented & understood
--Then **FAITH** exercised in Christ
--Followed by **feeling**
--**NEVER** a different order in Scripture
--"Faith fastens on fact and lets feelings come trailing along. Feelings will rise & fall, will come and go, but faith turns not back to follow feeling."
--Rom. 15:13--"Now the God of hope fill you with all **joy** and **peace** in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."
--**POEM** "Feelings come and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving.
My anchor is the Word of God;
Naught else is worth believing."

3 KEY WORDS

3-Moody's words:
"Don't be watching your **feelings.** There is not one verse from Genesis to Revelation about being saved by feelings. When the devil sees a poor soul in agony in the waves of sin, and getting close to the Rock of Ages, he holds out the PLANK OF FEELING to him, & says: "There, get on that. You feel more comfortable now, don't you."

And while the man is getting his breath again, **OUT** goes the plank from under him and he is worse off than ever.

Accept no refuge except the **ROCK**--The Lord Jesus !!

4-Personal response (8:39)
--Feeling or joy in believing
--The RESULT of salvation & possessing Christ
--Not told anything of the Eunuch's future service, but we are told of HIS JOY
--Joy level will vary with different individuals according to their personalities, but it is nonetheless REAL!!

5-Any and all can rejoice when they have Christ
--Rom. 5:2--"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."
--Phs. 4:4--"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice."
--Jas. 1:2--"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations."
--Gal. 5:22--But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy...."
--1 Thess. 5:18-- In everyting give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

6-Philip was caught away...so full dependence would be on God alone, not on man

III.-THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED: (For Believers)

A.-Care For Others:

1-God is a soul-seeking God
2-He is PEOPLE-oriented — That is all we can take to HEAVEN
3-He wants us to have a care for others also!!
--Win them one-by-one
--That includes YOU in the process also
—You have a place + part that involves OTHERS!

B.-Compassion For Others:

"Reach out + touch someone"

1-God has on His heart the ever expanding program of gospel outreach?
2-There are "O T H E R S H E E P" which must be reached.
3-What part are you having in reaching them?
4-To whom is your heart + hand reaching out?

C.-Concern For Progress:

1-God's plan--EXTEND and EXPAND !! — Always. Everywhere
2-The African Church--Failed to translate Scriptures
--Failed to evangelize neighbors
--Failed to be a missionary base
--Failed...TO S U R V I V E !!

NB

3-So, today, there are more churches under the sand of North Africa than there are believers on top of the sands.
4-God expects--PROGRESS !!
--More than keepers of the acquarium
--"Fishers of men"
—Reach + teach OTHERS

D.-Cure For The Needy:

1-The message we must preach is JESUS !!
2-Then even a desert can be a fertile field for God

(8)

3-Let's major on getting the slums out of men, not merely getting men out of the slums.

4-But both are involved

CONCLUSION:

A. Open Heart:

1-BELIEVER to be led--Abraham in his "call" from Ur
--Philip in his witnessing
--Y O U, also
--Have you given yourself to this

2-SINNER to be converted
--Cornelius & his household
--Ehiopian Eunuch near Gaza
--YOU here today
--God will not despise the seeking heart !

B. Full Heart:

3 KEY WORDS

1-FACTS--Necessary
--Basic
--L.S.Chafer--"Give them something to believe"

2-FAITH----Result of examining the facts
--Exercising TRUST in Jesus as Savior

3-FEELING=Subsequent joy on the basis of possessing eternal life through possessing HIM.
-Goes on for life + eternity

C. Personal Heart:

1-Where do you stand spiritually?
2-Who have you told of JESUS ??
3-When did you trust Christ as your Personal Savior ??
4-What response do you give to the Spirit Who is just now speaking to your heart?

Westbrae--7/18.65 & 4/21/68
Chinese Camp--8/28/66
Calvary Columbus--4/27/75
Daniels Miss'y Bapt.Ch., 8/7/77
Evergreen Bible Ch, Vancouver, WA.--7/27/81
Meriam Chapel, IN--11/9/81
A.B.C. Chapel--11/26/84
Bible Center Ch. Charleston - 2/3/85
Grace Gospel / Church, Huntington - 3/3/85
Old Kanawha Bapt. Ch., Pratt - 3/10/85
Maroa Bible Ch, Maroa, Il - 7/30/89
Buenas Aires, Brazil - 7/19/98

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

"The Haven Of Rest"
"Have You Any Room For Jesus?"
"Jesus Is Calling"
"I Will Sing The Wondrous Story"
"Blessed Assurance" 488
My Redeemer

INTRO:

A.-A Change of Name:

1-If we could change our names, WHAT NAME would YOU choose
2-OR if you knew the leaders of the church --guided by the H. S. --were about to give you a NEW NAME indicative of your Christian character & service, would you
--REJOICE ?? or
--TREMBLE ?? or
--Perhaps we'd view such an occasion with apprehension !!!!!!
3-ILLUS:--John 3:30 as my motto at Camp Peniel & an Indian name--"He must increase, but I must decrease"
--I was both stung & moved to change by that choice of a text

B.-Barnabas--A Man Whose Name Was Changed:

1-Little more than A NAME to us
2-Overshadowed by Saul/Paul in record of Acts
3-Not given great prominence by Dr. Luke in Acts
4-How much do you know about him?? WHO WAS HE??
Quite a biography & activity sheet can be pieced together if you carefully seek the details
5-One of the most winsome personalities of the Bible

C.-Message---ARE YOU A BARNABAS??:

OUTLINE--I.-The Man Barnabas.
II.-The Ministry of Barnabas.
III.-The Mar on Barnabas.
PROP:--Become better acquainted with one of the most helpful & winsome men of the N.T., and learn lessons for our own lives from his life

I.- THE MAN BARNABAS:

A.-Seen As An Encourager: (Acts 4:32-37)

1-Joses==Joseph; Hebrew name
2-Levite--Israelite who knew his lineage; Distinguished !!
3-Cyprus was ancestral home
4-LANDOWNER in Cyprus--Could not own land in Israel
--Large, fertile island off Syria
--Famous for wines, wheat, figs, etc.
--To possess land in Cyprus was to be a wealthy & influential man
4-EUSEBIUS--4th century, suggests Barnabas was converted by Jesus &was one of the 70 mentioned by Luke as sent out 2 by 2.
--Well grounded in the Scriptures: AN EARLY CONVERT
5-Sold his land & gave it to the Apostles for the work of the Lord--Many did that
--Apparently his was the largest & a most splendid example of generosity

(2)

-Spontaneous & voluntary gift
-CONTRAST the pretended piety of Ananias & S.

6-Tremendous ENCOURAGEMENT to the Apostles' hearts in a time of financial crisis

7-Joses is RENAMED "Barnabas" as his CHRISTIAN NAME
- "Son of Encouragement"; "Consolation" : "Exhortation"
- -Hereafter known by this name; BARNABAS
- -Subsequent record shows how magnificently he lived up to his name!!

B.-Seen As A Spiritual Man: (Acts 11:24)

1-TRPLE GRACES -"A good man", Moral quality of godliness
- -"Full of the H. G.", Spiritual; Sound judgment
- -"Full of faith"..Dedicated zeal; expected great things from God!!

2-An Apostle (Acts 14:4) Paul + Barnabas

3-Self-supporting in his ministry, as was Saul/Paul (1 Cor.9:6)

II.-THE MINISTRY OF BARNABAS:

A.-Encouraging Saul: (Acts 9:26-27)

1-Apostles distrusted Saul
- --Feared he was an infiltrator
- --Remembered Saul's past as a persecuter
- --Before any man could be commissioned as a bona fide preacher of the gospel, he had to be cleared by the Apostles, Peter, John & James

2-Barnabas alone held out a hand of fellowship to Saul
- * Probably known from previous years
  - ** Perhaps Gamaliel had been their Teacher
  - ** Perhaps fellow-members of the Sanhedrin
- * --Quick to discern Saul's sincerity; A TRUSTING SOUL !
- --Vouches for Saul to the Apostles
- --Willing to adopt a brother as yet untested & guide him
- * -Testified of Saul's conversion & fearless preaching

3-With Barnabas' endorsement the Apostles welcomed Saul

4-Barnabas was a tremendous help & encouragement to Saul

B.-Encouraging Antioch Believers: (Acts 11:19-26)

1=Many JEWS saved there -Some from Cyprus & Greece
- -Some from Antioch itself

2-Church in Jerusalem hears news from Antioch
- --Sent Barnabas as apostolic representative to help establish new believers** Not in first wave of men
  - ** But sent early on
- --Emmissary to encourage & supervise
- --Proof of how highly Barnabas was regarded in Jerusalem that he was the one sent
- --Note that some from his home in Cyprus were among the converts in Antioch

3-Barnabas' ministry in Antioch — JEWS AND GENTILES being saved
- -"SAW" the grace of God at work--OBSERVANT
- --Was "GLAD"--Joyful at spiritual victories
- -"EXHORTED THEM" all that w/ purpose of heart they should cleave to the Lord ** Concern for people
  - ** Not just for salvation

** But also for CONTINUING & involved in local church

--Sought out Saul in Tarsus (3)
** to help him; not too proud to seek aid
** To serve as an apprentice or intern
** To add balance to the ministry
** Reclaimer of the outsider & unaccepted
** Saul was persuaded & came to join the team
--LUTHER--"We cannot help being jealous of the men who are in our own circle & are more talented than ourselves----NOT BARNABAS !!!

4-LOCAL CHURCH established--assembled themselves w/ whole ch.
--TEACHING MINISTRY to establish believers in the TRUTH

5-Called "Christians" in Antioch
=="Possessers of Christ"
--Name not originated by christians
--Called this by a Gentile city
--Term of derision-----but it stuck with us

6-"Much people was added to the Lord: (11:24 d)

7-Barnabas as an ENCOURAGER--to the Church in Antioch
--to Saul in that he was given a chance to minister in a TEAM

C.-Encouraging Jerusalem Saints: (Acts 11:27-30)

1-Prophets from Jerusalem come to reinforce the ministry----AGABUS

2-Word of a FAMINE by prophetic announcement
--45 or 46 A.D. this occurred
--Antioch christians wanted to SHARE w/ Jerusalem saintss in their time of need
--Christian people are GIVING PEOPLE !!

3-Why this desire to share??--They are brethren
--They are in need
--They had shared Barnabas w/ them
--They wanted to show appreciation

4-Famine relief--Probably not money or gold
--FOODSTUFFS Are what was needed
--Sent to the Jerusalem church's Elders
--Sent via Barnabas & Saul as their emmisaries

5-AGAIN Barnsbas is involved in helpfulness to Jerusalem Ch.

D.-Enlarging The Work In Antioch: (Acts 12:25--13:5)

1-Barnabas & Saul return from Mission of Mercy in Jerusalem
--Bring John Mark along to Antioch
--Nephew to Barnabas
--Spiritual needs of Antioch Church still concern B & S

2-Multiple Man Ministry at Antioch
--Barnabas was Senior Pastor
--Also Simeon & Lucius from within--1 Tim. 2:2
--Saul is"low man "on the totem pole

3-Active & full ministry--"Ministered to the Lord"
--PEOPLE got it: GOD was the object !!
--"Fasted"--Spirit of sacrifice
---Esp. when seeking guidan

ce

-Called by the Spirit to new fields of service--Barnabas & Saul
--Probably the Antioch Church felt that these t
two could least be spared

4-Church involvement -Preparation--"fasted & prayed"
-Ordination --"Laid hands on them"
-Cooperation--"Sent them away" (Finances Outfit & Prayer)

NB

5-HOW?? -MESSAGE "they preached the Word of God"
-METHOD--"in the synagogues" --"TO THE JEW FIRST"
-MULTIPLE STAFF--"John to their minister"

NB

E.-Enlarging The Work--First Missionary Journey: (ACTS 13:6--14:28)

1-Cyprus was 1st stop--Barnabas was "going home"
--John Mark was having a high adventure
--Saul saw it a land "filled w/ people w/o hope & w/o God"

2-Saul is renamed PAUL in Asia Minor — GREEK NAME
-God reverses the leadership roles (13:13) IMPORTANT !!
-PAUL steps into prominence
-John Mark departs from them--Reasons not stated
-Barnabas graciously steps back (NOT JEALOUS!!)
-Paul becomes the spokesman** To Sergius Paulus (13:7)
** In Antioch of Pisidia (13:14)
-"Now, it must have been a supreme test of christian grace for the one who had been a 'father in the faith' to his colleague, to recognize in the younger man gifts which marked him out as the leader in this great enterprise, and himself to accept wholeheartedly the secondary place. No less noble a man than Barnabas could have submitted to this reversal of thir roles, and completed the journey in such wondrous fellowship & effectual ministry."
(Herbert F. Stevenson, A GALAXY OF SAINTS, 115)

3-Acts 13:46--JOINT DECLARATION--"To the Jew first" EXPANDS !!!

4-Together in preaching -Visited small Jewish enclaves
-Ministered gospel in local Synagogues
-Iconium, Derbe, Lystra, Lyconia
-Barnabas' preeminence of stature & age are still recognized (14:12)
-Paul stoned & left for dead

4-Retracing steps to confirm believers & Churches (14:20-25)
-Preaching & teaching----------CONTENT
-Confirming the souls------FOLLOW-UP
-Exhorting-------DETERMINATION ON FIRE
-Ordained elders in every church----ORGANIZATION
-Prayed // Fasted // Commended-------ONGOING

6-Report at Antioch (14:26-28) --Returned to "home church"
--Reported on work accomplished
--Told IN the church TO the Ch.
--Furlough in home church
--What an ENCOURAGEMENT this must have been to the saints

7-EMPHASIS on the LOCAL CHURCH because it is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15)

F.-Establishing Principles For Gentiles: (15:1-35) (5)

1Controversy w/ Judaizers over circumcision as a part of salvation (15:1-2a) (PROBLEM)

2-Paul & Barnabas sent by Antioch Ch. to Jerus. overneed for a settlement of that issue(15:2c-6)
- -Many rejoiced at Gentiles being saved (15:3-4)
- -Some Pharisees objected (15:5)
- -Consideration of the problem by Apostles & Elders (15:6

3-THE CASE -Peter's presentation (15:7-11)
- -Barnabas & Paul speak (15:12)
- -Settled by JAMES (15:13ff) Half-brother of Jesu
- -Even though Peter was present, he was not preeminent

-GODLY UNANIMITY --** Apostles
** Elders
** Whole Church
** A LANDMARK DECISION !!

4-Communication to Antioch
- -Judas & Silas accompanying Paul & Barnabas
- -Written notice of decision
- -Thus, a DOUBLE WITNESS of the ruling delivered

5-Return to Antioch -All stayed & ministered for a time
- -Judas surnamed Barsabas leaves
- Silas remains
- -ALL were ACTIVE in the ministry !!

G.-Enlarging Work By Second Missionary Journey: (Acts 15:36-41)

1-Initiation for 2nd journey -Came from Paul
- -Concern for "our brethren"

2-Barnabas proposes to take John Mark along again
- --KJV reads"determined" (15:37)
- --Margin reads "was minded"
- --Barnabas was more sympathetic in understanding of human frailty in John Mark. He perceived a repentant spirit in the young man.
- --Barnabas is always giving men a SECOND CHANCE !!
  - ** Consoler
  - ** Exhorter
  - ** Encourager

3-Paul objects -"thought it not good to take him w/ them"
- *Somewhat intolerant of those not cast in his "heroic mold"
- --Remembers Mak's defection on 1st Missy. journey

4-CONTENTION WAS SHARP !!!
- -"They departed asunder one from the other"
- --Barnabas took his Nephew, John Mark
- --Paul chose Silas as his co-laborer
- --Apparently only Paul & Silas were commended to God by the Antioch church
- --LAMENTABLE CONTROVERSY !!
  - ** Perhaps both were wrong
  - ** Paul for an unforgiving spirit toward Mark
  - ** Barnabas for pushing his Nephew too much
  - ** BOTH for failure to "give a little"

--BUT NOTICE !! --Neither left the church
--Neither failed to walk w/ the Lord
--Neither stoppped serving in the Church

5-AFTERMATH--Silas--** Active w/ Paul & involved in founding many churches over many years

--Barnabas & Mark
** Some say it was a mistake that Barnabas wrong to have disagreed w/ Paul
** Supported only by SILENCE in that we have no record of their labors & accomplishment

--John Mark ** Retrieved & made useful thru Barnabas' patience & concern
** Col 4:10--FORGIVEN & differences put aside
** 2 Tim. 4:11--"Profitable unto me"
** Understudy to Peter (1 Pet. 5:13)
** Gospel of Mark (Peter's Gospel)

--Perhaps we can learn that even our profoundest convictions are not infallible.

III.-THE MAR ON BARNABAS:

A.-The Record:

1-Gal. 2:11-14

2-Peter--In Antioch to visit & he ate with Gentiles freely
--BUT WITHDREW when some came from James in Jerusalem
--Respecting them which were of the circumcision

3-Result--The other Jews dissembled (="joined in acting the hypocrite)
--Barnabas also was carried away; STUMBLED from a WALK of CONSISTENCY
--THEREFORE *** Paul rebuked Peter
***"I withstood him to the face"
***Peter's wrong affected others

--Another proof of Peter's fallibility & non-primacy as a "POPE"

B.-The Remembrance:

1 Cor. 10:12

1-ONLY BLEMISH on an otherwise spotless career
2-Sorry it occurred,,,,,but,,,,CAN'T HIDE IT !!
3-But let us not magnify it beyond proper measure
4-Like all the rest of us, Barnabas had some defective qualities
5-There has only been ONE PERFECT MAN on earth
--The Savior whom Barnabas trusted
--The Savior whom Barnabas preached to many
--The Savior who has forgiven us ALL SIN !!
6-Note that though this mar on Barnabas' record did occur, it seems not to have harmed or hindered Paul's love & respect for Barnabas
7-To the end, Barnabas was true to his new name -----

"SON OF CONSOLATION"

CONCLUSION:

A.-Three Facets To Barnabas' Record:

1.= The Man
2.- The Ministry
3.- The Mar
4-Let's not get the mar blown out of proportion so we fail to appreciate the man & the ministry
5-Henry Drummond once said:
"How many prodigals are kept out of the kingdom of Gdd by the unlovely characters who profess to be inside!" ~~TGM*TGAT*~~
OH, THAT THERE WERE MORE "SONS OF CONSOLATION"

B.-Balance To Remember:

1-Contentions--(1) With Apostles in behalf of Saul (A6ts 9:26-27)
(2) With Council in Jerusalem over circumcision for salvation(Acts 15:1-35)
(3) With Paul over whether to take John Mark with them on their second missionary journed

2-Consolations:
(1)to the Apostles over his sacrificial giving
(2)to Paul in introducing him to the Apostles
(3)to the Antioch Church with his ministry to them
(4)to the saints in Jerusalem with an offering in time of famine
(5)to the many areas evangelized and discipled on his first missionary journey with Saul/Paul
(6)to all GENTILES for his part in defeating Judaizing of the GOSPEL message
(7)to John Mark as a "FAILIRE WHO MADE GOOD" because Barnabas gave hom a second chance to serve

3-Let us remember that the man who CONTENDS FOR the Faith is also used of God to CONSOLE those in the faith

4-Are YOU a " SON OF CONSOLATION??" ??
--Giving yourself to the Lord
--Giving your means to support the LOrd's work??
--Giving your life-service???
**Contending
**Consoling

5-You can be!!!..... IF you will!!!!

6-ADOPT someone as a brother/sister to be "consoled
EVERYONE needs a pat on the back.....
..at the appropriate level !!

Gary Barker
Ron Harder
Doug Winn
Jim Saunders

8/03/03 – Hilltop Bapt. Ch. 7/25/04 – VBS
11/18/03 – Pastor's Fellowship of Beckley
3/10/04 – Bible Center Ch.
8/13/04 – Beulah Baptist Ch, Summersville

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

INTRO:

A.-State Of The State Or Nation:
1-Governor gives a "State of the State message
2-President gives a "State of the Nation message
--Accomplishments are listed
--Goals are proposed
--Circumstances are evaluated

B.-State Of The Church:
1-Could do that here at OUR CHURCH
--Physical plant
--Membership
--Budget
--Missions
--Young people in Bible schools
--Men into the ministry
--.....BUT, we won't!
2-Avoid "Bragimony"
3-Rather----STATE OF THE CHURCH
--What the Book teaches about it
--Evaluate our Church in that light
--Realize the fact that we're only as strong as the weakest link
--Realize that we need to stand together!
** What strengthens one strengthens all others also
** What weakens one weakens all others
** United we stand, divided we fall
** ILLUS--Bill Gilmore at the time he placed his membership here
--Rev. 2:2--"Be watchful, and strengthen the tings which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God."

Evaluate in the light of the absolute standard of the Word. How Do WE MEASURE UP?

C.-Bible Characteristics Of "The State Of The Church"
1-Oneness of the Church
2-Witness of the Church
3-Unselfishness Of the Church
4-PROP: --To see what God expects the church to be
--To see how we need to adjust to the Divine pattern.

I.-ONENESS OF THE CHURCH --(4:12, 24, 32):

A.-One Name--(4:12):
1-No salvation in any other Name
--Not salvation from disease (3:1-11)
--But salvation from sin
2-"No second" Name--Exclusiveness of Christ's claims
--Not a teacher, or a leader, but a SAVIOR
--This is the ONE Name God has com-

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

manded men to honor
- John 5:22-24
- Samuel J. Stone (The Church's One Foundation)

"Elect from every nation,
Yet one o'er all the earth.
Her charter of salvation,
One Lord, one faith, one birth.
One holy Name she blesses,
Partakes one holy food,
And to one hope she presses,
With every grace endued." (Stanza 2)

3-Name of Jesus speaks of HIS POWER
4-"None other name under heaven"
- --Only place to make this decision---Here, under heaven
- --Only time to make this decision--NOW !
- --ILLUS--Matt. 9:1-8, esp. 6

5-If we're to be saved, it MUST be this way by this Name
- -The great promise---"Saved"
- -The great command---"Must"
- -ILLUS--If you've read George MacDonald's book, "MALCOM", you'll never forget his chapter on "The Marquis & the Schoolmaster."

The dying Marquis sends for the devout schoolmaster, Mr. Graham. The schoolmaster knows his man, & goes cautiously to work. "Are you satisfied with yourself, my lord?"----"No, not in God's sight"

"You would like to be better?"---"Yes; but how is a poor devil to get out of this infernal scrape?"

"Keep the commandments!"---"That's it, but there's no time."

Then the schoolmaster said: "If there were but time to draw another breathe, there would be time to begin."-----"HOW AM I TO BEGIN? WHICH AM I TO BEGIN WITH?"

Mr. Graham replied: "There is one commandment which includes ALL the rest!" ---"WHICH IS THAT?", inquired the Marquis seriously.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

When the Marquis of Lossier passed from the 10 Commandments to the commandment which includes all the ten, he found peace for which he longed.

6-"It is not a question of whether or no 'there is good in other religions'; it is a question of the one divinely appointed way of salvation." Thomas Walker, Acts.

B.-One Voice (4:24):

wax views

1-Not "one voice" in politics, social theory, or business ethics
2-But in PRAYER--4:23-24
- --And a LOUD voice at that
- --A UNITED voice, though many prayed

3-Response to being forbidden to speak or teach of Christ (4:18)
4-Twofold reply--To rulers & scribes (4:19-20) "We cannot but speak"
- --Lifted their voice (not voices) to God (4:24)

--ILLUS--Days when Assyrian general Rabshakeh sent a letter demanding capitulation of Jerusalem to King Hezekiah.

--2 Kings 19:14--"And Hezekiah recieved the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up to the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD"

5-No wonder the early church was "with one accord"

6-Not settling things by majority rule, but by submitting everything to God

7-This "one accord" was not geographic oneness, but spiritual, as in Acts 5:12

C.-One Heart (4:32):

1-This is the term associated with emotions

2-Bond of affection & love that makes a "new family" for the believer

3-Closeness that is "internal", based on spiritual values

4-Happy condition--"one heart"--of those who have believed in the Savior

--Men reject the ONE NAME at their peril

--The Church rallies around that Name!

5-Not among a small group of disciples, or the 120 of the upper room, but "the multitude" now acc. to 4:32

6-The cause of their common heart was their common faith

7-Remarkable unity & concord existed —— and do today among the really redeemed

D.-One Soul (4:32):

1-Not just true of a few, or of leaders

2-Multitude of the christians were involved

3-This term deals with the PSYCHE

=="The seat of moral & religious sentiment or feeling"

=="THE MIND"

4-The "mind" of the church was "single" for the things of Christ

--Phs. 2:5--"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:"

--Rom. 12:16--"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

--2 Cor. 13:11--"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

--1 Pet. 3:8--"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:"

--Phs. 4:2--"I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche that they be of the same mind in the Lord."

--Ps. 133:1--"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

5-Not selfish, but spiritually governed!
6-How we all need the "mind of Christ"
7-Out of this ROOT (one heart & one soul) comes the FRUIT of the changed life.

Are you exhibiting a CHANGED LIFE?

II. WITNESS OF THE CHURCH--(4:33):

A.-Great Power----EXTERNAL (4:33a):

1-Power centered in their message
- --Resurrection was a constant theme
- --Resurrection of Messiah Jesus
- --One of the "Three strings on their guitar"
  - ** Messiahship of Jesus
  - ** Resurrection of Jesus
  - ** Return of Jesus

"And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women"

2-EVANGELISM was stressed---------Acts 5:14
3-All the apostles had the same message
- --Apostles were threatened, but not intimidated into silence
- --Verb is imperfect--lit.--"with great power did the apostles discharge continually their debt of witnessing..."
- --Great subject to preach

4-Still, however, only the leaders were witnessing
5-This was effective--
- --"great power"
- --No suppressing or modifying the message because it gave offence
- --No "toning down"
- --The trumpet must give a certain sound
- --ILLUS--An interesting example of the pressure to tone down the exclusiveness of the gospel is found in A. J. Cronin's popular novel--"THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM" In that book the author sketches what is in many ways an admirable and lovable character--Father Chisholm. But he also states, although in somewhat extreme form, the creed of those who have abandoned the exclusiveness of the gospel.

The nun, Mother Maria-Veronica, is troubled by the fact that the amiable Dr. Tulloch, who ministered to the Chinise in the plague, was an atheist,& he died as an atheist.

But Father Chisholm tells her: "There is one thing most of us forget. Christ taught it. The Church teaches it--though you wouldn't think so to hear a great many of us today. No one in good faith can ever be lost. NO ONE. Buddhists, Mohammedans, Taoists--the blackest cannibals who ever devoured a missionary--if they are sincere according to their own lights, they will be saved. That is the splendid mercy of God. So why shouldn't He enjoy confronting a decent agnostic at the Judgment (Seat) with a twinkle in his eye: 'I'm here, you see, in spite of all they brought you up to believe. Enter the Kingdom which you honestly denied.'"

6-How radically the words of men are divergent from the words of "great power" given by God. LET US NOT BE DECEIVED!

7-But this "great power" had to be enlarged
--Deacons in Acts 6
--Stephen in Acts 6 & 7
--Church as a whole.....
--Acts 8:3-4--"As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word."

8-There was success of outreach in this church which showed such ONENESS--Acts 6:7
--Acts 9:31
--Acts 12:24
--Acts 16:5
--Acts 19:20
--Acts 28:30-31

9-WHEREIN does this great power lie?
--In the MESSAGE
--Rom. 1:16--"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."
--In the SPIRIT
--Acts. 1:8--"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

- DARE not to NEGLECT either or we'll not have "GREAT POWER"

B.-Great Grace----INTERNAL (4:33b):
1-Reference to Divine favor & blessing
--Great power for witnessing for Christ
--Great grace for living for Christ
--BOTH were the outgrowth
** Of oneness
** Of prayer
--But this was not "favor" with the unsaved in the sense of universal acceptance
--This is internal grace for the obedient & faithful
2-This grace abounds for those who walk with God
3-2 Cor. 9:8--"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:"
4-No spiritual caste system in the Church's membership
5-Upon them ALL--Wonderful condition of a church
6-In any case these two go together--great power
--great grace
"All one Body we"
7-Together they constitute a VITAL WITNESS for Christ
--Who has "great power" and "great grace"?
--Upon them ALL!
--Apostles & the people — Let us ask God for it to be true of us also!

III.-UNSELFISHNESS OF THE CHURCH --(4:34-37):

A.-Definition Of Terms:
1-Selfishness = "Being devoted to or caring only for oneself"
="Influenced solely or chiefly by considerations of personal interest"

2-Unselfishness--The exact opposite
--Not SELF-centered, but OTHERS-centered
=="Selflessness

3-The world says: "MONEY TALKS"------but what does it say?

4-JUSTIN MARTYR, who was educated a heathen philosopher & flourished about the middle of the 2nd century, in his celebrated 'APOLOGY', presented to the Emperor Trajan, says, "WE, who formerly delighted in adultery, now observe the strictest chastity; we, who used the charms of magic, have devoted outselves to the true God, and we, who valued money and gain above all things, now cast what we have in common, and distribute to every man according to his necessities."

B.-Unselfishness In Principle:

1-Acts 4:32b

2-Universal attitude of the church was
--Not "to get",
--Nor "to have",
--But "TO SHARE" — Hallmark of the real believer

3-Life did not center in acquisitions

4-GAEBELEIN--"They realized that their real possessions were now in a better place, no longer on earth, but in heaven." (P.99, Acts)

5-Rather, "they had all things common"

6-This is not "CHRISTIAN COMMUNISM"
--Practiced by many, but not all were possessors of lands or houses to sell
--Practiced voluntarily
** No compulsion
** No pressure
** Just the reactions of convered & dedicated people — They just WANT to give
--This is JUDICIOUS CHARITY
--Reminds me of Moses when an offering was to be taken for the materials for the Tabernacle
--Exodus 36:1-6

7-Quite a change for Jews whose idea had been that POSSESSIONS indicated divine favor

C.-Unselfishness In Practice:

1-Acts 4:34-35

2-No lack of needs by any believer

3-Sharing among the family of faith
--Flows from the "great grace" of 4:33
--This proves the sincerity of love for Christ (2 Cor. 8:8)
--Probably some had needs because they lost their employment because of their faith in Christ & testimony for Him
--Widows particularly had to be cared for
--Widows are still the church's concern, under certain strictly prescribed conditions (1 Tim. 5:3-10)

4-Church did the supervision of these finances
--Laid at the Apostles' feet
--Later the Deacons did the distributing (6:1-4)

5-ILLUS of unselfishness (4:36-37)
--Joses (=Joseph), called Barnabas

--Name means "Son of consolation" or "Son of Exhortation", indicating his ministry
--Levite from Cyprus
--Always seen in Scripture in the process of giving someone a helping hand
--Sold his land, and brought it all
--The grace of God was at work in his life
--Reminds me of Bill & Gladys Liner

6-Contrast---Pretended piousness of Ananaias & Sapphira

7-The church in those early days had "no lack"

8-Today, expansion of ministry is often curtailed or crippled for lack of finances.
--Missionary appointees waiting to go
--Schools unable to build new buildings
--Salaries not adequate or regularly met
--Land & buildings needed for relocations or expansion
--New churches needed in new areas

9-WHAT WAS THEIR SECRET ??
--Others live as though they possess "as their own", all that is in their hands
--Real believers don't see it that way
--Realize that ALL they are, and ALL THEY HAVE is the Lord's, and that they serve with a stewardship to Him
--"Corporate consciousness" before the Lord

10-These people lived in the conviction of the supremacy of the spiritual over the material
--Not by compulsions
--But voluntarily
--Out of love for the Lord
--Absolutely spiritual responses

CONCLUSION:

A.-State of the Church

1-Oneness

2-Witness

3-Unselfishness

4-How do we measure up against this BIBLICAL standard?

5-How do I personally measure up?

6-ILLUS--A traveler in a European village discovered a beautiful custom. At night she saw the people going to the church, each with a little bronze lamp. These lamps they carried, & placed in sockets by their pews. The soft light of the lamps was the only illumination for the service.

If a member was absent, there was a dark space.

We do not carry lamps to church, but we do send forth light. When we are absent, there is darkness in our place. The more people at church, the greater the inspiration. Many small lamps together make a beautiful and uplifting sight

What made the Jerusalem church a successful one? Just this: It had the total participation of those who called it their SPIRITUAL HOME. They were --in oneness
--bearing witness
--unselfish in giving.

B.-Suggestions For Individuals:

1-Participation in attendance--5 weekly services
--Bible class
--Mission meeting
--Women's group

2-Participation in prayer--Personal
--Corporate
--For souls
--For the "family"

3-Participation in witness
--Ask God for ONE in ~~1968~~ This year thru your testimony
--Then seek to win one!

4-Participation in finances--Melrose Baptist's pastor said recently over the air that 37% of their members gave nothing for the work of the Lord in 1966
--Have you given a minimum of 10% for the work of your church?
--Love offerings above that?

5-Let's examine these matters honestly !!
--State of your church
--State of your own life
--They move--UP or DOWN--together

6-Let's make some decisions to live by!

Westbrae --1/14/68
N. Calif Regional — 2/22/69 "I Am Resolved" 436

"PRAYER---HINGE OF HISTORY" (Part 2) Acts 4:13-31
Matt. 18:18-20
(Part 1 under Acts 10:1-22)

INTRODUCTION:

A.-General Subject Of Prayer:
1-ILLUS--In a Detroit school a believer in prayer and in the God Who hears and answers prayer, put this notice on the school bulletin board: ~~ATOMIC~~ NUCLEAR
"IN CASE OF ~~ATOMIC~~ ATTACK, THE RULING AGAINST PRAYERS IN THIS SCHOOL WILL BE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED."
2-Humorous, isn't it
3-Yet, it almost seems that it would take something as serious as an atomic attack to move some people to pray
4-But prayer is as essential to the Christian life as breathing is to the physical life. ABUNDANT LIFE doesn't exist without prayer characterizing the christian
5-See Prayer in the Bible
--Exemplified in the lives of the godly
--Absent from the lives of the unsaved & those who are out of fellowship
--POWER CONNECTION for the Church between man's need and God's intervention

B.-Recapitulation of Part 1--"PRAYER---THE HINGE OF HISTORY
1-24 occasions of prayer in Book of Acts
--9 cases of PERSONAL PRAYER
--2 cases of CLOSE FELLOWSHIP PRAYER
--13 cases of PUBLIC PRAYERS BY THE BODY TOGETHER
2-Occasions of Personal Prayer we looked at in our last message (NINE)--Apostles would give themselves to prayer & a ministry of the Word (6:4)
--Stephen prayed for his murderers (7:60)
--Simon Magus warned to repent & pray, but he refused (8:18-24)
--Saul as a converted man--"BEHOLD, HE PRAYETH" (9:11)
--Peter prays & Tabitha/Dorcas is restored to physical life (9:40-41)
--Cornelius prays & God sends information on how to get in touch with Preacher Peter (10:1-6)
--Peter prays & God breaks down his resistance to extending the gospel to the GENTILES (10:9-16)
--Paul prays in the Temple in Jerusalem & God warns him not to return to Jerusalem (22:17-21)
--Paul prays & Publius' father is healed & the populace is opened to hear the gospel (28:8)

C.-Today's Message--Part 2--"PRAYER--THE HINGE OF HISTORY":
1-Outline:
I.-CLOSE FELLOWSHIP PRAYER OCCASIONS:
II.-PUBLIC PRAYERS BY THE ASSEMBLED BODY:
2-Prop--Learn about prayer in the life of the power-characterized Church of the N.T. era, and de-

termine that such a pattern will characterize our lives and our Church
** Personal prayers
** Close fellowship prayers with brethren
** Assembled body prayers
--Realize we aren't BALANCED in our prayer life without all three aspects being our practice

I.-CLOSE FELLOWSHIP PRAYERS:

A.-Acts 16:25-34: (Paul & Silas in prison in Philippi)

1-**Follow-through** of 2 previous public prayer situations
--Lydia saved thru a prayer meeting (16:12-15)
--Damsel that's demon-possessed being delivered (16:16-18)
--Masters of the girl bring Paul & Silas before the Magistrates because of their loss of revenue

2-**Accusations**--"They trouble our city"
--"They teach things unlawful for Romans to observe"
--Accusations, but **NO PROOF**

3-Judgment by Magistrates--Stripped publicly
--Beaten
--Cast into prison
--Taken into inner prison
--Feet put into stocks

4-**WHAT NOW??**--Expect them to be **shaken** & **commiserating**
--But instead--16:25
--That shows their spiritual calibre
--Also evidences how much **help** it can be to have **someone share your trouble** and pray about it with you
--**PROMISE**--Matt. 18:18-20

5-ILLUS--Dr. T. Bulkley the distinguished mental specialist, addressed the British Medical Assn. in these words: "As an alienist (Mental disease specialist) and one whose whole life has been concerned with sufferings of the mind, I would state that **of all** the hygienic measures to counteract disturbed sleep, depression of the spirits, and all the miserable sequels of a disturbed mind, I would undoubtedly give **first place** to the simple **habit** of **prayer**."

6-**Results** of their praying together:
--Prisoners heard them
--Earthquake frees them all (GOD HEARD THEM TOO)
--Prisoners assembled, but didn't flee
--Jailor is about to take his life
--Jailor wants to know **HOW** TO BE SAVED
--**Gospel** is **given** (16:31-32)
--BELIEVED and BAPTIZED (16:33-34)
--**Much rejoicing**

7-Prayer fellowship of two believers turned the tide and with the conversion of the Jailor & family, the Magistrate released these gospel preachers

8-PRAYER **HINGE**--Brought salvation to a household
--Brought a Church into being in Philippi
--Book of Philippians to us
--As well as **JOY** in the midst of a trying time

B.-Acts 28:14: (Paul, Silas & Luke on the Appian Way)

1-On the way to Rome in captivity for Paul's case to be heard and judged

2-Paul, Silas & Luke landed & **fellowshipped** in Puteoli for 7 days

3-BRETHREN FROM ROME

--Heard these 3 men were coming to Rome

--Came to meet them on the way

--Met at "THE THREE TAVERNS" on the Appian Way

** Taverns were the ancient inns

** Only place for travelers to stay

--Paul saw these brethren & their welcome

** **Thanked God** for them

** TOOK COURAGE from their fellowship

4-N.B.--Paul & his companions were encouraged **by their brethren, not** by anything gotten at the INN. In England I saw many of the Pubs with signs: "COURAGE INSIDE", indicating a popular brand of beer that they carried, called "COURAGE"

5-Courage for the Christian--**Not** from **alcoholic** drinks

--But from fellowship with the brethren

--**GREATS** like the Apostle Paul need encouragement

--**LESSER** BRETHREN also need for us to encourage them very often

--Don't fail to "**reach out**" to ENCOURAGE OTHERS

6-What a PRAYER TIME this intimate group of Christians must have had & what encouragement to both Paul's party and to these Roman Brethren as they welcomed Paul to Roman soil & to their fellowship

7-A **HINGE** OF PRAYER that brings an Apostle to Rome for the first time.

II.-PUBLIC PRAYERS **BY** THE **ASSEMBLED BODY:** (13 of them)

A.-**Related To Physical Things:** (4 cases)

1-Acts 3:1+..**Hour of Prayer** at the Temple in Jerusalem

3:1-11

--Peter & John were headed there because they had the **HABIT OF PRAYER**

--Secret of the power of the early Church

--Came upon a lame man & never got to the Prayer Mtg.

--Divinely arranged **INTERRUPTION** of schedule & plans

--**Acceptable reason** for missing Prayer Meeting; healing of both body & of spirit

--Not by the power of Peter & John that the miracles took place

--Rather as they "TOGETHER" (3:1) looked to Jesus(3:6)

--Healing **opened** this man's **heart** to the gospel & he was SAVED (3:16)

--**MANY OTHERS** (3:11-12) heard the gospel also because of this PRAYER HINGE

2-Acts 12:1-18...Peter's deliverance from prison & death

--MAJOR CRISIS TIME
  ** Herod kills James the brother of John (first Apostle to be martyred)
  ** Herod imprisons Peter intending to kill him too

--REACTION of the Jerusalem Church
  ** They called a PRAYER MEETING
  ** Acts 12:5
  ** May not even have been "Prayer Meeting Night", but they were used to being interrupted so as to PRAY

--Divine Deliverance (12:6-11)
  ** Angel awakens Peter & breaks his bonds
  ** Peter had to **do for himself** what was within his his own power (12:8)
  ** Safe deliverance out thru gates of prison
  ** Peter's confession & praise (12:11)

--Prayer Meeting **INTERRUPTION**
  ** Peter knew **WHERE** the saints would be and **WHAT** they would be doing (12:12)
  ** Knocking at door & Rhoda's reactions (12:13-14)
  ** Unbelieving believer's response (12:15)
  ** Peter keeps on knocking
  ** "They were astonished"
  ** "No small stir" at Herod's prison also

--HINGE Of Prayer led to
  ** Peter's release
  ** People's confidence in God thru prayer being answered
  ** Herod's death
  ** **Expansion** of the gospel testimony

--ILLUS--On one of his journies in Ethiopia, Dr. Thomas Lambie & his caravan were in camp. Suddenly a **forest fire** started, & it was apparent that the fire would soon surround them. Dr. Lambie shouted, "COME HERE, ALL OF YOU!! IT'S **TOO LATE** FOR TRYING **TO GET AWAY**."

The natives came to Dr. Lambie. Then he prayed: "All-loving Father, Thou seest our need. If it please Thee, deliver us from this fire that these men may see Thy power and prise Thy name. Hear us for Jesus sake. Amen."

The answer was a Heaven-sent **downpour**. It was the middle of the dry season & a rainstorm at that time was very unusual. When the natives saw the rain pouring down & the fire extinguished, they marveled. They talked about the downpour for days and said, "HOW GREAT GOD IS!"

3-Acts 16:16-24:(Exorcising the demon from the demon-possessed girl

--Demon possession is **REAL** among the **UNSAVED**
--More prevalent than many people know or would recognize
--Certainly **connected** with the "**BLACK ARTS**"
  ** Fortune Telling
  ** Astrology
  ** Ouija Boards
  ** Tarot cards
  ** Drug culture
  ** Seances & Mediums
  ** Satan worship
  ** Cultic gatherings
  ** NO CHRISTIAN ought to have ANY involvement with such
  ** Playing into demonic powers domain

--Demon possessed **girl knew** (thru the demon) **who** Paul & Silas were (16:17)
--**Exorcism** (16:18) led to her deliverance
--But also led to the preachers imprisonment
--Prayer may be **the HINGE** for one person's **relief** (from demon possession for the girl) and yet lead to other **difficulties** (16:19-24)
--Don't let that deter you----for God will bring out of your praying that which is BEST, as He did with Paul & Silas (16:25-40)

4-Acts **27:35: (Thanks** For **Food)**
---Paul has been on this ship with these people for some time
** Doubtless he'd been praying privately over his own food
** 1 Tim. 4:4-5--"For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer."
** But now Paul has come into PROMINENCE because of their terror of the storm & Paul's vision of deliverance
--**THEREFORE** now Paul **leads them all** in Public Prayer of thanks (27:35) for their food, even in the midst of great danger--------**AND** out of it came 27:36--"Then were they all of good cheer"
--Prayer was the HINGE of testimony concerning PHYSICAL THINGS
--ILLUS--Missionary to Thailand whose bearers on the trail thought he "always **took a nap**" before meals. Though they didn't understand prayer until they were saved, yet it was a testimony and they were respectful.

B.-Related To Spiritual Things; (4 of them)
1-Acts **8:15: (Samaritans** to receive the Holy Spirit)
--God gave the "KEYS OF THE KINGDOM" to Peter & the Apostles to open the door of faith:
** To JEWS on the day of Pentecost
** To SAMARITANS some time later
** To GENTILES at house of Cornelius
--**TRANSITION** situation then and **not "normative"** for today, for we no longer have any of the 12 Apostles living among us
--Peter prayed
--Samaritans **received** the Holy Spirit **Regeneration
** Baptizing
** Indwelling
** Sealing
--Prayer was a **HINGE** for the door of faith related to spiritual things, as well as physical things
2-Acts **16:12-15: (Lydia** converted at a Prayer Meeting)
--**Not enough men** for a synagogue in Philippi, so prayer was made at the river side
** This was a regular place & practice
** WOMEN were more prominent than men
--Paul, Silas, Luke & Timothy joined them **to "speak"** the gospel

--Lydia's **conversion** ** "heard us"
** "heart the Lord opened"
** "attended unto the things which were spoken"
** "baptized"

--**Characteristics**--Open HEARING
Open HEART
Open HONORING
Open HOUSE

--**How??** Because of being in the **PLACE** of prayer at the **TIME** of prayer

3-Acts **20:36**: (Prayer With **Ephesian Elders**)

--Could be classified as related to **CHURCH LIFE** and so could our next one

--However, I'll list it as related to **SPIRITUAL THINGS**, because the specific content of the prayer is not disclosed

--This prayer does have **some peculiarities**, however:

** Follows **Paul's warning** of the Ephesian Elders about attacks on the Church from **WITHIN** and from **WITHOUT**

** Also told them he **didn't expect to see them again**

--No wonder they were **driven TOGETHER to their knees**

--ILLUS--Sir Walter Raleigh once made a request of the Queen and she petulently answered, "Raleigh, **when will you leave off begging**?"

Sir Walter Raleigh replied, "When your Majesty leaves off giving."......and his **request** was **granted**. Praise the Lord that the God of all grace never grows weary of our asking and never rebukes us for coming!

4-Acts **21:3-6**: (Prayer **with believers** at **Tyre**)

--Again we arbitrarily place this one under the "SPIRITUAL THINGS" category

--**Ship lands** at Tyre & Paul **seeks out** the **believers**

--**DO WE DO THAT** whenever we come to a strange or new place??

--We ought to!!!!!!

--**Downfall of many** is that when away from "home port" they **VACATION FROM GOD**

--Paul is again warned not to go to Jerusalem

--At end of their stay they all **kneeled** down & **prayed** together (21:5)

** Touching and beautiful scene

** **But** SOMETHING IS **WRONG**!!!

** Prayer is not the right thing in the face of Divine guidance

** **OBEDIENCE** is what is proper now

** No amount of prayer will compensate for a deliberate determination to do one's own will

--So, here's a prayer **HINGE** that doesn't turn, for no amount of praying will justify disobedience to the known will of God.

C. Related To Church Life: (5 of them)

1-Acts **1:12-26**: (Matthias chosen)

--1:14 sets the "tone" of those days between Ascension of Christ and the day of Pentecost

** "ALL"
** "continued"==indicates their pattern & practice
** "with one accord in prayer & supplication"
** "With the women...& with His brethren"
** PRECIOUS TIME OF PRAYER PREPARATION for the days of spiritual outreach ahead

--Peter speaks of a need for a replacement for Judas
** To make up the full number of THE JEWISH TWELVE apostles
** Qualifications
++ Companied with Christ and the other apostles during days from Christ's baptism onward
++ Eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ
** Two were selected as "QUALIFIED CANDIDATES"
++ Joseph called Barsabas, surnamed Justus
++ Matthias
++ Equally qualified from a human viewpoint

--"THEY PRAYED" (1:24) and cast the matter into the hands of their Omnipotent God, Who controlled the lot and Matthias was "numbered with the eleven"

--Prayer was the HINGE on which this first major decision of the infant Church was turned

2-Acts 4:23-31: (Prayer for boldness to witness)
--Aftermath of Jewish leaders prohibition (4:18)
--Threatened them & let them go
--CRISIS drives the believers to UNITED PUBLIC PRAYER
** Note their view of God (4:24b-28)
** SPECIFIC requests:
++ BOLDNESS (4:29)
++ Confirming SIGNS (4:30)
--Answer was immediate after prayer
** Acts 4:31
** Power of God in their midst
** Power of God in their BOLD WITNESS
--How we need such a praying and empowering for the Church in our day
--Maybe it will take A PERSECUTION on us to make us cry out for Divine enabling to witness with boldness
** That's what it took in N.T. times
** That's what it took in Korea
** It need not be so if we'd personally and UNITEDLY ask God----and believe that He hears and answers prayer

--ILLUS--Some years ago a number of people went to a country church to pray for rain. There had been no rain for many weeks. The fields were parched and dry. When the people came to the church to pray, only one little girl brought an umbrella.

The girl said, "Why, I thought we came to ask God to send us rain, so I figured I'd need my umbrella

BEFORE THE SERVICE ENDED, the rain fell. The little girl was the only one who kept dry on the way home. She had expected God to hear and answer their prayer----and He DID. She was prepared for the answer

3-Acts 6:6: (Ordination Of Deacons)
--Certainly a time for seeking Divine aid
** In choosing such men to serve
** In publicly setting them apart to their office
** AND throughout the years of their labors
** Often a THANKLESS TASK, but we need to stand with spiritual men over physical affairs by continuing prayer in their behalf
--Result of this prayer HINGE----Acts 6:7

4-Acts 13:3: (Missionary Ordination or Commissioning)
--CALL OF GOD for outreach
** Comes IN the Church to those already busy serving faithfully (13:1)
** Comes TO the Church to free these called of God and to encourage & support them (13:2)
** Comes THRU the Church to participate in the going of those called for missionary service
--HOW?? ** Fasting (Sacrifice of own desires)
** Prayer
** Laying on of hands (identification with them)
** Sending them away SUPPORTED
--Integral to this missionary outreach is the practice of prayer
** Matt. 9:36-38
** In the call
** In the sending
** In the sustaining
** These are the prayer responsibility of the WHOLE CHURCH

5-Acts 14:23: (Ordination Of Elders)
--Spiritual leaders over spiritual affairs
--Always a plurality in every local church
** "ELDERS" relates to their MATURITY in faith
** "BISHOP" relates to their ministry of OVERSIGHT and shepherding care
** Part of what makes a Church in God's sight is that there be duly ordained LAY LEADERSHIP
--How set apart?? ** "Ordained"==Designated by the stretching out of the hand(==Voted upon)
** Prayer
** Fasting
** "Commended them to the Lord"
--Part of the congregation's responsibility & privilege:
** To choose their leaders
** To install their leaders with prayer
** To follow their leaders with prayer & cooperation
--Once again a HINGE of prayer!!

6-ILLUS--Five young college students, before their ordination to the ministry, spent Sunday in London a hundred years ago. They were eager to hear some well-know preachers in churches other than their own, and they found their way to SPURGEON'S TABERNACLE.

While waiting for the doors to open a stranger came up to them and said: "GENTLEMEN, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE HEATING APPARATUS OF THE CHURCH?"

They were not particularly anxious to do so on a broiling day in July, but consented. They were taken down some steps, and a door was thrown open and their guide whispered, "THERE, MEN, IS OUR HEATING APPARATUS".

They saw before them 700 souls bowed in prayer seeking a blessing on the service about to be held in the tabernacle above. Their unknown guide was Spurgeon himself, Are you surprised that Spurgeons sermons are still circulated?

CONCLUSION:

A.-"PRAYER----HINGE OF HISTORY":

1-Obviously true, as we've seen from Acts, the experience book of the N.T.

2-Three kinds of prayer--PERSONAL (9 times)
--CLOSE FELLOWSHIP (2 times)
--CORPORATE & PUBLIC (13 times)

3-Balance of all 3 kinds is needed

4-Dare not neglect any of these 3 categories

5-A. W. Pink--"It is the CRISES OF LIFE which reveal the secrets of our hearts & make it manifest whether we are really new creatures in Christ or merely whitewashed worldlings." (Elijah, P. 182)

6-Of saul as a converted man it was said by God of him: "BEHOLD, HE PRAYETH"

7-Do you have that same testimony?????

B.-Your Prayer Life:

1-ILLUS--Suppose I go into a Wells Fargo bank and there I see a sign that reads: "If you present any checks according to our rules, we will cash them." That is a SENSIBLE ANNOUNCEMENT.....But suppose I step to the cashier's window with a check made out for a hundred dollars and ask for 5 $20's in cash.

The teller looks at me and at my signature and says: "Do you have an account in this bank?" I would answer: "NO--but I want you to know that I sincerely believe in cashing checks."

Such folly would speedily land me out on the sidewalk----or in the hands of a policeman. It is not enough to believe in cashing checks; it is necessary to have an account in the bank.

It is not enough to pray in the name of the Lord Jesus; there must be the TRUE DEPOSIT OF SAVING FAITH. You can draw on this deposit of faith, if you are asking in the Spirit. If He is praying within you, with groanings that cannot be uttered, then you may be sure your prayer will be answered.

If you are merely asking for something so that you may consume the gift of the answer on your own desires, you may be sure that God will not answer such a prayer.

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

2-Do you have an account in the Bank of Heaven thru faith in the Lord Jesus Christ???
- --If so, draw on it by prayer
- --Become characterized by your personal and your close-fellowship praying
- --Others will know you're a christian
  - ** Prayers over your food
  - ** Talking of answered prayer
  - ** Reflection of the presence of Christ will be seen in your speech and your life

3-What if you have no "account" with God in the Bank of heaven??
- --You can have!!
- --The price has been fully paid
- --The provision of eternal life is available to you as it is for ALL MANKIND
- --Part of the "PACKAGE" of blessings and privileges that you receive when you personally trust the Savior
- --WON'T YOU be born again right now by asking Jesus Christ to save you?

Acts 4:13-31

Acts 12:1-18

Westbrae--2/3/74--#374--"Take Time To Be Holy"
--#381--"'Tis The Blessed Hour Of Prayer"
--#384--"What A Friend We Have In Jesus"

2/10/74 — # 341 "I Gave My Life For Thee"
378 "The Beautiful Garden Of Prayer"
346 — "His Way With Thee"

Lookout Bapt. Ch — April + May 1984

EXPLAINING THE MIRACLE Acts 3:12--4:4

INTRO: A.-Explanation Was Necessary:

1-Second time for Peter
--Day of Pentecost (Acts 2)
--Healing of lame man (Acts 3)
--NOT the last time he'd have to explain a MIRACLE

2-Content of the scene
--2 Apostles headed for prayer (3:1)
--Alms asked by lame man
--"Such as I have, give I thee"
--Healing of body & SALVATION of the soul!
--Glorifying of God

3-Opportunity for preaching
--CROWD ATTRACTED thru healing
--Crowd "jumped to conclusions"
--Only exercise some people get is JUMPING to conclusions
--Thought PETER & JOHN had some miraculous power

4-Magnificent testimony given — 3:8-10

5-Jewish "flavor" of the scene
--In Jerusalem
--In the Temple grounds
--With local Jews, not a feast-time crowd as Ch.2
--Addressed thru "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers..."
--Speaks in terms of SEVEN O. T. DESIGNATIONS of God's Son and Redeemer
--Jewish hope--"That your sins may be blotted out" (From Pentiitential Psalm # 51)
--Promise of ALL the prophets (3:24)

B.-Recap Of The Scene:

1-The Beggar
2-The Messengers
3-The Believer--A CHANGED MAN
--His task was 3-fold
**Bear witness by a changed life
**Bear witness by open lips
**Get a crowd to hear the preaching
--HE fulfilled his tasks
--How are we doing on ours? ? ? ?— OUR TASK is exactly the same!

I.-EXPLANATION OF THE MIRACLE (3:12-16):

A.-Questions Asked (3:12):

1-Two of them--"Why marvel ye at this man?"
--"Why look on us...?"

2-First question is strange---"WHY MARVEL YE AT THIS MAN?"
--Why not marvel?
--Out of the ordinary!
--Great & wonderful transformation
--Appeal is to "YE MEN OF ISRAEL"
--THEIR heritage as related to God should have made them live in the realm of the supernatural every day ! !

- BUT, they marveled
- Forgetful of their past HISTORY OF MIRACLES
- Proof that they had strayed from their spiritual heritage

3-Second Question is personal--"WHY LOOK YE ON US...?"
- Not the SOURCE of power
- Just the CHANNEL
- Not by our power
- Not by our holiness
- BUT BY HIS !!!!
- We're not the issue
- He Is !

4-A miracle------surely!
- But it is from ABOVE, !
- Not from WITHIN

B.-Contrasts Shown (3:13-15):

1-You and God
- You delivered Him up
- God glorified Him

2-You and Pilate
- You denied Him
- Pilate wanted to let Him go

3-Jesus OR Barabbas--You denied the Holy One; the Just
- You desired instead a murderer
- You killed the Prince of life
- You freed a confessed killer

4-BUT--God raised Him up
- God had the last word
- God provides His witnesses
  - ** Apostles
  - ** Healed man
- God shows Israel's true state of heart thru their own actions contrasted with His actions
- THEY ARE LOST !

C.-Person Clarified (3:16):

1-Not by us, but by HIM

2-Faith unites us to Him

3-"MENTION MY NAME" is the KEY !!
- Power in a name
- "Name Dropper"
- Acts 4:12

Getting a job
Getting a favor
Getting an Academy appointment

4-Glorious Name--SEVEN FORMS HERE
- Servant of God (3:13)
- Holy One (3:14)
- Just or Righteous One (3:14)
- Prince, or Originator of life (3:15)
- Christ (Messiah) of God (3:18)
- The Prophet (3:22)
- Seed of Abraham (3:25)

5-WHO fulfills this?
- "Jesus" does, acc. to 3:13
- Phs. 2:9-11-"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted

Him, and given Him a Name which is above every Name: that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

--Acts 13:39--"And by Him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

--Jn. 16:23--"And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you."

6-"Accepted in the Beloved"---HIS NAME IS NOW OURS !

7-ILLUS.--Powerful engine. Loaded cars. No movement or departure as they stand, for they are separate. Must couple together the power and the load. Like 2 great hands, they must clasp each other.

Now the Engine and the cars make ONE GREAT WHOLE. No one supposes that the coupling pulls the load. Even a child knows that it is the engine that does so.....YET THE COUPLING UNITES the power and the load.

Just so, FAITH in His wonderful power and Name COUPLES US to Him who is able to save us and bear our load.

8-Only Christ meets the needs of--the lame beggar
--the timid disciples
--the audience there that day
--of us

Faith must have a SUFFICIENT OBJECT

9-We have stumbled at the simplicity of it. We have lacked faith because we have lacked simplicity.

II.-EXHORTATION TO THE MULTITUDE (3:17-19):

A.-Commuted Sentence (3:17):

1-Normally to die without mercy for MURDER

2-Change of charge--Due to Christ's prayer
--Lk. 23:34--"Then said Jesus, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."
--God here answers that prayer

3-Mosaic Law--allowed for sins of ignorance
--Lev. 4:2--"Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done....
--IF they were acknowledged by the bringing of a Trespass Offering, they were forgiven

4-Sentence commuted--From Murder
--To MANSLAUGHTER

5-What tenderness & mercy
--3:17--"And now, brethren, I know that thru ignorance ye did it..."
--Announcement made by Peter
--HE had DENIED the Lord
--He had been FORGIVEN
--Now he announces that PARDON is available to them as well

--ILLUS--Said of many that they preach on HELL as if they rejoiced to see men go there
--Said of D. L. Moody that he never preached on HELL without tears in his eyes.

B.-Prophecies Fulfilled (3:18):
1-Responsibility--Man is accountable
--Who is involved?
--Acts 4:27--"For of a truth against thy holy Servant Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod, & Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, & the people of Israel were gathered together."
Clear Answer
2-By means of MAN's actions, GOD fulfills His purposes & prophecies
3-Messiah--Not only to reign
--But also to SUFFER
--1 Pet. 1:11--"...the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow."

C.-Pardon Offered (3:19):
1-POEM---"Great God of wonders, all Thy ways
Are matchless, godlike and divine;
But the fair glories of Thy grace
More godlike and unrivalled shine:
Who is a pardoning God like Thee?
Or who has grace so rich and free?"
2-Repentance======"Change of heart and mind"
3-Conversion====="Turn about of life"
4-Conversion and Repentance
--Must go together
--Acts 20:21--"Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, REPENTANCE toward God, and FAITH toward our Lord Jesus Christ."
--Not a genuine salvation without both
5-THEN sins are blotted out.....and only then !
6-Refreshing will come thus
7-Requires a DECISION

III.-THE EXPECTATION OF THE MESSIAH (3:19-26):

A.-Conditions (3:19-21):
1-Repentance AND Conversion
2-Refreshing & Return are contingent
3-Christ's return depends upon Jewish repentance
--At present, He's waiting in heaven
--Stays there until Church is complete
--And Israel repents
4-Restitution--of THINGS, not PERSONS
--No "second chance" after death
--Of nation & land, not a second salv. opportunity
--Restitution is limited by the specific promises of God's Word.

B.-Prophetic Announcements (3:22-24):

1-Began with Moses

2-Continued--By Samuel
--And ALL the Prophets

3-Centers in Christ
--To be heard
--To be obeyed
--Obey in ALL THINGS — "WHATSOEVER"
--3:22
--Jn. 2:5--"Whatsoever He sayeth unto you, do it."
--Jn. 15:14--"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."
--Col. 3:17--"And whatosever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him."

4-Alternative to Obedience.....
.....DESTRUCTION (3:23)

5-Messianic expectation
--Not cancelled
--Rom.11:1--"I say then, Hath God cast away His people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew."
--G. Campbell MORGAN--"We speak of it as a second advent, but it will be the first advent in which He will be received by His own people. If I am asked if I believe that what Peter expected will be so, without any hesitation, I say 'YES'. I do not think Israel is a lost and abandoned nation. I believe that Israel is to be found and gathered together. It is because I so believe that I cannot accept any theory that robs Israel of its present living identity, and merges it in some other nation. Israel will yet repent and turn to Him, and He will blot out their sins. Until this time there has been no repentance of Israel; but there will be a day of repentance, and a day of turning to Him." (ACTS, P. 113)
--Contingent upon NATIONAL REPENTANCE
--This is the key
--THEN all Israel shall be saved (Rom. 11:26)

C.-Jewish Need And Jewish Primacy:

1-Need--Children of the prophets
--Children of the covenants
--In the line of the promises
--YET.....THEY WERE LOST !!!!
--Used as an argument for infant baptism
--That's no help
--Here said to be LOST !

2-Primacy--first to receive the gospel
--Historically this has been true
--Chronologically this has been fulfilled
--But not perpetually to be "first"
--Acts 13:46--"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, & said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."
--Acts 28:28--"Be it known therefore unto you, that

the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."

3-The Lord's coming as Messiah to Israel is contingent upon a NATIONAL repentance and conversion

4-Zech. 12:11--13:1

CONCLUSION: A.-Miracles:

1-Not by us

2-But thru us

3-Power is in God alone

4-HE CHANGES LIVES by.....changing HEARTS

B.-Message:

1-Attention (3:12)

2-Instruction (3:13-24)

3-Application (3:25-26) on the basis of 3:19

4-Decision (4:1-4)

--MANY of them heard the call of the Word of God and they believed.

--HAVE YOU?

--Why not today?

--Same message today

** Repentance toward sin

** Conversion from sin thru faith in Christ as YOUR TRESPASS OFFERING

5-Do it NOW

--ILLUS--Two grounded vessels caught on a sand bar and as the tide lowered, they both keeled over. Then, far out the tide began to turn and the waves rose higher and higer as they passed under both ships.

One vessel's captain took immediate action and advantage in the few moments of highest tide, and freed his ship, and passed out the narrow inlet.

The captain of the other vessel hadn't been alert, and within a few moments it was too late, and his ship missed its opportunity of escape.

May we not miss God's tide of opportunity NOW

--To delay may be to miss God's tide of opportunity in our time of need.

6-Promise is sure

--To the beggar who was changed

--That Christ will come

--That there can be a change--A MIRACLE--in you

--3:26

--Alternative--Jn. 8:24--"...if ye believe not that I am from above, ye shall die in your sins."

7-Believers--Children of privilege have responsibilities too

--This is a message to the Church too

--POEM--

next page

POEM--

"Let all that look for, hasten
The coming joyful day,
By earnest consecration,
To walk the narrow way;
By gathering in the lost ones
For whom our Lord did die,
For the crowning day that's coming by and by."

Westbrae--9/26/65

Hymns: Come Thou Almighty King
Near The Cross
Look To The Lamb Of God

"SUCH AS I HAVE"

Acts 3:1-11 (Read 1-26)
Heb. 10:19-22a

INTRO:

A.-The Men (3:1):

1-Peter--Practical man
--Doer of deeds

John--Poet
--Dreamer of dreams

2-Personal details of these two
--Probably about the same age (contrary to artist's pictures)
--Friends from their youth upward
--Partners as fishermen on Sea of Galilee
--Shared in looking for the "Consolation of Israel"
--Receivers of John's baptism
--Fellow disciples of Jesus Christ
--Commissioned as Apostles by the Lord
--Sent together to prepare the Passover
--Went together to the palace of the High Priest
--Comforted each other after the crucifixion
--Went together to the empty tomb
--The eager affection which, now more strongly than ever, bound the two together is seen in Peter's question, "LORD, WHAT SHALL THIS MAN DO?" (Jn.21:21)
--NOW they are again sharers in the action

3-"Now Peter & John went up together into the Temple..."
--"Together"--secret of the early church
--Temple--early in church age; transitional
--ONENESS in the House of God is imperative.
("together")

B.-The Habit:

1-"Habit"--is a word usually connoting something bad
--not so here
--HABIT of corporate prayer is GOOD
--Peter & John had it — CHARACTERIZED THEM

2-Prayer--Part of the Church's life (2:44)
--Part of their lives (3:1)
--Regularity of prayer
--Togetherness for prayer
--Power of the church
--Spiritual men are characterized by prayer in God's House
--Intended to be ON TIME, but providentially detained! — The only acceptable excuse

Spiritual men are REGULARLY in God's House for prayer

3-

C.-The Interruption:

1-How do we look at interruptions?
--As inconveniences
--OR as God's appointments? — Divinely ordained opportunities

2-Lame man was missed in the 3½ years of Christ's ministry

3-First recorded miracle THRU Apostles
--Acts 1:1
--Acts 2:43
--Acts 3:12, 16

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

I.-THE BEGGAR (3:2-3):

A.-Sinner's Condition (3:2a):
1-Helpless--Rom. 3:10-12

2-Lame--From birth
--40 years he'd been this way (4:22)
--Not by accident
--Not because of sin
--But from BIRTH
--Ps. 51:5--"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."
--Eph. 2:1-3--"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherin in time past ye walked according to the course of the world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; & were by nature the children of wrath even as others."
--ILLUS---Mephibosheth (2 Sam. 4:4)
Injured in THE FALL

3-"A certain man"--No name given
--Illustrative of all "lame men"
--See in him God's view of the WHOLE RACE
--"Lame" & unable to stand before God
--Eph. 2:12--"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, & strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

B.-Sinner's Position (3:2b):
1-OUTSIDE the Temple
--Conspicuous by his PLACE
--Conspicuous by his CONDITION
--Unable to go in
--Unable to render acceptable worship
2-BROUGHT to the Temple
--By interested friends
--NEAR, but not saved
--Mk. 12:34--"...thou art not far from the kingdom"
3-Cooperation--THEY may bring
--HE must choose
--Reminds of Mk. 2:3--"And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four"
--Or of Jn. 1:42--"And he brought him to Jesus"

Personal Decision must be HIS VERY OWN

C.-Sinner's Occupation:(3:3):
1-Asked an alms == an offering
--Concerned with temporal things
--Occupied with this world
--Worms-eye view
--Sought an ANESTHESIA to deaden the pain of facing hell
--Begged in a lucrative place
2-BUT--Money hadn't helped for 40 years
--Money only sustained him in his disability
--Needed a CURE ! !

Need is for more than welfare; or for Social Improvement; Need is for CHRIST!

3-Looked to Christians for help — They are CHANGED People
--WHERE ELSE?
--Who else cares? (Liberals feign interest / Socialists claim concern) BUT w/o Love + INVOLVEMENT
--Message, not means was the answer he needed
--Something to believe, not something to put in stomach
--Liberals today--"New conditions will make new men"
--Apostolic Church--"New men will make new conditions"
--ROPER--Education and social advance without the gospel of Christ will only make the heathen more enlightened & more debased — BIAFRA is an example.
--ILLUS--England was saved from ruin & revolution such as swept France in the time of the Industrial Revolution by the preaching of the gospel by John Wesley.

Some are INVOLVED, but w/o a power dynamic to CHANGE men's hearts

ZAIRE, NIGERIA

4-REDEEMING GOSPEL--Not a social gospel
--Not a political gospel
--Not a racial gospel
--Not a garbled gospel
--But the simple, true good news of redemption thru faith in Christ's shed blood

- Open Housing
- Racial Balance
- Slum Clearance
- School Bussing
- Pollution control

5-Only let the church not get sidetracked. Let her remember that she has a BIGGER JOB to do than to merely be a charitable almshouse. Let us not neglect the BEST for the LESSER

- FIRST BUSINESS of the Ch. is the spiritual needs of man
- All else is SECONDARY

II.-THE MESSENGERS (3:4-7):

A.-Their Selves (3:4):

1-Channels for divine grace, not its source
--3:6
--3:12
--3:16

Compassion

2-Hearts moved by sight of lame man's condition of need

3-"LOOK ON US"--Man glancing at each who passed by
--Only a lingering glance to each
--ILLUS--A HITCH-HIKER at the passing cars only glances at each, until the "word" of screeching brakes draws his attention in a special way
--Such words become an invitation to CLOSE scrutiny
--1 Cor. 4:16--"Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me."

We're AMBASSADORS not SECRET AGENTS

4-Can WE so invite?--2 Cor. 5:20--"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."
--Jn. 14:12--"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father."
--YES, we too can be MESSENGERS for Christ

IN FACT, if people are to HEAR, to BELIEVE + be saved..... we must

FIRST + LAST witness-themes of Christ to His own
- MK. 1:17
- Acts 1:8
- Father we are fishers of men
- not we're not following

B.-Their Gift (3:5-6a):

1-Beggar is expectant

2-Explanation--"Such as I have"=="What I have"

--Not a depreciation of the message of Christ

--But an evaluation of its worth

--Rom. 1:16--"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

--Not money as their gift, but something much better

--2 Cor. 6:10--"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich..."

I Tim. 6:10 - "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, + pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

--ILLUS---Peter did not have so much as a silver dime. Apparently he had not collected the apostolic revenue as his "successors" have done. "You see", said Pope Innocent IV to St. Thomas Aquinas as he sat before piles of money, "You see, Thomas, that the Church cannot now say as the Primitive Church did, 'Silver and gold have I none.'"

"Yes, holy father," replied Thomas, "but neither can she say, as did St. Peter to the crippled man, 'ARISE AND WALK.'"

3-Peter was not willing to support him IN BEGGARY & impotence

4-Gospel can deliver FROM both

5-Not MONEY, but LIFE is given — NO LASTING HELP in a dole system of welfare

6-Peter was not one whit poorer after this "giving"

7-GEORGE APPIA--"The gospel is strange merchandise. The more you export, the more remains----Increase is by distribution----As with the feeding of the 5 thousand."

NB

PATTERN of the Early Church

Acts 8:4

Acts 8:1 — ALL, except Apostles

w/o witnessing we are FAILURES

C.-Their Daring Words (3:6b):

1-"In the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, rise up & walk"

--ALL they have centers here

--Acts 4:10-12

--PHYSICAL evidence of a COMPLETE change — "this man to walk"

2-Cooperation--Christ; the power

--Peter & John; the compassion

--Beggar; the response of faith

3-Peter "met him where he was"

--willing to help

--encouraged his faith

--authoritative message

--"The Bible as it is for men as they are"

Only message that can CHANGE men!

4-A MIRACLE took place ! !

I believe in God - wrought miracles in the lives of men.

Do You?

III.-THE BELIEVER (3:8-11, 16):

A.-New Position (3:7-8a):

1-Strength received--not from inside; no divine spark

--but from outside

--miracle was instantaneous

--miracle was complete

2-"Stood on his feet--NOW can walk before God

--Not to be saved IN their sins, but FROM

--Not subsidizing his incapacity, but CURING IT !

3-"Feet"--Same root as "base" or "basis"
--Peter, in the name of Jesus, did a BASIC work for this lame man
--Not superficially, but dynamically changed
--Not feeding his impotence, but freeing from impotenc
--Phs. 4:13---literally translated

4-ILLUS--When the great Scottish preacher Andrew Bonar died in Scotland, one of his converts and great admirers despaired of being able to continue to walk as a Christian, deprived of the help of his godly Pastor. He began walking thru Kelvingrove Park, where many nurse-maids bring their babies under their care for the daily walk.

Now in those days many Christian parents named children after the godly and greatly beloved minister. Just as the despairing christian passed a baby-buggy carrying twins, the nurse-maid in charge said peremptorily to 1 of the little tots, "DON'T LEAN ON ANDREW BONAR".....It proved a message from God to him.

Don't lean on human influences!
Lean on the Lord alone !!
Illus--Acts 8:39-40

B.-New Condition:
ENTRANCE.
1-Has access now
2-Heb. 10:19-22a--"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new & living way which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; LET US DRAW NEAR..."
3-No longer dead, but alive unto God
4-Verbs of ACTION--3:8
--leaping
--stood
--walked
--entered
--praising
--at the time when the temple was full at the hour of prayer
5-New life does follow salvation
--2 Cor 5:17
--If no experience, then
--DOUBTFUL if there has been salvation
--Do you have a "new experience" & a new song since you profess to have been redeemed?
--His LIFE WAS CHANGED!

THE QUESTION

Is Yours?

C.-New Occupation:
1-Doubtless went on to a new JOB, but this was incidental
2-Occupation--Worshipped God; Knew where to go after salvat'n
--Praised God; Knew Who to thank
--Thankfulness; Evidence of a SPIRITUAL change as well as a PHYSICAL healing
**Lk. 17:11-19
**Acts 12:11
--Testimony;**All the people saw & knew
**It was the changed man who got the crowd that Peter preached to
**This is what YOU can do.
**God expects this as a ministry of yours

CONCLUSION:

A.-Let's Tend To Our Business:

1-God-Given Opportunity----LAME MEN

--Asking charity
--Needing deliverance
--Dare not sustain them in their disability
--Still OUTSIDE the Temple & without the gospel

2-God-Given Gift----------SAVING CHRIST; "In the Name"

--Not an apologetic answer given here
--Invest our time & energy & money in SPIRITUAL enterprises that will pay off
--Pragmatic questions **Does it reach souls???
**Does it build lives???
**Does it establish churches???
--Evaluate your involvements in this light

NB

3-God-Given Method--------LOOK ON US

(a)--COOPERATION:

--Not in OUR Name, but in HIS Name
--With some who might have irritated us before conversion, or without the Spirit permeating our lives for Christ
--"Lone wolf" & "free-lance" is not in the will of God
--LOCAL CHURCH IS!!!! NB! - GOD'S ORG.

(b)--CONTACT:

--May God give us such personal purity as to be able to say "Look on us"
--Must BE a witness to back up a verbal witness of the lips
--Peter & John went to him in his need
**Thousands are lonely
**Thousands are needy
**Thousands can be won
**BUT, it will take the privation & sacrifice necessary to establish CONTACT for Christ
**We need to CIRCULATE beyond our 6 or 7 friends & their families
**Weary world is not impressed because we are here, but will be if we go to them

Go where the Fish are to be found

(c)--CONTINUATION:

--Christ is gone
--Christ's work is not gone
--His work continues----------in the church - HIS CHURCH
--People marvelled then
--Do they marvel in our community?
--Jn. 14:12--"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to my Father."

B.-Such As I Have:

1-Will you RECEIVE it today? Not money — But THE GIFT OF GOD

2-Will you SHARE it each day? — TELL OTHERS as you were also told.

Hymns: Beneath The Cross Of Jesus 57
Prelim: At Whatever You Go - 388
Channels Only - 387

Weather - 9/19/65 Sept 72

"PRAYER----HINGE OF HISTORY" (Part I) Acts 10:1-22
Jude 20-23

Part II filed under Acts 4:13-31

INTRO:

Contact:

A.-Dr. Brock--"KEEP ON KEEPING ON"
1-Message of last Sunday
2-Closed with the "HOW" to do that in the face of widespread apostasy:
--Building up yourself on your most holy faith (Jude 20a)
--Praying in the Spirit (Jude 20b)
--Keep yourselves in the love of God (Jude 21a)
--Compassion/Evangelism (Jude 22-23
3-From this we would see that prayer is an **essential** ingredient in the Christian's spiritual well-being
4-W. W. Ayer--"The quickest way to get a Church **on its feet** is to get it **on its knees**."

B.-Confirmation In The Book Of Acts:
1-Experience book of the N.T. describing the Christian life as it was then
2-**Acts 2**--Gospel preached (2:14-40)
--Salvation decisions (2:41a)
--Water baptism (2:41b)
--Continued Steadfastly (2:42-45)
** Apostle's doctrine
** Fellowship (Community life ++LOVE ++RESPECT ++OPENNESS
** Breaking of Bread
** **PRAYERS**
** Giving
3-Again a constituent part of N. T. Christianity is **PRAYER**!!
4-Recently **I heard** that Acts has **18 occasions** of prayer and that each is a "HINGE" to development of the Church--Partly true, for prayer seems to have been a real "HINGE OF HISTORY" in the development of the Church in its life and witness
--Partly **inaccurate**, for I found **24 occasions** of prayer ** 9 cases of PERSONAL, PRIVATE prayer
** 2 cases of CLOSE FELLOWSHIP PRAYERS
** 13 cases of PUBLIC PRAYERS by the assembled body of the saints
5-Certainly, we'll see that prayer is a **VITAL, VIBRANT** part of the daily life of the Christian both individually and corporately
6-Moreover, we'll also see
--Prayer was often the **HINGE** OF HISTORY that opened the door to spheres of larger service for the Ch.
--**Absence of prayer** would be devastating to a Christian's life ** Personal & private
** Intimate with close friends
** Public with the Church Body
** **ALL** & **EACH** are vitally important!!
7-Oswald Smith--"When **we work**, we work; when **we PRAY**,

GOD WORKS!"

C.-Message:

1-Outline: I.-PERSONAL PRAYERS In The Book Of Acts:
II.-CLOSE FELLOWSHIP PRAYERS In The Book Of Acts:
III.-CORPORATE BODY PRAYERS In The Book Of Acts:
(Next Message)----Acts 4:13-31

2-Prop:--Learn about prayer in the life of the power-characterized Church of the New Testament and determine that such a pattern will characterize our lives and our church!

INT- what kinds of prayers?

I.-PERSONAL PRAYERS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS:

A.-Acts 6:1-5a, 7:

1-Problem in the Church over Greek-speaking Jewish widows
2-Choose men of the Church to look after this & other mundane affairs
3-Apostles had other priorities
4-Acts 6:4
5-Not that they wouldn't do other things, but that the would **not be diverted** to majoring on minors
6-The saying pleased the whole multitude
7-PROGRESS REPORT--Acts 6:7
--**Quit "ADDING"** to the Church and **gone to "MULTIPLYING"**
8-Samuel Chadwick:--"Satan dreads nothing in the world so much as prayer."

B.-Acts 7:59-60:

1-Consummation of **Stephen's** Spirit-filled address to the Council of Israel where he has recounted God's dealings with the nation of Israel & their failure to respond in faith thru the centuries
2-**CONVICTION** sets in--**7:54**
3-**Stoned him** without a trial--7:57-59a
4-Stephen **prays**--**7:59-60**
--In the midst of the mob, but this was a PERSONAL, PRIVATE prayer
--Called on God **to receive** his spirit (7:59)
--Asked God **to forgive** his persecutors (7:60)
5-**What answers?**
--"He fell asleep" (Absent from the body; present with the Lord"
--Chapters 8 & 9 describe the conversion of Saul (7:58) & it has been well said that we **owe** the conversion of Saul to the **prayer of Stephen**
--TURNING POINT !!
6-W. T. McLean--"When you come to the end of your rope, **tie a prayer knot** and **hang on.**"

C.-Acts 8:18-24:

1-Simon Magus has seen Samaritan believers receive the Holy Spirit at the ministration of John & Peter:
--**TRANSITION** condition then
--Not the "**norm**" for the history of the Church

THEN → --Opening the "door of faith" to mixed-blooded Samaritans required the KEYS OF THE KINGDOM
--**Now** an instantaneous receiving of the Spirit at our moment of salvation

2-Simon Magus wants to **BUY** that power for himself
--Heart condition now seen
--In the company of the saved ones
--Touched by the truth
--BUT **NOT SAVED** !!
--"Thy **heart** is **not right** with God" (8:21)
--Not my judgment, but that of the Holy Spirit

3-**Peter warns** Simon Magus--8:22-23
--**Repentance** in the heart NEEDED!
--Prayer on the lips
--Peter uses δεησις, which is a word for prayer which means **to show great need**

8:24
4-Simon's response--**Fear** & **sorrow** are evident
--Wants Peter to pray for him
--**BUT** there is **no repentance** of heart

5-Therefore there is NO TURNING POINT, though the opportunity was presented

6-Matthew Henry--"If we would have God hear what we say to Him in prayer, we must be ready to hear what He saith to us by His Word."

D.-Acts 9:11:

1-**Conversion** experience of Saul **recounted** in 9:1-9
--CONVERSION (9:5-6a)—"Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"
--CONSECRATION (9:6b)—"Arise + go"
--COMMUNION (9:9-11)—Time to think, pray + be prepared.

2-Ananias--Disciple at Damascus
--Called of the Lord to service
--Sent to the house where Saul was
--**Reassured** that Saul was **really saved** by:
"BEHOLD, HE PRAYETH" (9:11)

3-Prayer in a believer--**Evidence** of the new life
--As necessary to Christian experience as breathing is to physical health
--Prayer is HUMAN **NEED** reaching up for DIVINE **HELP**
!--Right from the time of the new Birth onward
--Not reserved for the "mature"
*--**How** will you **learn** to pray??????????
--B Y P R A Y I N G, that's how!!
--Just as a child learns to walk **by** **WALKING**

4-**TURNING POINT** in Saul's life is seen in him now as a child of God at prayer

5-ILLUS--In a certain West African village the native Christians had **no privacy for prayer** in their huts. So each Christian made off to the bush, behind his hut, for seasons of prayer. After a while there was **a worn track** from the hut to the place of prayer.
Then if it ever happened that the **track became**

overgrown from lack of use, another Christian villiager would admonish his neighbor, "BROTHER, THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOUR PRAYER TRACK."

----How is it with your "prayer track"
** Well worn ??
** Or is it "overgrown" & choked?

E.-Acts 9:40-42:

1-Peter comes to Joppa from Lydda (9:35,38) when summoned
2-Called because of Tabitha/Dorcas (=Gazelle)
--Woman characterized by **GOOD WORKS** & **MERCIFUL DEEDS**
--Became sick & died
--Widows mourned her death because of the helpfulness they'd received from her kindnesses
--Especially a "sewer for Christ" as she used her skill with a needle to clothe the needy
3-Peter's actions--Puts everyone out
--Kneels down and prays
--Turns to the dead body of the woman
--Says: "TABITHA, **ARISE**"
--Similar to Mark 5:40-42 - Jesus w/ Jairus' daughter.
4-Restoration to life (9:40c-41)
5-**AND** "many believed" (9:42) so this private prayer was the **H I N G E** that opened the door of faith to many
6-ILLUS--When Gypsy Rodney Smith was saved, he became anxious for the conversion of **his uncle.** Among the gypsies, it wasn't considered proper for children to tell their elders what they should do. Rodney **prayed** for his uncle and waited for God to open the way for him to speak.

One day the uncle noticed a hole in the boy's trousers and said, "Rodney, why have you **worn out** the **knees of** your **pants** so much faster than the rest of them?"

Rodney replied: "Uncle, I have worn them out **praying** that **God** would **make you a Christian**." Then, after such boldness, Rodney **began to cry**. Nothing more was said, but the uncle put his arm around the boy.....and it was not too long before the Uncle was **praying** to Jesus to save him & make him a child of God.

F.-Acts 10:1-6:

1-**Very peculiar case**--Prayer of an **UNSAVED MAN**
--Reminds of John 9:29-31 — Read it.
2-Cornelius--Italian Centurion
--Stationed in Caesarea
--Spiritually sensitive:
** A devout man (=A man of practical piety)
** Feared God with all his house (REVERENCE)
** Gave much alms to the people (Israelites)
** Prayed to God alway
--Here's a man who, though UNSAVED, **outshines** half the Christians I know
3-**Result** of his prayers--Vision sent thru an angel
--Came up for a memorial before God
--Good counsel: "**SEND FOR PETER**"
--He will tell thee what thou oughtest to do

--**Notice** ** The angel didn't tell Cornelius how to get saved
** That takes a **REDEEMED** MAN (or woman)
** Rom. 10:14--"How then shall they call o Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

4-**Guidance** as the aftermath of prayer was SPECIFIC AND EFFECTUAL---leading to the conversion of Cornelius & of his whole family

5-What a **Turning Point**----A HINGE OF HISTORY
--Message of the **gospel comes** to a hungry heart
--And he is **S A V E D**!!

G.-Acts 10:9-23:

1-**Timing of God** is tremendous--God works on **BOTH ENDS** at once
--God ordains prayer as the means to His working out the counsel of His own will
--Peter goes up to the rooftop to pray (**buying up moments** for holy use)
--"Life is fragile; handle it with PRAYER"

2-**Trance** or **vision** from God
--Sheet with all manner of beasts in it let down
--Both clean & unclean animals in it
--**COMMAND**: "Rise, Peter: Kill and eat"
--Remonstrance: "Not so, Lord:"
--Second & 3rd repetitions
--RADICAL instructions to a Jew, for it meant breaking the prohibitions of Lev. 11

3-Peter is **still pondering** the meaning of this vision
--Embassage from Cornelius comes
--They call for **PETER**
--Spirit prompts Peter to go **TO** and **WITH** these men
--Tell Peter of Cornelius and a ready audience waiting "to hear the words of thee"
--Leads to **conversion** of Cornelius & all those who heard Peter preach (10:44)

4-**Aftermath** of 2 separate occasions of private prayer----
*Hinges Of History, for here the "**Door of faith**" is opened for the first time **TO GENTILES**

5-Gen. Booth:--"WORK as if everything depended upon work; PRAY as if everything depended upon prayer"

H.-Acts 22:17-21:

1-Nothing indicates **which** of Paul's earlier 4 journies to Jerusalem was the occasion of this....

2-**VISION**--While Paul prayed in the Temple in Jerusalem
--Fell into a **trance**
--Appearance of Christ (Him) to warn Paul
*--"Make haste, & get thee quickly **out** of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning

3-Paul's **reply**--**Recounts** his past experiences (22:19-20)
4-REPETITION of command (22:21)
5-**Results**--Paul **disobeyed** this double warning
--Paul did return to Jerusalem
--This brought him **into jail** & eventually to Caesarea's **prison**, and on to Rome
6-**Prayer**-----**Answer**-----Rebellious **Refusal**---**TROUBLE!!**
7-HINGE OF HISTORY for this refusal of prayer-answer brought Paul into Roman captivity & eventually to the city of Rome itself
8-ILLUS--In a certain cotton factory of which I have heard, there is a card on the walls of the workrooms that reads: "IF YOUR THREADS GET TANGLED **SEND FOR THE FOREMAN.**"

One day a new worker got her threads tangled, & she tried to disengage them, but only made them worse. Then she sent for the foreman. He came and looked---and said to her----"You have been **doing this yourself.**"

"Yes", she said.

"BUT WHY did you not send for me according to instructions?"

"**I did my best**", she said

"**NO**, YOU DID NOT," the foreman said. Remember, that doing your **best is sending for me.**"

--Paul got into trouble by **not sending for the Lord** in prayer and then responding in obedience to what he was led to do.

I. Acts 28:8-11:
1-On island of Melita (Malta) after shipwreck
--Among "barbarous people"
==Luke's term for non-Greeks
--Yet very kind to all these who were shipwrecked
--Paul **bitten** by a **snake** and miraculously not incapacitated by it
--People came to think of Paul as **a "god"** (28:6)
2-Man named **PUBLIUS**--**Chief man** of island
--Lodged them for 3 days & showed courtesy to them
--Publius' **father** becomes **sick** with fever & dysentery
3-**Paul's prayer**--Enters alone into room with Publius' father
--Prays for the man
--Lays hands on him
--**HEALED HIM**
--No faith is said to have been involved by father
--Just answer to prayer:
--Ralph H. Dumont:
"The Power House is always there,
So push the button labeled '**PRAYER**'"
4-Results--Man is **healed**
--Others came for healing
--Honors heaped on Paul & company
--Provisions made available for sailing to Rome
--Three months worth of hospitality

5-So what did private prayer produce?
--specific answer in the healing
--Changed "climate" toward their witness
--Hospitable to the men and their message
--J. Sidlow Baxter--"Men may spurn our appeals, reject our message, oppose our arguments, despise our persons--but they are helpless against our prayers."

CONCLUSION:

A.-Three Categories Of Prayer In Acts:

1-Personal & PRIVATE (this message
2-CLOSE FELLOWSHIP prayers
3-Corporate bodies of believers ((Next 2 messages))
4-Usually a "HINGE" to enlarged ministry of the gospel

5-Certainly essential to the life--Of the individual
--Of the Church
--Of our Christian fellowship with others

6-A.W.Pink--"It is the CRISES OF LIFE which reveal the secrets of our hearts and make it manifest whether we are really new creatures in Christ or just whitewashed worldlings." (Elijah, P. 182)

7-Of the true christian it can be said, as it was of Saul when he was converted:
"BEHOLD, HE PRAYETH"

B.-Personalization Of This Matter Of Private Prayer:

1-How is it with you??
2-FAITHFUL in prayer ministry?
3-Or are you a FAILURE in this matter of praying?
4-Have you been up and down; erratic in this ministry?

5-Will you join me in a pledge of allegiance to our Lord and a determination to daily spend time---MORE TIME---in faithfully engaging in the ministry of prayer?

6-GOD HELP US ALL !!

Westbrae-1/27/74--#313--"Dear Lord And Father Of Mankind"
A.B.C. Chapel-11/15/76 --#377--"Teach Me To Pray"
Lookout Bapt. Ch. --#145--"More Love To Thee"
3/7+21+28 4/4, 11.

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®
BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

"Definition---A Good Congregation"------Acts 10:33.

Intro.--A.-ILLUS--A man once came to Spurgeon & asked that great preacher if his church was a PURE church. He said that he was looking for a pure church that he might belong to it. Spurgeon said that he did not know about his own church. He DID know that there were a number of truly good people in it; saintly people and fine Christians, but there might possibly be a Judas among them, as there was in the company of Jesus' first apostles; and there might be some deceivers & idolators and those who walk unruly, as there seemed to have been in the churches of Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Colose Philippi, Thessalonica, and all the others to which the N. T. Epistles were written. On the whole he thought that his church was not the one his brother was looking for. Indeed, he did not know that there had been such a church in all history. "But," said Spurgeon,"if you should happen to find such a church, I beg of you not to join it, for you would spoil the whole thing.

B.-Scripturally speaking, what is a "good congregation?"
C.-Several messages on the local church.
D.-Acts 10:33--good def. of a good congregation.

I.-"NOW THEREFORE ARE WE ALL HERE PRESENT..."

A.-Saved persons
1-message to tell
2-message to hear
3-praise & worship
4-ILLUS --Acts 2--all together of one accord.

B.-Unsaved persons
1-to hear of the person of Christ
2-to hear of forgiveness of Sin by Jesus Christ
3-have a God-inspired desire to HEAR

C.-All Here Present.
1-Regular in attendance
2-On time
3-"HERE"--place of worship--God's house--. The New Testament Epistles are mostly writtent to CHURCHES.
--Heb. 10:25 "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

Illus - In a European Ch. there are sockets in the pews to hold lamps. This is the only illumination. When some are absent, their place is DARK

Illus- Hoffman, Chemist, visiting Lord Kelvin in Glasgow said to the maid, is L.K. in? He is not. Where could I find him? - "IN CHURCH WHERE YOU OUGHT TO BE."

II.-"...BEFORE GOD..."

A.-Outward Appearances ---UNIMPORTANT
1-Building, 2-fixtures, 3-Clothes 4-Social acceptability--
ILLUS--Charles Reiter's attitude — social necessity only

B.-Heart attitude--ALL IMPORTANT
1-there need be no concern about outward things
2-the need is for the Lord--"my heart pants for thee..."
3-Eyes on the Lord. Need to get "spiritual blinders on so we see HIM."
4-Spiritual matters are matters between YOU & GOD.

III.-"...TO HEAR..."

AA.-Not to:
1-Sleep---Illus-"I am building a church," said a small boy playing on the floor with a set of building blocks, " and we must be very quiet." His father, eager to encourage thus unexpected reverence, asked "And why are we quiet in church?" "Because the people are asleep!" was his reply.

Many miss much by spiritual drowsiness

NOT TO:

2-worry over other day by day problems.

3-criticize or complain--ILLUS--They knew each other intimately. Said one, "I've been in the harness of this church for 22 years." "Yes," said the other, "and during that time you've worn out 15 holding back straps and only one collar."

4-do the talking---place for your voice is in your dayly life.

B.- Time of Instruction.

1-listen attentively to the Words of the butcher, Lawyer, Dr.

2-Time to listen to the authority of God's Word.

3-Take it in in church to give it out later.

4-ILLUS--Old John was a man of God and he loved his village Chapel. One day he was stopped by an acquaintance, who, by the way, was was an ardent angler. "I say, John," said the angler, "I have often wondered what attraction there is up at the village chapel. You go week after week to the same old chapel, see the same folks, sing the same old hymns--" "Wait a minute," interrupted John. "You fish very often in the same spot and in the same water do you not?" "Yes, that's true," agreed the other. John smiled, and then exclaimed: "Well you do not, for the water you fished in yesterday has passed on to the sea; and every time I go up to the chappel the Lord has something fresh for me."

IV.-CONTENT---"...ALL THINGS THAT ARE COMMANDED THEE OF GOD."

A.-Salvation truth
B.-Christian Life truth
C.-Prophecy
D.-Prayer
E.-Missionary activity
F.-Must be regular to get it all.

Acts 20:27 "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

ALL SERVICES

It is a matter of habit. --Illus. T.E. Evans

G.-ILLUS--Food at the table--some sweet; some not. But all is nourishing. Don't want to live on breakfast food alone.

ILLUS--George Washington's pastor said of him, "No company ever kept him away from church. I have often been at Mount Vernon on the Sunday morning when his breakfast table was filled with guests. BUT TO HIM THEY FURNISHED NO PRETEXT FOR NEGLECTING GOD AND LOSING THE SATISFACTION OF SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE. For instead of staying at home out of a fancied courtesy to them, he constantly used to invite them to accompany him."

CONCLUSION--A-Result---Hearing the word leads to Salvation and then to growth. Rom. 10:13-14

B.-The place of the Christian is to be in the Lord's house to hear the Word of the Lord.

C.-We need to bring our family & friends--Regularly.

ILLUs--While things are pliable is the time to make things permanent. A Kansas pastor tells, "On the front walk leading up to my church one can see the imprint of 2 baby feet, painting toward the door. Some mother had set her baby down there when the cement was still fresh. She started him in the right direction for early impressions are permanent. That was 14 years ago & the impression on both the concrete & the feet is as though it were done only yesterday.

ILLUS---Allan Wright--"I wish I had brought my family up in a Christian home"

D.-God's channel is the LOCAL, NEW TESTAMENT, CHURCH.

Are you doing your part, regularly, to make this a GOOD CONGREGATION in the sight of God?

The Church And You — Acts 2:42-47; 10:33

Intro: A.-Definition Of The Church:
1-Widespread ignorance of its nature---Spiritual
2-Abuses of its ministries---Social & Political
3-Definitions--"called out company"
--organism--the body
--organization--the local church
--96 of 113 N. T. references
4-Origin--Mt. 16:18—"I will build my church"
--Day of Pentecost—BIRTHDAY
5-Constitution-------The Word of God
6-Today many are "LOWERING THE FLAG" just a little. Need to know the facts

LOCAL

I.-PURPOSES OF GOD ENTRUSTED TO THE CHURCH:

But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

A.-In Its Own Walk:
1-In Unity--Eph. 4:1-16
--Spiritual realities in common
--Spiritual gifts given
--Spiritual body perfected
2-In Separation--Eph. 4:17-6:9
--Walk as a new man in Christ
--Walk in the Spirit
--Walk as a child of God
--Walk in relation to others.

B.-In Its Propagation:
1-Witnessing & Evangelism--Acts 1:8
2-Missions--Acts. 13:1-3 Read
--ILLUS --The part which local churches have played in carrying out the Lord's missionary directive is called to mind bya recent anniversary celebration. The year 1957 marked the 500th anniversary of the Moravian Church. The recent events recall to students of church history the momentous experience of the Lord's people at Herrnhut Germany, when on Aug. 13, 1727 this little church received such a visitation of heavenly power as has seldom been witnessed since Pentecost. As a result, the greatest missionary revival of modern times took place. Dr. Warneck, the German historian wrote: "This little church in 20 yrs. called into being more missions than the whole evangelical church has done in 2 centuries." Within a few decades more than 200 members of that little flock had gone forth as missionaries. That the Moravian movement was a local church movement there can be no doubt. One historian described it this way: "It began with the congregation as the unit, based upon Scripture, bound by a Brotherly Agreement, and governed by an elected eldership."
3-Giving
4-Ordinances

Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, + for his ~~goodness~~ wonderful works to the children of men. Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, + praise him in the assembly of the elders.

C.-In Its Worship And Instruction:
1-Praise--Ps. 107:31-32
--Ps. 111:1 Praise ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with all my heart, in the assembly of the upright, + in the congregation.
--ILLUS ---According to an ancient Jewish tradition, when God had created everything except man, He called the angels to HIM and asked them what they thought of His work. They answered that it was very good, but that one thing was lacking---a mighty harmonious

voice to sound the note of praise and thanksgiving throughout the world. So man was forthwith created and became the mouthpiece of praise for the whole creation.....Though this is mere legend, it at least indicates the fact that God created man to worship HIM.

2-Corporate Worship--Heb. 10:25
3-Corporate prayer--Mt. 18:19-20 — READ
4-Instruction of believer---2 Tim. 4:2
5-Defense of sound doctrine--1 Tim. 3 & Acts 20

D.-In Its Government:
1-Headship is vested in Christ--Col. 1:28
2-Spiritual men who are PACE*SETTERS over all affairs
3-Elders & Deacons
4-Prophets & Evangelists
5-Pastor-Teachers
6-Discipline in the church
7-Membership--born again baptized believers
--sharers of like precious faith
--bound together for worship, fellowship & salvation of souls.

LOCAL

II.-THE CHURCH AND YOU:

A.-Why Go To Church:
1-No example in the N. T. of an isolated Christian
2-Christian isn't that kind of a creature
3-Analogies--insects swarm
--fish move in schools
--even wolves move in packs
--Scriptural example--Acts 2:42-47 — "togetherness" + "oneness"
--ILLUS---Pastor who went to the backslider. He reached intothe fireplace & pulled out one of the red-hot embers and placed it alone on* the hearth. As it lay there alone it turned black and lost its warmth & glow. The man got the point and repented of his waywardness and came back to the Lord.
4-You've been "attached to the family"---1 Cor. 12:13 — Baptism of the Spirit
5-Now a member of God's team and team activity is needed
6-Even missionaries--Acts. 14:26-28
--kept up membership
--returned to report
--fellowshipped whenever able
7-Never even 1 case of "CHURCH TRAMPS" or "SERMON TASTERS"
8-ILLUS--George Washington's Pastor said of him, "No company ever kept him away from Church. I have often been at Mount Vernon on the Sunday morningwhen his breakfast table was filled with guests. BUT TO HIM THEY FURNISHED NO PRETEXT FOR NEGLECTING GOD AND LOSING THE SATISFACTION OF SETTING A GOOD EXAMPLE. For instead of staying at home out of a fancied courtesy to them, he constantly used to invite them to accompany him."
9-Attitude--have many friends
--attend many churches
--you need ONE church home like you need one wife
--it settles you down, matures you, & teaches you some spiritual responsibility — Reason Why
--ILLUS--Mr. Hoffman, chemist, visiting Lord Kelvin in Glasgow said to the maid, "Is Lord Kelvin home.?" "HE IS NOT" was her reply. "Where could I find him?" inquired the chemist.

"IN CHURCH WHERE YOU OUGHT TO BE TOO!!!!!!"

Best possible place for hypocrites they may get SAVED

B.-Complaint Of Imperfections In The Church:
1-Worse in Paul's day acc. to the N. T,
2-Newly saved converts from heathenism
3-Almost hard to believe these made up the church
4-Yet called "saints"--1 Cor. 1:2 "them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints"
--though not thoroughly saintly
5-You may have felt justified in being content with your own personal time of worship at home now & again
6-You may have felt you have done all God expects by attending church occasionally
7-These attitudes arrise from a fundamental misunderstanding of the essential character of Christianity
8-I do not know of any Christian in those days who left the church because of imperfections within, or who merely worshipedprivately. They ALL entered into their church life FULLY
9-ILLUS--European churches in centuries pas had no internal lighting provided. There were sockets in the pews to hold lamps. This was the only illumination. Since the pews belonged to certain families when some were absent, THEIR PLACE WAS DARK.....How often would your corner be lighted??????

C.-What The Church Can Mean To You:
I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the House of the Lord
1-Firm stand is expected if the Christian life is to be enjoyed
2-Joyful participation--Ps. 122:1
3-Regular attendance--Heb. 10:25
--gives mutual help--Rom. 15:1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, + not to please ourselves
--spiritual strengthening
--mutual fellowship
--development--Col. 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms + hymns + spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord
4-Constant nurture--God calls leaders
--God calls teachers
--God calls pastors
--Pastoral oversight & counsel
--2 Tim. 3:16-17
--Participation in ordinances
--Worship services
--Interest of many in YOU
5-Cooperative opportunity to fulfill tasks that are too big for 1 person alone--Evangelism
--Missions
--Instruction
--Worship, etc.

D.-What You Can Mean To The Church:
1-Too many want to reap benefits & take no responsibilities
2-Remind me of a man who had 2 neighbors. One had a cow and gave him milk free. The other had a garden & gave him produce free. He did nothing in return for either, but lived as a parasite off their labor.....Some do that in the church
3-God wants us to take our stand WITH HIS CHURCH so we can contribute to its life and witness
--1 Cor. 12:27 Now ye are the Body of Christ, + members in particular.
--1 Cor. 12 lists a variety of spiritual gifts & endowments
--a place and a job for EVERYONE
--Prayer--Acts 12 --Striving together--Phil. 1:27

4-All this requires believers joining together to meet with a cooperative ministry the challenges of this day of ours.

Concl:.

A.-Church Itself:
1-Both a spiritual organism & and an organization
2-Designed for your spiritual aid and nurture
3-Designed for worship & service of God

B.-Mutual Relationships:
1-You needthe church of Jesus Christ
2-The church needs you

C.-Error of Minimizing Church Affiliation:
1-A local church is a group of confessed believers in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord who have united in a voluntary yoke of common doctrine and aims for fellowship, worship, instruction, and service.

DEF.

2-Membership often minimized
--because of a revolt against unscriptural tactics of other churches in gaining members
--because some insist N. T. churches had no membership lists
--because of an overemphasis on the truth of the BODY
--because of too rigorous membership standards.
--because of the neglect of the Scriptural importance of the LOCAL CHURCH.

NB

3-This has been an error here!!!!!!!
4-Believers who mean business for God and stand with a group in doctrine ought to be in a church and * active in it; not just attending a church.

Solidify the "flabbiness" into a real corps of believers who stand together & labor together

BACK TO ANTIOCH — Acts 11:19-30

INTRO

A.- WHAT IS GROWTH?:

1- Webster — "A process of growing or developing; development toward maturity; increase in size, weight or power."

2- Mk. 4:26 - "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself: first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

3- Examples — # of children
— Size of children (HEIGHT / WEIGHT)
— Family of aunts, uncles, cousins

B.- How Do WE MEASURE GROWTH?

1- By — numbers of people
— pounds of development
— relationships to others that deepen

2- Spiritual Sense — Budgets — Offerings
— Buildings
— Baptisms
— Busses
— Christian Schools
— # in Christian service

3- Measurement:
— It is inevitable
— It is not necessarily bad
— It needs to be by a correct measuring guage

4- PROP — A growing church is a church with a strong commitment to biblical characteristics. GROWING!

5- INT — What characteristics?
— SEVEN of them... seen in the church at ANTIOCH

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(1)

I.- A STRONG COMMITMENT TO WORSHIP:

A.- WORSHIP IN PRAISE!

1- God - centered side of worship
2- DEF — "To set a price upon"
— To express approval or admiration
— Use of words or music - VERBAL
3- Heart reaction of the REDEEMED
4- Acts 13:1-2
- "Ministered"
- This activity before the Lord is the prime function of a worshipping people
- To such a people God to speak, call + send
5- Such approval + admiration of God ought to characterize us — EACH ONE
— ALL of us

B.- WORSHIP IN PERSON:

1- Man related side of worship
2- Dedication in Rom. 12:1-2 — Once for all
3- Expression in 2 Cor. 8:1-5
— Gave themselves
— Gave their substance
4- This is the act of a true worshipper

C.- WORSHIP IN PRAYER:

1- Basic element of worship's communication
- Not just perfunctory prayers
- But practical talking w/ God
- Not just a weekly prayer meeting
- But daily + moment by moment communion w/ God — "Pray without ceasing"

2- Acts 13:3
3- Involved with BEING + DOING
4- How? A C T S
- A doration
- C onfession
- T hanksgiving
- S upplication / Intercession

5- A PRAYING CHURCH
- Begins w/ a praying pastor
- Forwarded by praying leaders
- Developed in praying people
- Results in a praying congregation

6- FIRST CHARACTERISTIC of a growing church is a strong commitment to WORSHIP

II.- A STRONG COMMITMENT TO OUTREACH

Outward Growth

A.- OUTREACH IN COMMUNITY PENETRATION:

1- Not limited to church building activities

2- Example
- Acts 11:19-21
- Gospel shared by common people scattered due to persecution
- People believed + turned to God
- TOUCHED w/ a message of help + hope
- Produced an explosive response

3- WHAT IF
- Rented a building
- Put up a sign:

> FIRST CH. OF THE PERSECUTED SAINTS OF T.C.
> AM Services — 11:00
> PM Services — 7:00
> Prayer Mtg — 7:00 Wednesdays

- STAYED AWAY in droves!

4- Vital X-nity touches people where they are w/ the truth of Jesus Christ.

B.- OUTREACH IN WORLD VISION: Acts 13 + 14

1- Whole gospel for a whole world by sending forth THEIR OWN

2- Responded
- To training
- To service
- The BEST of those they had
- Test of a church
  - HOW MANY in vocational X-n. service?
  - One church — 197 yrs w/ none into the ministry

3- Acts 13 + 14 + 15 — OUTREACH

4- Response to Jesus' words:
Mt. 9:38 - "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest"
5- Door of faith opened outward to a needy world

C. - OUTREACH IN BIBLICAL PATTERN:

1- House to house - Acts 20:20
2- In market place - Acts 17:17
3- EVANGELISM is the cornerstone of the local church
- Not an optional plan
- But an essential priority
- Penetrate the local community
= Extend to the whole world
- Starting * w/ own families
* w/ folks next door
* w/ co-workers

4- Local ch. as the sending agency:
- NOT the mission bd's resp.
- But the local Cong.'s.
- Sent out - Acts 13:3+4
- Reporting back - Acts 14:26-28

5- A choice - PARA CHURCH agencies OR
- Local church involvement
- Our PRIVILEGE / OUR RESPONSIBILITY

6- Strong commitment to outreach

III. - A STRONG COMMITMENT TO EDIFICATION (Inward Growth)

A. - EDIFICATION'S ELEMENTS:

1- Preaching the word - Acts 11:19
2- Evangelizing the lost - 11:20
3- Exhorting (= ENCOURAGING) - 11:23
4- Teaching - 11:26
5- Body life ministry to one another
- Christian education
- Discipleship
- Building up
- Complement to growth in numbers

Eph. 4:11

6- GOAL —— SPIRITUAL MATURITY —— of all

B.- EDIFICATION'S TIMOTHY PRINCIPLE:

1- Seen in local churches — Jerusalem
— Tarsus
— Antioch

2- Faithful men instructed — 2 Tim. 2:2

3- Elders — Cream rises in milk
— Leaders rise out of Cong.
— Qualified men
— Reproducing in others

4- Takes time + work

5- But it produces — Strong believers
— Strong churches

C.- EDIFICATION'S RESULTS: 11:26

1- Great number - 11:21

2- Developing these converts into SPIRIT-LED + SPIRIT-TAUGHT ones

3- HOW? — Believers assembled
— Believers discipled
— Believers identified AS CHRISTIANS
— Believers TRANSFORMED

4- Strong commitment to edification

IV.- A STRONG COMMITMENT TO PEOPLE:

A.- LOVING ONE ANOTHER:

1- Internal body of believers in the Ch.
— Physical needs
— Social needs
— Spiritual needs
— BODY LIFE INTERACTION
— Jas. 2:15-16 - "If a brother or sister be naked, + destitute of daily food, + one of you say to them, DEPART IN PEACE, BE YE WARMED + FILLED; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?"

Evidences of LOVE

2- OTHERS in the Body in need — 11:27-30

3- Care // SHARE // Bear — Gal. 6:2, 10

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B.- LOVING THE FAMILY:

1- People centered — PEOPLE are our most important product
— PEOPLE are what God will take to heaven.

2- FAMILY
- God's institution
- Along w/ Human govt + church
- Sometimes fragmented by our church program
- Enough of that from other influences
- Needs to be STRENGTHENED

3- Eph. 5+6 — Wives + husbands
— Children + fathers
— Servants + masters

(Singles also)

4- A growing Ch. must be a caring ch.

strong commitment to People

V.- A STRONG COMMITMENT TO GROWTH:

A.- PREVIOUS EMPHASES:

1- LOCAL Evangelism
2- WORLD Evangelism
} II above

3- True - In Antioch
- Here also!

B.- PATTERN OF EXTENSION:

1- Antioch freed Barnabas + Saul for OUTREACH ministry.

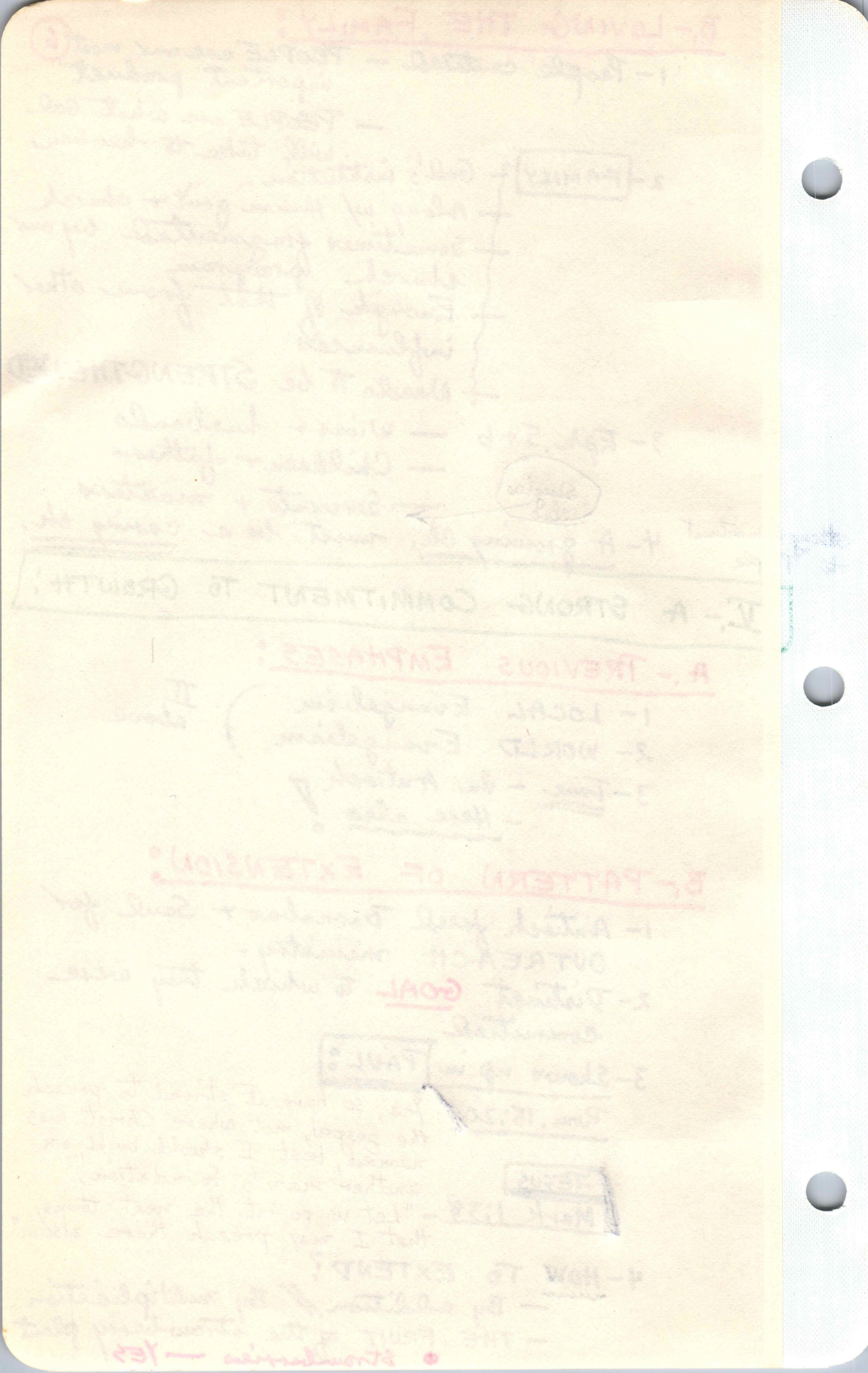
2- Distinct GOAL to which they were committed

3- Shows up in PAUL:

Rom. 15:20 - "Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation,

JESUS
Mark 1:38 - "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also..."

4- HOW TO EXTEND?
- By addition // By multiplication
- THE FRUIT of the strawberry plant
• Strawberries — YES



• Strawberry plants also
— This is the pattern of extension;
CHURCH PLANTING

• FOREIGN
Frank Davis
Jack Davis
Clifford Hayes - P.R.
Chuck Robinson - Paraguay
John Stauffacher - Formosa

HOME
Robert Frazier — FLA
Charles MacDonald — W.V.
Jerome A. Moore — FLA,
John Sage — Dallas, TX

— Not an option, but a COMMAND!

5 - Seen in Acts also — 6:7
9:31
12:24
16:5
19:20
28:30-31

6 - Strong Commitment to GROWTH
GROWTH because of OBEDIENCE to God's command

VI: A STRONG COMMITMENT TO CHANGE

A. - HISTORIC PATTERN — Jerusalem:

1 - Birthplace of the Ch.
2 - Initial center — Acts 1:8 — A Jewish Church
3 - Resistive to change + to
— God sent PERSECUTION
— Believers were SCATTERED
— Acts 8:4 — "... they that were scattered abroad went everywhere teaching the Word."

B. - INNOVATIVE PATTERN — Antioch:

1 - Seven last words of the Church
"WE HAVE NEVER DONE IT THAT WAY"
2 - All too widespread an entrenched mentality
• Need innovation
adaptation
flexibility

The Gentile Church

3 - DIFFERENTLY at Antioch

- Barnabas
  - Mr. Encouragement
  - Open to change
  - Assessed needs
  - Met them
  - Followed leading of H.S.
  - Produced worship & growth
- TRADITIONALIST RESISTERS
  - Home Bible classes
  - Church service times
  - Shepherding Groups
  - Sacredness of closing at NOON
- PAUL
  - Apostle to Gentiles
  - Innovator // Adaptor
  - 1 Cor. 9:22-23
  - Flexible man + attitudes
  - Phil. 4:11-12

5 - Strong Commitment to CHANGE

4 - Oh, how we need to be able to break out of outmoded modes to meet people + their needs today!

VII. - A STRONG COMMITMENT TO SACRIFICE + FAITHFULNESS

A. - LOYALTY TO THE LOCAL CHURCH:

1 - This was what they KNEW + could SEE

2 - Viewed as representative of the Lord Jesus on earth = GOD's INSTITUTION

3 - CONSULTATION
- Acts 15:1-29, 36
- Elders sought for godly input
- Illus - Dr. Winters + Daniels Bible Ch

4 - COMMISSIONING
- Sent out Barnabas + Saul Acts 13:1-3
- Sent out Paul + Silas - 15:40

5 - BIG place in the life of the committed X-n. LOYALTY!

(9)

B.- FAITHFULNESS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH:

1- Attendance + Participation
2- Involvement seen as a "SACRED TRUST"
3- 1Cor. 4:2 - "... it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful."
4- Place + channel of sp. ministry
5- One cannot be faithful to the trust of the gospel and be unfaithful to the local church.!

C.- GIVING PEOPLE IN THE LOCAL CHURCH:

1- Stewardship - Of their time
- Of their talents
- Of their treasures
- IN + THRU the local assembly is the place to start

2- Attitudes - Lovingly
- Freely
- So Christ may be honored

3- A strong commitment to sacrifice + faithfulness

CONCLUSION

A.- CHARACTERISTICS AT ANTIOCH:

1- WORSHIP
2- OUTREACH
3- EDIFICATION
4- PEOPLE
5- GROWTH
6- CHANGE
7- SACRIFICE + FAITHFULNESS
8- Let our attitude in our day be "Back To Antioch"

Strong Commitments to...

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B.- CHARACTERISTICS AT THIS CHURCH:

1- Use the "Measuring Rod" of what characterized the Ch. at Antioch

2- Honest appraisal:

- Some good strengths
- Some definite weaknesses
- Some variations
  - * Some willing workers
  - * Some willing to let them work

3- Need for PERSONAL
- Evaluations
- Decisions for strengthening
- Involvement + commitment

4- A growing church is a church with a strong commitment to biblical characteristics....

BACK TO ANTIOCH

OKBC - 8/25/85

"THE FAILURE WHO MADE GOOD" or "THE BENEFITS OF SPIRITUAL FAILURE"

Acts 12:1-25
Eph. 4:32

INTRO:

A.-Who Has Failed?:
1-Adam did
2-His "BUG" of sin & failure has infected us all
3-Only O N E EXCEPTION---The Lord Jesus Christ
4-Rest of us must live with this realization
--None righteous
--None perfect
--WHO among us has not failed?

B.-Cure For Failure:
GET RIGHT w/ GOD
1-SALVATION is the first step
--Christ is not merely an example to mock us
--Christ is not merely a helper to help us with aid
--Christ is first & foremost a SAVIOR to redeem us from our sin
--This is the foundation of our "cure"
FOLLOW-UP STEPS
2-Making the best from there on by living a really dedicated life is the entrance into the enjoyment of the A B U N D A N T L I F E which Christ has provided(Jn.10 "10
--Dedication (Rom. 12:1)
--Separation (Rom.12:2a)
--Transformation (Rom. 12:2b)
--No other way for real peace & Joy
3-C.I. Scofield wrote to Fred Lincoln in Central America many years ago:
"God has His best things for the few,
That dare to stand the test.
God has His second best for those
Who will not have His best."
4-Can't reclaim yesterday, ...or yesteryear
NB 5-Begin where you are--LOOK to God
--LOOK ahead
--Let's look at a CASE STUDY of...

C.-A Failure Who Made Good:
1-A Secret Disciple---------HIS COMMENCEMENT
2-A Privileged Person-------HIS COMPANIONS
3-A Dismal Failure----------HIS COLLAPSE
4-A Ringing Success---------HIS CONQUERING
5-PROP:--Personal profit of how to come back from failure.

I.-JOHN MARK; A SECRET DISCIPLE---HIS COMMENCEMENT:

A.-The Illustration:
1-Painter's signature (unnoticed, except to the inquiring eye, off in a dark corner of his canvas)

B.-The Counterpart:

1-Mark 14:50-52
2-"A certain young man"
3-**Not recorded** in the other 3 gospels
4-Considered as AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL by most readers
5-Hasting to garb himself & follow when he heard the din of Judas & his band on the way to Gethsemane
* 6-He followed Jesus when others forsook Him
7-**FLED** when he was laid hold of
8-Reminds of **JOSEPH** when Potiphar's wife sought to seduce him (Gen. 39:10-13)
9-SPIRITUAL CONDITION--Not stated !
--Interested
--But not open or clear-cut
--**NO COMMITMENT** !
10-Ivor Powell--"Timidity and sincerity alternately urged him to action." (P. 157,"Bible Cameos")

II.-JOHN MARK; **A PRIVILEGED PERSON**-----HIS **COMPANIONS**:

A.-His Godly Family:

1-Mother--Mary, sister of Barnabas, from Cyprus
--Married a Roman----That's all we know of **father**
--Now a widow
--Well-to-do woman
--**Conspicuous** person in the Christian community
--HOME
** Large dwelling & with servants
** Open to believers
** Normal gathering place for PRAYER (Acts 12:12)
** So John Mark was accustomed to **REAL** PRAYER MEETINGS

2-**Name**--John was his Hebrew name
--Marcus or Mark was his Roman surname
--Spoken of **8** times in the N.T.

3-**Uncle** Barnabas (Col. 4:10-11)
--Also from Cyprus
--**Prominent** in the early Church community
--**Trusted** by the Apostles in Jerusalem to be sent to Antioch to help the new believers there
--A man who majored on giving people a "**SECOND CHANCE**"

B.-His Godly Friends:

1-**Peter**--A "**second father**" to John Mark
--Doubtless it was he who led John Mark to Christ, for he calls him "**my son**" (1 Pet. 5:13)
* -**SPIRITUAL FATHER** to him (Mark's own father not saved)
--Often in Mary & John Mark's Jerusalem home, for probably the Church met there for worship
* * -COMPANION of Peter's for 12 years of his later life *in Babylon*
--**WRITER** of **PETER'S GOSPEL**:
** Source of material was Peter's talks & sermons
** Written to the Roman mind
** Shows the Powerful Savior as a SERVANT, written by one who once was a servant

PETER → ACTION PERSON

** Doings and not SAYINGS are presented
** 20 miracles & only 4 parables in Mark
** So typical of Peter's personality (3)
** Edited by John Mark under the guidance of the Holy Spirit

2-Paul-Met him in Jerusalem
--Went with him & Barnabas to Antioch (Acts 12:25)
--Accompanied him on 1st Missionary Journey
--IMPACT on John Mark's life by his personality

3-Much depends upon our CHOICE OF FRIENDS
--1 Cor. 15:33--"Be not deceived: evil communication corrupt good manners."
--Ps. 1:1--"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."
--Non-christians can & will lead us astray
--Believers need to STRENGTHEN ONE ANOTHER
--Watch your companions !!
--Spanish Proverb: "Live with wolves & you will learn to howl"

4-Friends often determine WHERE we go + do:
--World's places of attraction.....or
--Christian activities
--Christian camps, conferences, schools
--John 8:12--"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

5-Friends & acquaintances had every reason to envy John Mark his privilege of such companionships in his youth

III.-JOHN MARK; A DISMAL FAILURE----HIS COLLAPSE:

A.-His Departure From The Work:

1-Acts 12:25--Picked up in Jerusalem on a trip to distribute Antioch's offering for needy saints

2-Acts 13:5--Taken on 1st Missionary Journey as "their minister"
--Colleague of inferior rank, an attendant
--To handle the multitude of mundane details as could safely be delegated to him
--NOT as a slave, but "their minister"

3-Acts 13:13--THE DEPARTURE
--Luke uses colorless language to describe John Mark's departing
--Luke records Paul's passing judgment on Mark's conduct in words severe & almost passionate (Acts 15:38)

Definite disappointment to Paul & Barnabas

4-Possible **REASONS** for the departure
- **Dissatisfaction** with role as helper instead of as a preacher & co-laborer
- **Change of plans** from coastal area to dangerous interior of Galatia thru Cilesian Gates — **FEAR!**
- **Duty** to mother & home
- **Not sent** by the **Spirit** or by the Church, but taken as a helper, so he felt free to QUIT
- **Homesick** for M O T H E R
- WE DON"T KNOW FOR SURE — and need to be very slow to pass judgment in our ignorance
- The only EXERCISE some folks ever get is in jumping to conclusions !!

B.-His Dissension In The Work:

1-Barnabas, apparently, did not consider John Mark to have been a **DESERTER**
2-Paul was **unwilling** to be further associated with Mark
3-Acts 15:36-41
4-Contention was SHARP !!
5-**PAUL**--Said "**NO**" to taking John Mark along on a 2nd journey--and of course he was **right** !!
--How could they urge other converts to be **STEADFAST** if they took along with them an associate who had DESERTED ??
--So, Paul took Silas with him to Cilesia
6-**BARNABAS**--Said "**YES**" to taking John Mark with them on a second journey--and of course he was right!
--Because all of us have failed & needed someone to give us a **SECOND CHANCE** !
--So, Barnabas took John Mark with him to Cyprus, where his testimony was not marred by the previous desertion to begin again
7-Both began again on "**familiar ground**"
--HOME AREAS
--Barnabas in Cyprus
--Paul in Cilicia
** 8-NOTE--Neither left the Church
--Neither left the Lord's work
--A matter of personality & preference; not of doctrine !
--Agreed to disagree & **kept on** for the Lord
--Out of the dissension grew TWO MISSIONARY SOCIETIES
9-Mark was the cause of dissension because of his failures, BUT THE STORY DOES **NOT END** THERE!!! Praise God!

IV.-JOHN MARK; **A RINGING SUCCESS**------HIS **CONQUERING**:

A.-His Progress!

1-Barnabas was a man who **SAW** "potential" !!!
- In Paul (Acts 11:25)
- In John Mark (Acts 15:37, 39

2-John Mark **BEGINS AGAIN** as an intimate of Barnabas
3-Later he labored with **Peter** for **12 years**
4-He "**won his spurs**" because he didn't give up
5-CONTINUANCE in God's work, though he never is listed as having any "official" position among the Apostles

B. His Performance:

1-Philemon 23-24--"There salute thee Epaphras, my fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus; Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my **fellowlaborers**." *could this be John Mark?*

2-Col. 4:10-11—*Written at same time.*
"Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;) and Jesus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my **fellowworkers** unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me."
- --Mark was **distrusted** & not easily received by the churches due to the dissension he caused between Paul & Barnabas
- --Listed as one of three JEWS who stood with Paul in Rome
- --**Not now** as a servant, but as a **FELLOWWORKER**
- --A N D....."a **comfort** to me"
  --How rare those kind are !!

3-Walter C. Wright, (Mark)
"It is refreshing to observe in Paul's allusions to John Mark, not only as redeeming his reputation, but as illustrating the character of Paul. He was large enough a man to reverse his verdict and take to his heart whom he had openly & severely criticized."

4-Paul wrote Eph. 4:32--"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."
- --Not just wrote those words
- --Also **PRACTICED** them !
- --Past is now FORGIVEN and F O R G O T T E N !!

5-The wound was **healed**--and more
- --Relationship restored
- --Too big to hold a grudge !

C. His Profitability:

1-2 Tim. 4:10-11--"For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is **PROFITABLE** to me for the ministry"
- --Profitable to Paul personally
- --Profitable to the Church in his day
- --Profitable to us also
  - ** In his example
  - ** In his writing the Gospel of Mark
  - ** In his being a "FAILURE WHO MADE GOOD"
  - ** A case study to show us the way !

2-H. B. Swete, MARK, Pl xx:
"Not endowed with gifts of leadership, neither prophet nor teacher, he knew how to be invaluable to those who filled the first rank in service of the Church, and proved himself a true serving servant of God."

3-Poem----------(~~Wilbur Aristdale~~) (D. M. Stone)

"When God wants to drill a man,
And thrill a man, and skill a man,
When God wants to mold a man, to
To play the noblest part;
When He yearns with all His heart
To create so great and bold a man
That all the world will be amazed,
Watch His methods, watch His ways!

"How He ruthlessly perfects whom He royally elects!
How He hammers him and hurts him,
And with mighty blows converts him,
Into trial shapes of clay which only God understands;
While his tortured heart is crying
And he lifts beseeching hands!

"How He bends but never breaks,
When His good He undertakes;
How He uses whom He chooses,
And with every purpose fuses him;
By every act induces him
To try His splendor out-----
GOD KNOWS WHAT HE'S ABOUT !!

4-John Mark was such a one who **CONTINUED ON** til he ultimately **triumphed**. "THE FAILURE WHO MADE GOOD"

and so can you!

At end "Resolve to be tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, tolerant with the weak, and patient with the wrong, for sometime in your life you will have been all of these." SOURCE UNKNOWN

CONCLUSION:

A.-Lessons Seen Here:

1) Blessings of a **godly home**
   - --Mark owed much to his MOTHER, Mary
   - --So does the Church

2) Choice of **Friends** & **Companions**:
   - --Godly men (Peter, Barnabas & Paul)
   - --Great influence
   - --For good and God.....or
   - --For evil and Satan
   - --**Choose** your influences.....and choose wisely!

3) **Possibilities** Of Life:
   - --Widow's son
   - --Servant of leaders
   - --Revered name today
   - --Great historian
   - --Willing to find and to be satisfied with the Lord's place for his life
   - --**Known to us** today... as "The Failure Who Made Good"
   - --**Don't stop short** of that in your life !!
   - --NOT NOW TOO LATE to **begin again** for God

Time for YOU also!

4) **Reward** for faithfulness:
   - --No sermon recorded from John Mark
   - --**No miracle** performed
   - --JUST a man whose life was TRANSFORMED
   - --**A helper of others**
   - --Appreciated eventually, if not immediately
   - --Such service never fails to find its reward
     - ** In MAN'S eyes (perhaps
     - ** In GOD'S eyes (always)

B.-Personalization:

1-COMMENCEMENT--------A Secret Disciple
--Need to be "O P E N"

2-**COMPANIONS**-----An apprentice of the Apostles
--Time for training & development

3-**COLLAPSE**----------A dismal failure
--Don't stop there

4-**CONQUERING**----------A ringing success
--PERSEVERE til you "make good"

5-Where are you??

6-You & I are not given the privilege of WRITING A GOSPEL, but we are privileged in BEING A GOSPEL

"You are writing a gospel, a chapter each day.
By all that you do, and all that you say! true
Men read what you write, whether faithless or/
Say! What is the Gospel ACCORDING TO YOU?"

7-H O W??--Impliment 1 John 1:9 in your life
--And **LIVE IT** !!

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Westbrae--7/31/66
Spring Branch--8/14/66
Chinese Camp--9/1/66
Eureka--10/23/66
S.F.Seminary--5/14/71
R.B.H.S. Chapel-2/8/74
Irvine Com. Ch.-7/21/74
A.B.I. Chapel-4/1/75 — 4/22/85
Clearwater C.C.-10/21/75
Mims B.I. Chapel-10/22/75
Spurgeon BBC-10/23/75
Tobago--10/29/75
Tunapuna, Trinidad-10/31/75
Calvary, Columbus-1/25/76
Danielo M.B.Ch - 4/23/78
Bible Center Ch, Charleston 8/13/78
Maple Valley Bapt. Ch, 8/13/78
Belle Creek Bapt Ch, Dixie 8/20/78
Bible Bapt. Ch, Danville 9/3/78
Calvary Bapt. Ch, Meadow Bridge, WV - 9/10/78
Calvary Bible Ch - Williamston, N.C. 10/15/78
Faith Bible Ch. - Aquenburg, S.C. 10/20/78
Boomer Bapt. Ch., Boomer, WV 12/30/78
2nd Bapt. Ch, Ravenswood, WV - 2/4/79
Pettus Bapt Ch, Pettus, WV - 3/4/79
Lancaster Bible College - 3/20/79
Clayton Valley 1st Bapt. 7/1/79
West Hills Bapt., Portland 6/27/79
Valley Bible Church, Pinole 7/15/79
1st Bapt. Ch, Eleanor, WV - 7/22/79
Windy Gap Church, PA. 10/21/79
Old Kanawha Bapt. Ch., Pratt, WV - 12/9/79
Mt. Tabor Bapt. Ch, Beckley, WV - 12/30/79
C.B.C., Byrdstown, TN. 3/9/81
Gum Springs Bapt. Ch. WV. - 4/26/81
Daniels Bible Church - 5/3/81
Calvary Bapt. Ch., Roseville, CA. - 6/21/81
York, PA - 8/9/81
Cross Lanes Bible Ch. - 5/16/82
Lower Falls Bapt. Ch. - 10/17/82
Lookout Bapt. Ch. - 6/19/83
Victory Bible Ch, Meyersdale, PA - 7/16/83
Grace Bible Ch., Phoenixville, PA - 6/24/84
Foot-of-Ten, PA - 7/1/84
Nitro, WV - Open Bible Bapt. Ch - 7/8/84
Andover, England - 7/22/84
IOP - WEF - 8/24-3/84
Grace Fellowship Ch, Ephrata, PA - 8/5/84
Springhill Bapt. Ch, So. Charleston, WV - 8/26/84
IFCA New England Regional - 9/17/84
First Bapt. Ch. Berlin, OH - 7/21/85
Grace Bible Ch of Northeast Phila 7/29/87
Freshman Class A.B.C. - 10/13/88

388
25 4
396

386

#11--"Wonderful"
#109--"My Redeemer"
#438--"Have Thine Own Way"
"Are Ye Able," Said The Master

488
388
365

Hilltop Bapt. Ch., Crab Orchard, WV 10/8/89
ABC Chapel - 10/18/95 +12/2/98
Hurricane Bapt. Ch. VA - 9/24/95
Buenad Aires, Arg. 4/21/98
Faith Missy Bapt. Ch, St Albans 7/16/00
Grace Gospel Ch - 8/20/2000
Wray St. Gospel Chapel, Dunedin 6/4/04
Lookout, Bapt. Ch - 2/22/04
Pastor's Fellowship - 8/12/08

"IS PRAYING TOGETHER IMPORTANT?" Acts 12:1-19
or Read 1:1--2:1
"THE HELPFULNESS OF CORPORATE PRAYER"

INTRO: **A.-Preservation Of Prayer Meeting:**

1-ILLUS --Some time ago I heard a radio preacher tell a story on the air. It seems that the **RAILROAD** wanted to cut off a "feeder line" in N. E. Colorado, which was losing money.

At the I.C.C. hearing on this an irate farmer was exclaiming on how it was **not right** for this train to be removed. The railroad's lawyer asked him **how long** it had been since he had **shipped** any goods on the railroad. "NEVER", was his reply.

The lawyer questioned further & asked how long it had been since the farmer had **ridden** on the railroad. He replied: "Oh, I suppose it has been **10 or 12** years now."

QUITE AGHAST the lawyer asked: "Well, sir, if you use the railroad so infrequently, **Why** are you so insistent that it should continue to run, even when it is losing money?"

The farmer replied confidently: "BECAUSE I JUST LIKE TO KNOW IT IS **THERE!**, LIKE A RAILROAD **OUGHT TO BE.**

2-Lots of Christians are like that about **PRAYER MEETING**
--They **don't attend** it
--They don't pray with others
--They'll occasionally **phone in** a desperate request for special prayer
--But they never "**JOIN IN**"

B.-Place Of Prayer Meeting:

1-In a world that is in turmoil; ~~when superpowers are playing one-upmanship~~; when "**BRUSH-FIRE WARS**" seem capable of popping out almost anywhere, many christians ask:

"**WHAT VALUE** DOES **PRAYER HAVE IN THESE DAYS**?"

2-Some counsel that believers ought to "wait and see" what will happen

3-Many will honestly admit: "We don't know **HOW** to pray, or even **WHAT** to pray for.

4-A few even go so far as to declare that "The **worse** affairs in the world grow, the **better**, because that shows the **coming** of Christ **is near.**"

C.-Purposes of Prayer: (Previous Message — See Mt. 18:19-20)

1-Because Christ has promised **to meet** with us:
Mt. 18:20--"For where 2 or 3 are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them."

2-Because Christ promised **to answer** our prayers:
John 16:24--"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name: ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

3-Because Christ **commanded us** to pray:
Luke 18:1--"And He spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;"

4-Because we follow the **EXAMPLE OF THE APOSTLES**, who began the pattern of Biblical Christianity we follow

5-Because we have personal needs which demand that we meet with others to pray about them
6-Because of the needy condition of the world about us, for which we need to pray
7-Because praying together enhances the public testimony of our joint faith in the Living God
8-Because praying together draws us nearer to one another, as well as nearer to God.

I.-HELPFULNESS OF CORPORATE PRAYER:

A.-Prayer Meeting Reinforces Private Prayers:

1-God does want "closet" prayer of the quiet time
2-Strong Biblical EXAMPLES--Abraham by his altar
--Isaac in the field
--Jacob at the brook Jabbock
--Moses on the Mt. of Sinai
--Peter on the housetop of Simon the tanner
--Paul in the desert
** In his D.T.S. (Desert Theological Seminary)
** ILLUS--L. E. Thomas, who got his education in the "School of KNEEOLOGY"
3-We dare not neglect this private discipline of our spiritual lives
4-But God also wants corporate prayer--IN the Church
--BY the Congregation

B.-Prayer Meeting According To The Bible:

1-Classic Example of corporate prayer----Acts 12:1-19 *
2-Desperate situation--Desperate from a HUMAN viewpoint
--Apostle James killed as the first martyred Apostle (12:2)
--Peter imprisoned
--Where do we go from here ???
** To God
** In prayer.....OF COURSE !!!
NB
3-Key verse--12:5
--The "BUT" that brings God into the situation is the "BUT" of united prayer
--This is real prayer; "foxhole" style
--Mk. 11:24--"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."
--DEF.--"A PRAYER in its simplest definition is merely a wish turned heavenward. We should remember that prayer is not conquering God's reluctance, but taking hold of God's willingness" (Phillips Brooks)
4-Four characteristics of their prayer (12:5):
1--Persistent:::::"without ceasing"
2--CORPORATE:::::"of the church" — Gathered together
3--According to pattern::::::::"unto God"
4--SPECIFIC:::::"for him"
--Not a saying of prayers, but PRAYING !!

5-God answers--Herod's plans are thwarted
--Herod fancied himself that he had numbered Peter's days; God had numbered Herod's; and long after Herod was laid in the dust, Peter was still doing God's work of building up the Church
--Angel delivered Peter--12:7a, 9-10
-BUT Peter was to do for himself what he was able to do. (12:7, 8)
--Some real lessons in all this

* 6-Peter stops to give THANKS to God (12:11)

7-Prayer Meeting Interruption--Peter at the door
--Rhoda is flustered
--People are unbelieving
--Peter keeps knocking
--ASTONISHMENT of the congregation at the ANSWER to their prayers

8-PRAYER DOES BRING RESULTS !! AMEN!

C.--Sharing Aspect Of Corporate Prayer:

1-Your problems are shared--With the Lord
--With the brethren who'll care
--With those who'll pray

NB 2-Enter into problems & needs of your fellow-believers

3-Draws you into a closer fellowship
--Enables you to bear one another's burdens
--Rom. 12:15-16--"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, & weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."
--Gal. 6:2--"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."
--2 Cor. 1:4--"Blessed be God...who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

4-INVOLVEMENT in the work of God — Teens, Collegians Shut-Ins — couples Seniors

Needed from each one of us

--Local ministry
--National ministry
--International ministry
--Ethnic ministry — Hispanics, Black, Chinese
--Evangelistic ministry
--Educational ministry — A.B.C., Sun Day Schools
--Missionary ministry
--2 Cor. 1:11--"Ye also helping together by prayer for us..."
--PARTICIPATE in ministries in which you have no way of sharing apart from praying.

* --Good antidote for complaint, too:
PRAY FOR THEM !!

5-ILLUS--You have heard the story of the child who was rescued from the fire that was raging in a house way up on the 4th floor. The child came to the window, and as the flames were shooting higher & higher, the child cried out for help.

A fireman started up the ladder of the fire escape to rescue the child from its dangerous place. The wind swept the flames near him, and it was hard to see. It was getting SO VERY HOT that he wavered, and it looked as if he would have to turn back without rescuing the child.

Hundreds looked on---their hearts quaking at the thought of that child perishing in the fire---as surely it would....if the fireman could not reach it.

Someone in the crowd cried: "GIVE HIM A CHEER"... Cheer after cheer went up, and as the fireman heard the voices of his encouragers below, he gathered fresh courage. Up he went into the midst of the smoke and fire...

...and brought down the child to safety.

IF YOU CAN NOTGO and do the rescuing of the perishing yourself, you can at least help by praying for those who do... .....and "cheer them on". If you do, the Lord will bless the joint effort--both yours and theirs.

6-DON'T GRUMBLE & CRITICIZE !!--That takes no heart
--Nor any brains, either!
--JOIN IN PRAYER instead
--Generally the "grumblers aren't found faithfully in Prayer Meeting, anyway.

NB

D.-Personal Attitudes Improved Through Corporate Prayer:

1-Grumbling is left off

2-Prayer is humbling--Praying before others
--Acknowledging your insufficiency
--Does you good "to come down low"
--To hear others praying for YOU, TOO

3-Prayer develops breadth of vision--OTHERS-oriented
--Widens your viewpoint
--Lessens your self-centeredness
--Lets you see OTHERS as needy & as objects of your concern

IMP

4-Prayer becomes habitual--A REAL PART OF YOU
--As David: "Evening, morn and noon"
--As Daniel: "As he did aforetime"
--As Jesus: "As His custom was"
--As Paul: "Prayers day and night"

ILLUS-During World War II a British soldier was one night caught creeping back to his quarters from a nearby woods. He was taken before his commanding officer and charged with holding communications with the enemy. The man pleaded that he had gone to the woods to pray by himself. That was his only defense.

"Have you been in the habit of spending much time in that woods in private prayer?" the officer growled?

"YES, SIR"!

"Then down on your knees and pray now," he roared. "You never needed so much to pray as you do now."

EXPECTING IMMEDIATE DEATH, the soldier knelt and poured out his soul in prayer, that for eloquence could have only been inspired by the power of the Holy Spirit.

When he had finished, the officer said simply: (5)
"You may go. I believe your story. If you hadn't drilled often, you couldn't have done so well at review"

NB

E.-Proceedure For Public Prayer:

1-Rules are few & simple:
--Be on time; appointment is with God !
--Be brief; especially when others are waiting to be able to participate
--Be natural & genuine
--Be awake to say an "AMEN" to what another asks of God

Be a participator, not just a spectator

Just GET STARTED! Illus—How Dad taught me to swim—THREW ME IN + I swam!!

2-Remember---Public prayer is "UNTO GOD" (Acts 12:5) and not to an audience

3-Prayer is OPEN TO BELIEVERS
--1 Pet. 3:12--"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

4-Prayer requires that WE BE CLEAN! Pure before GOD!
--Ps. 66:18--"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

5-TRAINING GROUND for larger service often begins with your praying in public
--ILLUS--P.C.R.'s first time to pray publicly in Lincoln, Nebraska
--Not likely to be useful to the Lord's work if you aren't disciplined to PUT PRAYER FIRST !!
--A. H. Strong at Rochester Seminary in 1906:
"I am inclined to believe that all errors of doctrine have resulted from neglect of prayer. I doubt whether men who live a life of prayer can doubt the unity & sufficiency of Scripture, the supremacy of righteousness in God, the depravity & helplessness of man, God's initiative in salvation, the deity & atonement of Christ. I am persuaded that all decline in doctrine or polity, in conscientiousness or liberality, in evangelistic activity, or missionary zeal in our churches is due to the neglect of prayer. Does it seem strange to you that one who represents an institution for theological education should so emphasize one of the means of success? Let us make no mistake! Prayer is primary; education is secondary."

6-What about DELAYS IN ANSWERS to our prayers?
--Learn to persevere in prayer KEEP AT IT!
--Observe with what earnestness the believers in Jerusalem prayed for Peter's release.
--God was also giving Herod TIME TO REPENT, and release Peter in peace
--Often we learn "afterward" how God has been very active during what we thought of as "delay times"

Jn. 13:7 "Thou shalt know hereafter..."

II.-RESULTS OF CORPORATE PRAYER MEETINGS:

A.-OUTward Results:

1-Souls saved — SALVATION
2-Bodies restored — PHYSICAL
3-Lives upbuilt--Your own
-OTHERS ALSO
4-Work of God upbuilt
5-REVIVAL
6-Physical deliverances (Acts 1a)
7-In other words.....THE ANSWERS DO COME !!
8-Bishop Hopkins: "Our prayers and God's mercy are like two buckets in a well: While one ascends, the other descends."

Currier
Sievers
Berkheiser
Nelson
Teens - Families
Collegians - Ch.
Xn Service - Family
MISSIONS - Rodriguez - McKinneys
Hammons - Portugalo

9-ILLUS--While at Pine Valley Bible Conference on Aug. 31, 1961 we received word that a man in the Upland Bible Church was at death's door due to an unknown malady of the throat, for which the doctors did not know what to do for treatment.

Several of us prayed specifically for his improvement in a season of prayer at 10:00 PM following the evening service, when we got the message. The next morning a call informed us that not only was he not worse, but that at 10:00 PM the night before--THE VERY HOUR in which we prayed---he took a turn toward marked improvement. *

B.-INward Results:

1-Sweet fellowship with our God
--Pitifulness of Jesus' words to his disciples:
--Mt. 26:40--"What, could ye not watch with me one hour?"
2-Blessed Cooperation with fellow-believers in business of eternal importance
3-Strengthened in the faith
4-Testimony enhanced--Shows where your heart is.
* 5-Mid-week "SPIRITUAL BATH" Roger Reynolds
6-Satisfaction of sharing in results thru prayer
7-Growth in--Trust in God
--Practical obedience
--Knowledge of God by being intimately in His presence

CONCLUSION:

A.-Prayer Meeting That Opened A Prison: (And so IMPORTANT!)

1-The purpose--Prayer
2-The personnel--Local church believers — All present
3-The persistence--"without ceasing"
4-The power--supernaturally
5-The pitfall--They were NOT EXPECTANT
6-The praise--By Peter (12:11)
--By Rhoda (12:14)

B.-WHY Is Such Prayer So Needful?:

1-Because there is a devil & his co-horts — AGAINST US!
2-Because prayer is God's appointed way of obtaining things from our Heavenly Father
3-Because prayer occupied an important place in the life of our Lord

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

4-Because prayer occupied a large part of the life & ministry both of the Apostles and of the Early Church
5-Because prayer is a most important part of our Savior's present ministry for us ← From His place in heaven! (7)

C.-YOUR Personal Reaction:

1-"Too busy" ? ? ?
2-Perhaps you are too busy if you're too busy to join in with brethren to pray together

3-In danger of spending your entire life SERVING MAN, without a thought for SERVING GOD

4-ILLUS.--There is an old church in Europe in which may be seen a picture of a plowman who has left his plow & turned aside to pray. But while he prays an angel is doing his plowing for him.

The moments we spend "looking up" are NOT LOST TIME. We work the better & more effectively for the moments we've spent in prayer when we do return to the duties of our lives.

YOUR PLOWING--whatever it is--will not suffer by your taking some moments every day and an hour every week in prayer meeting to direct your prayer to God & to "look up"!

5-Don't just say: "OUCH",----"He sure hit me today!"

6-DO something about it !!!

7-Prayer Meeting is the POWER HOUR of the Church

8-ARE YOU ADDING to that power by your presence & petitions ??

9-Poem---"Prayer-Meeting Night"

Where would I be on a prayer-meeting night
If my Lord should suddenly come?
At Church, in my place, or out with the crowd
Just having some innocent fun?

Where would I be? Getting food for my soul,
And praying for those who are lost;
Or absent again--forgetting the One
Who bought me at infinite cost?

Where would I be? I've excuses enough,
But how would they look in His sight?
Where would I want Him to find me at last
Should He come on a prayer-meeting night?

(SELECTED)

10- Is there a SHORT-CIRCUIT in the power of God because of YOU??
• Part of the PROBLEM OR
• Part of the SOLUTION

(OVER)

Which will you and your family be?

Prayer was CHARACTERISTIC of the early church

(8)

and

may it be so with us also!

7/23/72 - Westbrae
8/2/97 - O.K.B.C
9/26/99 - Grace Gospel Ch
7/5/09 - Harper Heights Bapt. Ch.

#313 Dear Lord And Father Of Mankind
#30 Sweet Hour Of Prayer
#378 The Beautiful Hour Of Prayer

"Prayer Meeting" Scripture Reading: Acts 12:1-19

Intro. A.-Christ's Promise in Mt. 18:19-20.

B.-Yet this little quip is so true: "Death was caused by serious neglect on the part of careless Christians, & unless the Lord raises it up in answer to the prayers of a few exercised saints funeral will take place shortly. The remains will be taken to the Judgment Bar of God, where HE will hold an inquest, having all the facts relative to the wicked neglect of those who forsook the Prayer Meeting, causing such a sad & untimely death.

I.-REASONS FOR HAVING PRAYER MEETING:

A.-Command & Promise of Christ

1-Meeting for prayer--Apostolic example — Acts 2:42-47 Prayer was where the power came from for new Ch.

2-Agreeing in prayer (2 or 3 or more) — Do you Believe it?

3-Presence in their midst of Jesus Christ — Mt. 18:19

4-Answers to prayers are then forthcoming. — Acts 4:13 6

B.-Needs demand the having of Prayer Meeting.

1-Personal Needs:

--communion
--thanksgiving
--sharing burdens & blessings
--fellowship in prayer strengthens all

(Preach because you can't remember for many years)

2-Needs of Others:

--Missions
--Local Church & Pastor
--Fellow Christians
--Unsaved folks--1 Tim. 2:1

Prayer Cards Bring Results in souls saved

3-ILLUS--It is said that Alexander the Great had a favorite general to whom he had given permission to draw upon the royal treasury for any amount. On one such occasion the general had made a draft for an enormous sum such that the treasurer refused to honor it until he consulted the emperor. So he went into his presence & told him what the General had done. "Did you not honor the draft?" said the Emperor. "No; I refused until I had seen your majesty, because the amount was so great." The emperor was indignant. His treasurer said that he was afraid of offending him if he had paid the amount. "Do you not know," replied the emperor, "that he honors me & my kingdom by making a large draft?"-----So also we honor our God when we ask great things of Him.

C.-Public Testimony:

1-Evaluation of attendance at church:

--Morning Service--Church's popularity
--Evening Service--Pastor's popularity
--Prayer Meeting---The Lord's popularity. — Mk. 26:40-41

2-Show others our Confidence in Power of Prayer

--unsaved
--Unchurched
--Other Christians--where you work — People who call in Prayer regu eats, but never come to the P.M.
--at home when they "drop in" on Wed. Nite

3-ILLUS--A young man enlisted, & was sent to his regiment. The first night he was in the barracks with about 15 other young men, who passed the time playing cards & gambling. Before retiring, he fell on his knees & prayed, & they began to curse him & jeer him & throw boots at him. -- So it went on the next night & the next, & finally the young man went & told the chaplain what had taken place, & asked what he could do. "Well," said the chaplain, "you are not at home now, & the other men have just as much right in the barraks as you have. It makes them mad to hear you pray, & the Lord will hear you

say your prayers in bed & don't provoke them."----For weeks after the chaplain did not see the young man again, but one day he met him, & asked---"By the way, did you take my advice?"---"I did, for 2 or 3 nite he replied. "How did it work?" "Well," said the young man, "I felt like a whipped hound, & the third night I got out of bed, knelt down & prayed."---"Well," asked the chaplain, "how did it work?"---The young soldier answered: "We have a prayer meeting there now every night. 3 have been converted & we are praying for the rest." Let us ALL be stedfast to give a testimony for Christ in EVERY way.

D.-Strengthen Faith

1-Pray specifically & then we'll get & recognize real answers.

2-Moses prays--the sea divides
Joshua prays--Achan is discovered
Hannah prays--Samuel is born
Asa prays--A vicory is gained
Jehosaphat cries--God turns away his foes
Isaiah & Hezekiah pray--185,000 Assyrians are dead in 12 hrs
Daniel Prays--Dream revealed: Lions muzzled: Prophecy clear.
Nehemiah prays--A King's heart is softened.
Elijah prays--Droughth of 3 years: then rain came by Prayer
Elisha prays--Jordon divided; a child's soul comes back.
Church prays--Peter delivered from prison.

More references to UNITED PRAYER than PRIVATE PRAYER in the N.T.

II.-HELPFULNESS OF PRAYER MEETING

A.-Public Prayer:

1-God wants "CLOSET" prayer--Abraham by his altar
Isaac in his field
Jacob at the river
Moses on the Mountain
Peter on the housetop
Acts 12

Prayer UNTO God to the AUDIENCE

2-God also wants "CORPORATE" prayer by His church.

3-Training ground for future service--ILLUS--First time Paul C. Reiter ever led in prayer in Lincoln.

B.-Sharing: RULES

1-Personal Needs & burdens--with others
--with the Lord

1. Be on time - Appt is with G
2. Be Brief
3. Be Natural
4. Be awake to say an AMEN!

2-Needs of others

3-Work of the Lord--LOCAL**NATIONAL**INTERNATIONAL

4-A good antidote for complaining is PRAYING FOR THEM.

5-ILLUS--You have hard the story of the child who was rescued from the fire that was raging in a house way up in the 4th story. The child came to the window, & as the flames were shooting higher & higher it cried out for help. A fireman started up the ladder of the fire-escape to rescue the child from its dangerous position. The wind swept the flames near him, & it was getting so hot that he wavered, & it looked as if he would have to return without the child. Thousands looked on & their hearts quaked at the thought of the child having to perish in the fire, as it must do if the fireman did not reach it. Some one in the crowd cried: *******"GIVE HIM A CHEER!"---Cheer after cheer went up, & as the man heard them he gathered fresh courage. He went into the midst of the smoke & fire, & brought down the child in safety. If you can not go and rescue the perishing yourself, you can at least pray for those who do, & cheer them on. If you do, the Lord will bless the effort. Do not grumble & criticize; it takes neither heart nor brains to do that.

6-Blessings of ANSWERED prayers encourages one to pray on.

C.-Attitudes:

1-Prayer humbles us--praying in front of others
--praying on knees--some need much practice

2-Prayer becomes HABITUAL--a real PART of you--David "Evening, morn & noon"; Daniel "As he did afore time"; Jesus "As his custom WAS" Paul "Prayers day & Nite"

3-Creates an attitude of interest in others:
4-You have a part in spiritual ministry you can't participate in otherwise

III.-RESULTS OF PRAYER MEETING:

A.-Public:
1-People get saved when prayed for
2-People unbuilt when prayed for
3-Church is strengthened when prayed for
4-Strong positive testimony for Christ when prayer backs it.
5-Help to one another out of hard places--ILLUS--Peter in Acts

B.-Personal:
1-Sweet fellowship--with God
--with fellow believers
2-Strengthened faith & testimony "Mid-week Bath"
3-Satisfaction of having a part in answered prayer:

C.-TOO BUSY?????!!!!!

ILLUS--There is an old church in Europe in which may be seen a picture of a plowman who has left his plow & turned aside to pray. But while he prays an angel is going on with his plowing for him. The moments we spend "looking up" are not LOST TIME. We work the better & the more effectively for them when we return to our ordinary duties. Your plowing--whatever it is--will not suffer by your taking some moments very day & 1 hour a week in prayer meeting to direct your prayer unto God & to "look up." "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee."

CONCL:---Don't just say "OUCH"--He sure hit me---& then let it slide off. DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT !!!!

Let's see YOU & YOUR FAMILY at Prayer Meeting Regularly!

INTRO:

1

A.-Preparation:

Our Lord established **His Church** on earth to be a progressive growing, spiritual organism. It was to spread its message & extend its influence to other lands & reach new people who had never heard its message. It was to have a **missionary spirit** and vision. It was founded to diffuse the fragrance of Christ (2 Cor. 2:14-16) & the saving message of the gospel to the ends of the earth

The book of Acts is one account of the Church's growth & **extension** from Jerusalem, Judea & Samaria to the vast Gentile world, eventually comprehending "the uttermost part of the earth. Philip's missionary work in Samaria (8:5-13) & his witness to the Ethiopian court official (8:26-40) were expressions of the **missionary outlook** of the early Christians.

The same manifestation of the **spiritual outreach** of the early Church appears in the ministry of the disciples scattered abroad by the persecution that followed Stephen's martyrdom (8:1-4) & Peter's witness to the Gentiles at Caesarea (10:23-48). All these activities were expressions of the **evangelistic** & **missionary zeal** of the infant Church. However, the first account of an organized foreign missionary program by the Church appears in Acts 13.

B.-City Of Antioch:

Gentile city + Gentile church

1-Capital of **Syria** for Greek Kings (Seleucids) after death of Alexander when the empire was divided
2-Predominantly a **GREEK CITY**
3-Located at the N.W. corner of the Mediteranian Sea, just around the corner from Tarsus
4-Major **center** of **trade** & **government**

C.-Church of Antioch: (Acts 11:19-30)

1-**COMMENCEMENT**
- Record indicates that some who were **scattered** at the time of Stephen's persecution, did the preaching that founded the Church(11:19)
- Cyprians & Cyrenians **continued** the evangelization (11:20)
- Many **believed** & turned to the Lord (11:21)

2-**CONFIRMATION**
- When these tidings came to Jerusalem, the Church there **sent Barnabas** to investigate & help
- Barnabas exhorted these new believers

3-**CONSOLIDATION**
- Barnabas **got Saul** from Tarsus to help
- "**CHRISTIANS**" was a term of derision first used to describe believers in Antioch

4-**COOPERATION**
- **Offering** sent from Antioch to aid the poor saints in Jerusalem — "Every man participated" 11:29

D.-Characteristics of the Antioch Church: (2)

1-UNITY--Eph. 4:4-6
--ALL believers everywhere share these 7 "unities"

2-MARKED VARIETY of gifts
--God's method is a man
--God gives gifts to men & gifted men to the Church
--Preachers or evangelists (11:19, 20)
--Exhorters (11:23)
--Teachers (11:26; 13:1)
--Prophets (11:27; 13:1)
--These spiritual gifts ** From the Lord Himself
** By the operation of the Holy Spirit
--No apostles in Antioch at that time — Spontaneous Expansion

3-WATERSHED of the Book of Acts
--New phase in the Church's life — MISSIONARY MOVEMENT
--Outreach to the whole world begins
--Antioch, not Jerusalem is the center of expansion
--Prominent personage is not Peter but Saul/Paul

4-PROP:--Work of the Spirit in Missions
--Involvement of Men in Missions
--Ministry of the Church in Missions

INT How do we see these 3 elements at work in the N.T.?

I-PREPARATION---THE SPIRIT CALLS IN THE CHURCH (13:1-2a):

A.-The Church Is An Important Organization:
1-Place where men ministered== "IN the Church that was at Antioch" — Not a building, but a people!
2-Place where believers met & worshipped
3-Place where the Spirit spoke
4-ONLY organization ever given the gospel commission by God
5-PROPER SPHERE for every true Christian to be identified & working
6-Here the Spirit spoke:
--Not to the mob in the streets
--Not to the legislators in City Hall
--Not to the soldiers in their garrison
--Not to unbelievers in heathen temples
--But IN and TO and THRU the Church of Jesus Christ came the Holy Spirit's call
7-Live in a day of MINIMIZED CHURCH IMPORTANCE today, but it was not so, Biblically
8-We neglect it--To our own detriment
--To the detriment of God's work
Need to get back to basics — PRIMACY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

B.-"They Ministered To The Lord" (13:2):
1-This is the business of believers
--Gk λειτουργεῖς; =="Priestly service"
--Function of worshipping believers
--PRAYER & PRAISE
--Worship is a prime & fundamental necessity!
--Antioch saints recognized that WORK for the Lord is not everything
--Church there majored on the ART OF WORSHIP toward God
--OUTCOME of worship is a readiness to serve (IN the Ch.)

2-Parallel passages:
--Ezek. 43:19--"And thou shalt give to the priests & Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me..."
--Rev. 7:10-16...Progression of:
1. Salvation — 7:10
2. Worship — 7:11-12
3. Service 7:13-15
4. Satisfaction — 7:16a
5. and Security 7:16b

True for heaven; Should be true NOW ALSO

3-"And fasted" 13:2 --Self-denial
--Especially helpful when making or receiving decisions
--Heightens sensitivity to the Spirit's communications

4-Church is an INSTITUTION FOR WORSHIP
--"Ministering to the LORD" — 13:2
--Then sent forth to be of service of outreach
--Worship & work are always closely associated
--If we work without worship, we shall DISASTROUSLY FAIL
--If we worship without work, we shall BECOME RITUALISTS
--Ones to whom the Spirit can reveal Jesus and God's will are ones who have an attitude of WORSHIP

5-This "MINISTERING" was active, not passive

6-Eph. 4:11-12--"And He gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ."

C. The Spirit Speaks: (13:1-2) (PERSONALITY & DEITY of Sp.)

1-The Prophets & teachers:
--Barnabas is first named
** Originally from Cyprus
** Prominent in Church at Jerusalem
** Delegated to oversee the new Church at Antioch
** SENIOR PASTOR of the ministering team
--Simeon ** Black man from Africa
** Proselyte who had taken a Jewish name
** Now saved, gifted & ministering
--Lucius
** Latin Name
** NOt likely LUKE or the Lucius named in Rom. 16
--Manaen ** Hebrew Christian
** Foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch (Herod Antipas) who had murdered John the Baptist
** Prominent Jew
--Saul ** Last named
** Intern from Tarsus learning from Barnabas

2-MANY were active!

3-G. C. Morgan--"In Judaism, the son of the High Priest succeeds to the priesthood. That is so no longer. There is no succession, because the living Lord is always present. Succession means distance, but the Lord is ever

in the midst of His Church!" (Acts, P. 309)

4

4-The Spirit SOVEREIGNLY SPEAKS to some for this missionary activity as GOERS to a FOREIGN ASSIGNMENT

* --Initiative is by the Spirit
--No indication of superiority of any chosen
--No indication of inferiority of any not chosen
* --NAKED SOVEREIGNTY; Divine guidance
--Gal. 1:1--"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)"
--G. C. Morgan (P. 305) "There is a sense in which it would be perfectly accurate to say that the Church had no voice in the selection of these men. The choice was...the activity of the Spirit: SEPARATE ME BARNABAS AND SAUL FOR THE WORK WHEREUNTO I HAVE CALLED THEM." (Acts)

5-Yet ....it was IN THE CHURCH

* 6-90% +/- of those on the Mission fields & in Pastorates today came thru this way of a strong home and local Church influence

* 7-God puts a premium on this kind of training "ON THE JOB"
--Joshua with Moses
--Elisha with Elijah
--Saul with Barnabas
--Silas with Paul
--Mark with Barnabas
--Timothy, Titus, Tychichus, Trophimus, Epaphras, Epaphroditus & others with Paul

MODELING BY EXAMPLE

8-WOE BETIDE the Christian worker who fails to know the workings of a Biblical LOCAL CHURCH
** Many fail to know what their ministry is expected to produce
** Complications of foreign languages & cultures
NB * ** Best he not also have a FOREIGN TASK

9-WOE BETIDE the "christian work" which is not integrally tied into the furthering of the LOCAL CHURCH
--Otherwise an orphan
--Totally UNSCRIPTURAL
--Today we see far too many "ARMS" reaching into the local Church for funds & workers
* --But where is the VITAL CONNECTION with the local body which is God's expression in the local Church??
** In depth communication
** Counsel in polity, standards & discipline
** Same position on doctrine & separation

10-Let's return --God's program
--Primacy of personal ministry of Worship
--LOCAL CHURCH as the Biblically responsible organization

II.-PERSONALIZATION--THE SPIRIT CALLS TO THE CHURCH (13:2b):

A.-Message To The Church:

II. -PERSONALIZATION---THE SPIRIT CALLS TO THE CHURCH (13:2b):

A. -Message To The Church:

1-Barnabas & Saul were a **PART** of the Church

2-All who **WORK IN IT**, must be a PART **OF IT** ! (5)

--Members

--Baptized

--Involved —Learn by DOING

--Experienced

--Proven over some time

3-**Separation** as it pertained to the Church

--**FREE THEM** from their present work "Loose team"

** Hard to spare this kind of workers

** Might appear to **cripple** the local ministry

** But God calls the **BUSY** to fields of greater usefulness

** Often the MOST **EMMINENT** are called out

** AND God always provides replacements (Bill Liner, Harold Casper, etc.)

BOTH

--**AUTHORIZE THEM** for their new work

** **Church** has this responsibility

++ Give them freedom to go

++ Give them authority to go

** Church is **to participate** in their ministry

** Congregation is to be **INVOLVED**!!

** **IDENTIFICATION** with the ones called out

4-Gk. reads "**Separate** me **NOW!**"

** Imperative command

** In the immediate time frame

** **Message** is clearly **from** the **Spirit**

++ No mistake or doubt

++ Not told how this happened

++ Only told that **it occurred**, and that the **Church understood** it.

5-**Called** the Church into **DEFINITE ACTIVITY** with Himself

B. -Message To Barnabas & Saul:

1-**WHEN** were they called?

2-Was it just here in **Acts 13**?!??

3-**Paul's CALL**--Gal. 1:15-6 (From birth)

--Acts 9:15-16 (At conversion)

--2 Cor. 12:1-7 (When ministering at Tarsus)

--Acts 13:1-3 (PUBLIC CONFIRMATION at Antioch

--Very **PROGRESSIVE** in development — Step by Step

--Not **STATIC**, but **DYNAMIC** !

4-**Barnabas' Call**

--No knowledge of **the timing** of the Spirit's working in his heart

--Only know that there was an extremely **close affinity** between Saul & Barnabas

5-MACAULAY: "Draw nigh unto God, and He will draw nigh unto you." Do not be surprised if He draw nigh in **an unexpected manner.** I should not wonder a bit if some of those good ministers were praying that day, 'LORD, **LAY THINE HAND** & THINE ORDINATION ON SOME OF THE FINE **YOUNG MEN** OF THIS GENTILE CONGREGATION, & **SEND THEM OUT** TO PREACH THE GOSPEL to their fellow-Gentiles

in Cilicia & Asia & Bithynia & Macedonia & Achaia & Italy & Lybia & Spain & Gaul,' when the Holy Spirit broke in upon them with this startling communication: 'SET APART FOR ME BARNABAS AND SAUL!'. (6)

Two of their own number! And the chief of them at that! Was not Barnabas sent from the mother Church at Jerusalem to help them & did he not bring Saul from Tarsus as one specially suited to the work here? When extraordinary tasks were to be performed, when appointments of high trust were to be made, did anybody ever think of other choices than Barnabas & Saul? "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul!' The more unreasonable it seemed, the more imperative it became.

This also is one of the ways of God. "PRAY YE therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will thrust forth laborers into His harvest.' So our Lord exhorted His first disciples; and scarcely had they begun to pray as they were taught when 'HE CHOSE THEM that...He might send them'. God has a way of HAVING US DO the things we pray should be done." (Acts, P. 141)

C. Message Of Separation For The Work:

1-Not a vacation, but a vocation (Eph. 4:1)

* 2-Separation=="RESERVED FOR SERVICE"

--ILLUS--A friend of mine who operates a restaurant told me of a visit he paid in wartime to the packer's warehouse. He saw an unusually fine section of meat, & was closing the deal for it when an army sergeant came up behind him, touched the carcases and said:

"A R M Y".

That constituted a federal order to the packer to reserve that meat for the armed forces. It could be put to no other use; disposed of in no other way. In regard to all the meat which the sergeant indicated, the packer became AN AGENT of the government to reserve it for military disposition. SO THE HOLY SPIRIT lays the Church under obligation with respect to those whom HE MARKS FOR

* HIS OWN USE.

3-That separation was:

-By the Spirit-------SOVEREIGNTY
-Unto God----------SANCTIFICATION
-For the work-------SERVICE

* Long hours
** Hard work
** Physical dangers
** Spiritual battles
** VICTORIES in lives

4-Required that they "burn their bridges behind them"

* 5-ILLUS--I Kings 19:19-21

6-G. C. Morgan:--"The final word is for the individual. No man can go unless the Spirit call him. This is the high doctrine of the ministry. Men cannot make a minister; not even the Church, nor her theological halls. He must be called of the Spirit. Unless he hear that call sounding in his soul, ringing like a trumpet night and day, giving him no rest until he is compelled to say, 'WOE IS ME IF I PREACH NOT': then in God's name let him stay where he is,

in his present calling. BUT if he **hear the call**, then let him **remember** that it is his business to go forward **WITHIN** the fellowship and **UNDER** the guidance of the Church."(P.312, Acts)

III.-PARTICIPATION---THE SPIRIT CALLS THRU THE CHURCH (13:3):

7

A.-Three Essentials In A True Ordination:

1-The action of **GOD**----------God **CALLS**
2-The action of the **CHURCH**-------**Church SENDS**
3-The action of the **CALLED ONES**--**They GO**
*4-Here we have all three clearly seen:
Acts 13:3

5-Macaulay: "No man is truly ordained who has not been indicated by the Holy Spirit as **a chosen vessel**, though a thousand councils or ten thousand bishops should lay their hands on him. The manner in which the Spirit points out His chosen ones **will vary**, but it is still the **obligation** of the **leaders** of a local church to be **seeking the face** of the Lord in this regard, **expecting** that their church will be honored in such a fashion; and when a young man begins to give evidence of special devotion and special aptitude, the elders ought to **surround him** with earnest prayer and **loving encouragement**, till they and he together know the mind of the Lord. In too many instances young men whose hearts incline them to the work of the Gospel are **left to find** the **will of God for themselves**, without the counsel & prayers of older, more experienced & discerning men of God." (Acts, P. 142)

B.-Five Elements In A True Ordination:

1-"**THEY**"==The **WHOLE CHURCH**: God's authorized organiza.
--Genuine involvement by all
--Not a work of a minority
--Not a decision of the leaders alone
--**Parallel** -----**Acts 15:22**
--It was the WHOLE CHURCH that sent them out (13:3)
--It was **to** that same **WHOLE CHURCH** that they returned & reported (14:26-28)

2-"**FASTED**"--Emblem of **sacrifice**
--Not a matter lightly viewed by the Church
--**C O S T** them something

3-"**PRAYED**"
--Evidence of the **solemnity** of the occasion
--More than "a word" of prayer
--Doubtless their desire there was **to BATHE** the expedition **in prayer**, though they knew not what perils these brethren would face
--MUTUAL COMMITMENT seen here

4-"And **laid their hands on them**"
--**Ordination** of the **SPIRIT**------Acts 13:2
--Ordination of the **CHURCH**------Acts 13:3
** Not an **adding** of **a qualification** they did not already possess
** But a **RECOGNIZING** of God's call on their lives
** **FELLOWSHIP** with them in their call

** APPROVAL by their brethren
** Not Apostolic ordination, but by the LOCAL CHURCH leaders.

--MACAULAY--"The missionaries would never forget that joint ordination & farewell, when the hands of their brother-ministers were laid upon their heads, they know that they represent a host of holy hands that for hours had been lifted up to God on their behalf. We may refuse to call ordination a sacrament; we may disavow it as a 'means of grace' in the sacramental sense; but no man can have such a service performed for him as Barnabas & Saul had for them that day, & fail to carry with him through all his earthly ministry & up to the Throne itself a profound sense of the grandeur of his calling, a DEEP REALIZATION of his own unworthiness, & a STRONG ASSURANCE of Divine enablement."(Acts, P. 144)

5-"They sent them away" = SUPPORT
==Lit, "They let them go"
--Freed to serve as REPRESENTATIVES of that local Church
-SHOULD imply outfit & finances
--Yet, the Antioch Church FAILED IN THIS
--Phs. 4:15--"Now ye Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no Church communicated with me as concerning giving & receiving, but ye only."
--WHY??
** Failure of the leaders?? Perhaps
** Failure of the people ?? Perhaps--We don't know
--Nonetheless, here we see the fulfillment of Acts 1:8

6-A. H. Strong--"What are churches for, but to make missionaries?? What is education for, but to train them?? What is commerce for, but to send them?? What is life itself for, but to fulfill the purpose of MISSIONS, the enthroning of Jesus Christ in the hearts of men?"

7-Significance of Acts 13
--Not noteworthy to the people of that day
--Missionary activity that changed the course of history
--Vital influence on generations yet unborn
--SO ALSO our sending forth today of our God-called fellow believer to the work to which God has called

CONCLUSION:

A-Pattern For The Initial Outreach:
1-Spirit calls IN the Church
2-Spirit calls TO the Church
3-Spirit calls THRU the Church
4-Spirit of God calls PERSONALLY to those who are involved
5-Spirit called two finely qualified brethren, who could least be spared
6-PATTERN: --Team ministry in & thru the Church

--Strategic use of personnel
--SPIRIT is the dynamic of the missionary enterprise
--Prayer & sacrifice of the WHOLE CHURCH is behind all effective outreach

B.-Pattern For The Church Today:

1-Minister to the Lord

2-Use and develop many Spirit-gifted men & women

3-Expect the Holy Spirit to call out some from the midst of our congregations

4-COOPERATE HEARTILY and immediately & continuously !

5-ILLUS--In New York City, down by the docks there is a very swift current. Anyone falling into that is almost certain to be drowned. One day not long ago a child fell into this swift current

The people standing there were paralyzed with terror. A nearby young man was a noted swimmer. A large coil of rope lay there. The young man told the group that he would tie the rope around his waist, & swim out & get the child IF they would hold the other end of the rope & pull them in when he signalled. Soon the young man was swimming rapidly toward the child, the rope was unwinding. When he reached the child, he gave the signall to draw them in.

BUT the people in their excitement had forgotten to hold the rope, & the end of the rope was seen drifting away in the swift current---leading to the DEATH of both the child & the swimmer

6-HOME-CHURCH RESPONSIBILITY OF "holding the ropes"

** Encourage prospective missionaries
** Pray for laborers to be sent out
** Recognize the God-called ones
** Support them financially
** Undergird them in prayer

God help us to be faithful to these responsibilities.

"It is INSANE -
It is IMMORAL - to send out our missionaries without prayer"

Westbrae--11/3/63
Calvary, Columbus--2/29/76
Druid Park Blvd. Bible Ch - 5/4/77
Ivis Bible Ch, Ky - 11/11/79
Old Kanawha Bapt. Ch, Pratt - 9/30/84
SBCC - 2/26/89
Salina Bible Ch - Salina, PA 10/98
Grace Gospel Church, Beaver 2/31/99 + 2/7/99 + 2/14/99

#39--Where He Leads, I'll Follow
#473--The Regions Beyond
#31--"I'll Go Where You Want Me To Go"
481
538
127 - Take The Name of Jesus With You

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

Grace Gospel Ch – AM – 6/25/2000 – John + Melanie McKinney Commissioning

"THE POSITIVE SIDE OF FORGIVENESS---- JUSTIFICATION"

Acts 13:14-43
Rom. 4:5-8

(1)

INTRO:

A. Preceding Presentations:

1-Message on Forgiveness of **Sin** (See Ezek.18:1-32)
2-Message on FORGIVING **OTHERS** (See Mt. 18:21-35)
3-FORGIVENESS OF SIN: (Review)
--**Human**;; Putting away the penalty
--**Divine**;; **Execution** of the penalty; **DEATH**
--Removes sin from being on one's record
--Summarized in **Acts 13:38**--"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the FORGIVENESS of SIN
--Returns one virtually to a **state of innocence**
** Not negatively **WRONG** in God's sight
** Nor positively **RIGHT** in God's sight
--**SO**.....something **more** is needed beyond forgiveness
--**BUT**....man is **unable** to **bring** anything to God that makes him acceptable with a holy God.

4-Therefore if a man is to be RIGHT (or righteous) in God's sight, **God** will have to **provide** that **RIGHTNESS** for man, which leads us to...

B. Present Message--JUSTIFICATION:

1-Summarized in **Acts 13:39**--"And by Him all that believe are **justified** from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."
2-**Def.** of **Justification**
=="Declared righteous in the sight of God"
--**Root** in Gk. is same for "righteous" and for "justified"
--**SO** ** To be righteous in God's sight is to be "justified"
** To be justified in God's sight is to be righteous in His evaluation.
3-**Meaning** of Justification
--A divine **ACT**, not a human **ATTAINMENT**
--**Distinguished** from "made righteous", which is sanctification
--**More** than **removal** of guilt & penalty
--Indicates a positive righteousness placed to our account.
4-Outline:
I.-THE PROBLEM OF GOD:
II.-THE POSITIONS OF MEN:
III.-THE POSITIVE SIDE OF FORGIVENESS---JUSTIFICATION:
5-**Prop:**-- Believers need to understand their need of a righteous standing with God, and how they may receive that standing.

I.-THE PROBLEM OF GOD:

A.-God As Judge:

1-Forgiveness views God as a HEAVENLY **BOOKKEEPER** removing all the entries due to sin from our account

2-Justification views God as THE RIGHTEOUS **JUDGE** of all the earth

3-As **an accountant** of **absolute integrity**, God (Who is absolutely righteous)
- --Set down the **DEBITS** of Adam's sin to the whole human race (including you & me)
- --When **Christ** accepted our liabilities & **paid our debt** at Calvary...
- --The Heavenly Accountant **transferred** our **debit balance** to His Son
- --Thereby our debit balance due to sin was **CLEARED** TOTALLY !!
- --Furthermore, when the Heavenly Accountant **transferred** the **Divine Righteousness** of His Son **to our account**, He acted in a righteous manner.

4-Now as the **RIGHTEOUS JUDGE** of all the earth, His absolute integrity is **expressed in JUDGMENT**:
- --Gen. 18:25d--"..."Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"
- --Ps. 9:7-8--"...the LORD shall endure for ever: He hath prepared His throne for judgment. And He shall judge the world in righteousness, He shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness"
- --**SO**.....we come to...

B.-The Principle Of Righteousness:

1-God's **nature** of righteousness requires:
- --That He **acquit** all persons who are righteous
- --That He **condemn** all persons who are evil

2-Expressed in **HIS STANDARDS** for human judges on earth appointed to administer justice

3-**Deut. 25:1**--"If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto (the place of) judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked."
- --Divine **principle** given for me
- --Because that's the way the Divine Judge will deal
- --No respecter of persons
- --**No favoritism** for any
- --**No "bending"** of the rules
- --Deut. 10:17--"For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:"
- --Judgment on basis of **FACTS** of a case
- --Judgment **not** upon **SENTIMENTAL INCLINATIONS** of the Judge

4-Therefore when it comes to the judgment of sinful man, God has **a most difficult problem** (at least from a human point of view) due to His ABSOLUTE RIGHTEOUSNESS.

C.-The Judge's Problem:

1-**God's Character**--**Absolutely righteous**; so---He must render

judgment **according to the facts**
--**Total knowledge** as the Omniscient One; SO--He has all the facts at His disposal: (3)
** No hearsay evidence
** No contradictory testimony
** Just IMPECCABLE **TRUTH**
--So **God will** (in harmony with His character) **judge** according to **the facts**:
** Adamic **NATURE** of sin in us
** Personal **ACTS** of sin by us

2-HOWEVER, God is also **LOVE**:
--Self-sacrificing love (Agape)
--He desires to **find** a **righteous ground** whereby SINFUL MEN might be **acquitted** instead of **condemned**
--**The answer** to this paradox is **found at Calvary**

3-St. Paul recognizes this problem & states it in **Rom. 3:26** "To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness; that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus"
--**HOW** can God be both **JUST**, and also **A JUSTIFIER** of those who put their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior ??????????
--Paul spends almost **3 chapters** (Rom. 1-3) proving "all have sinned & come short of the glory of God" (3:23)
--**So**, as sinners, **all** men **deserve condemnation** unto death---NOT ACQUITTAL
--The facts demand a **verdict**....of **GUILTY !!**

4-Since God--The Righteous Judge--must acquit only those who can honestly be declared "righteous", and condemn all those who are lacking in Divine Righteousness, **HOW CAN** the "Judge of all the earth" do anything except **sentence all mankind** to **ETERNAL DEATH???**

5-That was **God's "PROBLEM"**.

II.-THE POSITIONS OF MEN:

A.-"In Adam":

1-Adam & Eve were created **INNOCENT**
2-When they sinned, they heeded the words of God's enemy & assumed a **new relationship** as **SINNERS**:
--Father & Mother of the human race
--**Produced sinners** as their children, reproducing "after their kind"
--Viewed as **"IN ADAM"**
--1 Cor. 15:22--"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive"

3-**Only way out**--**NEW BIRTH** "from above"
--Thru faith in Christ
--**Physical** nature thru **physical** birth
--**Heavenly** nature thru **spiritual** birth
--**Old** nature; **SINFUL**
--**New** nature; **SINLESS**
--Born in **rebellion** as a follower of Sata
--**Re-born** in **obedience** to God's Word

--This new relationship of a "saved one" who's BORN FROM ABOVE is called...

B.-"In Christ":

1-1 Cor. 15:22--"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

4

--Not an assertion of Universal salvation

--But a contrast of the 2 alternative positions

--Either "IN ADAM" or..."IN CHRIST"

--No other alternatives

2-What does it mean to be "IN CHRIST" ????

--Born again

--Partaker of the divine nature of righteousness & life

--Resident of the Kingdom of Light

--Indwelt by the Holy Spirit

--Ruled by the Lord Jesus Christ

--Chosen to this relationship before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:3-14)

3-That little word "IN" indicates relationship or sphere.

--In Christ

--In heaven

--Phs. 1:1--saints are "IN Christ Jesus" while they are "AT Philippi"

--Correspondingly the City of Philippi was loaded with people who were "In Adam" also

--Denotes spiritual citizenship

** "In Christ"---Kingdom of God

** "In Adam"-----Kingdom of Satan

* EVERYONE is in one or the other

4-Since Jesus Christ is the Righteous One, the only place where Divine Righteousness can be obtained by sinful man is "IN Christ Jesus"

--2 Cor. 5:21--"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

--Then the believer is seen to have Divine Righteousness

--And the Righteous Judge is able to look at the Christian and say "NOT GUILTY"

--The books are reconciled!

--Our debits are paid in full (FORGIVENESS)

--And Divine Righteousness has been "put to our account" (JUSTIFICATION) because of faith "IN CHRIST"

5-Where are you living your life??--"In Adam" ??

--"In Christ" ??

--Life is lived in that sphere where we hold our citizenship

--For the Christian--Phs. 3:20--"For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."

6-HOW THEN do I get....???

III.-THE POSITIVE SIDE OF FORGIVENESS—— SEVEN-FOLD JUSTIFICATION:??

A.-Justified By GOD: (1)

1-Rom. 8:33--"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is **God that justifieth.**"

2-Since sin is ultimately **AGAINST GOD**, then it is understandable that **ONLY GOD can justify**

3-When God has declared man righteous

--**No one can charge** man with his sin & guilt

--**No one can take away** that Child of God's standing in the righteousness of Christ put to his account

--Justification is a **WORK OF GOD !**

--**Eccles. 3:14**--"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever:" PTL!

--**So**, Justification **cannot be undone**

--Part of the truth of the **Eternal Security** of a believer

4-**ILLUS**--Gen. 3:21--"Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them."

--**BLOOD SACRIFICE required** for an acceptable offering for a covering for Adam & Eve's nakedness & sinfulness

--**Who provided it??** ?

--**GOD DID !!**

5-**Paul's testimony**--Phs. 3:9--"And be found **in Him**, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which **is of God** by faith."

6-William Temple: "**The only thing** of my very own which I can contribute to my redemption is **the sin** from which I need to be redeemed." (Nature, Man & God, P. 401)

B.-Justified By GRACE: (2)

1-**Rom 3:24**--"Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is **in Christ** Jesus:"

2-**GRACE**--"The **unmerited favor** of God

--God's Riches At Christ's Expense

--**How ??**

--"Freely"="without a cause"

--**Example** of that translation in **John 15:25**--"But this cometh to pass, that the Word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause"

3-No legitimate **reason** for Christ to have been **hated** by His enemies; They hated Him "**without a cause**"

4-**No legitimate reason** in us **to draw forth** the grace in justifying sinners such as we are, but God justified us "freely" or "without a cause" in us because of HIS GRACE (unmerited favor) toward us

5-**ILLUS**--**High Priest** in Zechariah 3 is **STRIPPED** of his filthy garments & then **CLEANSED** and thereafter **CLOTHED** so as to "**walk** in my ways" and then "**Keep** my charge"

6-ILLUS--Prodigal son returned to his father & confessed to him: "I HAVE SINNED" (6)
--Father's response was immediate (Lk. 15:22-24)
--That's Grace freely given----"WITHOUT A CAUSE" !!

C.-Justified By BLOOD: (3)
1-Rom. 5:9--"Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him."
2-Christ's BLOOD of sacrifice is the righteous ground of the sinner's hope
3-Because of that OFFERING FOR SIN, God can justify sinners
--God can't overlook sin
--God won't overlook sin
--God hasn't overlooked sin
--Indeed, Ex. 34:6-7--"...The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty;..."
--HOW THEN can God satisfy His own perfect justice as the moral Judge of the universe ????
--Answer: ** Penal, vicarious death of Jesus Christ
** 1 Pet. 3:18 a,b--"For Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust..."
** Jesus Christ was MY SUBSTITUTE.....and yours
4-Justified by His Blood which is the meritorious price of our salvation.

D.-Justified By His RESURRECTION: (4)
1-Rom. 4:25--"Who was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification."
--Some translate it: ""Who was delivered because we had sinned & was raised in order that we might be justified."
--NOT SO !!
--Same preposition in both cases (dia)
--Translated "FOR" (KJV) or "BECAUSE OF"
--Both look BACKWARDS
2-Meaning--Because we had previously sinned,
--Therefore God has previously accepted Christ's death as the meritorious ground of our justification
--AND the resurrection is the chief evidence of God's acceptance of Christ's death for our sins
3-ILLUS--RECEIPT given when we pay a bill
--Resurrection is GOD'S RECEIPT for our salvation being fully paid for
--Christ said "It is finished"
--Father says: "AMEN" by the resurrection, which is visible EVIDENCE that we are justified in His sight

E.-Justified By FAITH: (5)
1-Rom. 3:22, 25, 28; 4:5; 5:1
2-Repeated emphasis of the New Testament
3-Faith is--The hand of the heart which receives God's offer
--The channel thru which God pours His fulness into my emptiness
--"Without the deeds of the law"

(7)

4-**Romanism** makes Justification to be BY THE **SACRAMENTS**, and Justification is conceived of as **conditioned upon repeated and continued participation** in the good graces of the R.C.Ch

5-**ILLUS**--**Martin Luther**
- -Rom. 3:28--"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by **faith** without the deeds of the law."
- --Studies in Galatians & Romans "proved to be for Luther **the Damascus Road.**" (R oland Bainton)
- --Wrote in the margin of Rom. **3:28**--"**SOLA**" == "**ALONE**"
- --Realized we are justified thru trusting God's Son as He is offered in the Gospel

6-**EXAMPLE**--Rom. 4:3-4 (**Abraham**)

F.-Justified By The SPIRIT: (6)

1-**1 Cor. 6:9-11**

2-**Notice**--"But ye are (were) justified...by the Sprit"
- --**Christ PROVIDED** our justification by His death on the Cross
- --**Spirit APPLIED** our justification to our hearts as the efficient cause

3-**Fits in** with the Spirit's work in **John 16**:7-11 (CONVICTING OF SIN, R+J,)

4-Added to His **other INSTANTANEOUS MINISTRIES**
- --Regenerating
- --Baptizing
- --Indwelling
- --Sealing

5-Spirit **applies** the benefit of Justification to us at the hour we believe in Jesus Christ

G.-Justified By WORKS: (7)

1-**James 2:21-24**

2-**PROBLEM PASSAGE** to some
- **Paul** teaches Justification **by faith**
- James teaches Justification **by WORKS**

3-Isn't that a **CONTRADICTION** ??
- --**NO** !!
- --Really **in harmony**
- --H O W can that be??
- --**Paul** looks at justification from the **DIVINE** viewpoin
- --**James** looks at it from the **HUMAN** viewpoint

4-What's the DIFFERENCE??--**GOD** looks at **the heart**
- -He is able to distinguish if we really have **SAVING FAITH**
- --**MAN** looks at **life**, conduct & works
- --He cannot "read the heart"
- -Therefore **man's proof** of salvation is when he sees **GOOD WORKS** as the **outward demonstration** of inward reality

5-N.B.--**Works** according to James are **NOT MERITORIOUS**, but **EVIDENTIAL** !

6-**Same** man **Abraham** is used as **an illustration** by **both** Paul & James--**BELIEVED** God, so saved & recognized as saved by God
- --**DID WORKS** before men in offering Isaac, and so they could **SEE** the reality of his faith
- --**Luther:** "Saved by faith alone, but by a faith which is not alone"

CONCLUSION:

A. Positive Side——JUSTIFICATION:

1-Def. of Justification=="Declared righteous"

2-Seven-fold manner of Justification--By GOD
--By GRACE
--By BLOOD
--By RESURRECTION
--By FAITH
--By SPIRIT
--By WORKS

3-Justification was Neglected doctrine--In the days of Martin Luther
In our day also
--Dangerous situation, calling for a re-enunciation of Biblical truth
--Urgent need of our day
--Could cause a second PROTESTANT REFORMATION in our day, and how we need it!!
--Life-transforming truth!!

B. Personal Side——DECISION:

1-Greatest Question which can be asked of any man:
"AM I JUSTIFIED BEFORE GOD?"

2-The answer--Can be quickly determined
--IF you've trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior——That's the issue
--THEN you are justified before God
--BUT...
good deeds or ordinances are not enough; not acceptable!!

3-Choice is necessary:
--Rom. 4:23-24--"Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."
--God is calling for a decision
--A CHOICE is expected
--NOW is the time
--"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved"
--INCREDIBLE, but true, that God bestows heavenly and eternal blessings upon all who make this choice in BELIEVING UPON the blessed Savior.

4-ILLUS.-Out of history we learn that of all English Kings, Richard seems to have been the bravest. History tells us that he was a great warrior, and because of his daring and prowess upon the battlefield he was surnamed COEUR-de-LION, or LION-HEARTED. Like many another brave man, he was also very generous, and able to forgive wrongs.

It is recorded that, when his treacherous brother JOHN, who had tried to rob him of his crown, pleaded for mercy, Richard said, "I FORGIVE HIM AND I HOPE TO FORGET HIS INJURIES AS EASILY AS HE WILL FORGET MY PARDON."

After he had reigned about 10 years, one of his French

vassals, VIDOMAR, Viscount of Limoges, rebelled against him. Richard at once marched his army against Vidomar, and beseiged him in his castle of Chaluz. During the seige, with his usual disregard of danger, Richard approached very near the wall of the castle, almost wholly unattended.

Seeing this, a young man named BERTRAND de GURDUN, fitted an arrow to his bow....took aim...and let fly the arrow which pierced Richard's left shoulder...and proved to be a FATAL WOUND.

While the King lay in his tent, the castle was taken and BERTRAND made a captive. Heavily ironed, he was led to the bedside of the suffering and dying monarch---KING RICHARD THE LION-HEARTED.

Richard looked calmly into the face of the young man and said: "YOUTH, I FORGIVE YOU my death."

Then, turning to his soldiers standing by, he said, "LET HIM GO FREE, and GIVE HIM A HUNDRED SCHILLINGS."

5-How like what God has done is that story.
--God offers that "EXTRA" to you also !!
--Not just removal of your sins
--Great as that truly is
--But also the added benefit of the very RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST to your account.
--What is your decision??

Won't you TODAY Receive Jesus as YOUR PERSONAL Savior?

"My Redeemer" 488

Westbrae--3/25/73--# 416--"Grace Greater Than Our Sins" 209
446--"In Tenderness He Sought Me"
190--"Christ Receiveth Sinful Men" 199

OKBC - 3/6/66
"Glory To His Name" 489
Oak Hill Bible Church, WV - 7/17/88

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEBAR" ®

"THE WORK OF THE MISSIONARY" Acts 13 thru 15 (+)

Read 14:1-28 (1)

INTRO:

"Taking coals to Newcastle"

A.-The Cause Of Christ IS Missions:

1-"Missionary or Mission Field---One or the other" Dick Hillis

All Christians → 2-"**BORN TO REPRODUCE**" acc. to Dawson Trotman

3-**A.H.Strong**--"What are churches for, but to make missionaries? What is education for, but to train them? What is commerce for, but to send them? What is life itself for, but to fulfill the purpose of missions, the enthroning of Jesus Christ in the hearts of men?"

B.-The Outgoing Of Our Missionary:

1-Saved — Counseled by Pastor & Elders

2-Trained - Bible College/Seminary/Technical

3-Led to a field + a mission board — w/ GUIDANCE by Elders

4-Thrust forth---Acts 13:1-4 — Commissioned to the task by his/her HOME CHURCH

C.-The Work Of The Missionary:

1-**Content**--GOSPEL message
--CHURCH planting

- EVERYTHING should contribute to this!
- This is what God has commanded!

2-**Methodology**--One of today's **battlegrounds**

** Education
** Social betterment
** Medical aid
** Cultural improvement

* Agriculture
* Environmentalism
* Political Freedom
* Translation

--**Infiltration** of a liberal methodology wedded to a fundamental message

--Need to get BACK TO BIBLICAL BASICS!

3-What ought we to expect???

I.-EVANGELIZATION
II.-INDOCTRINATION
III.-ORGANIZATION
IV.-CONTINUATION

BIBLICAL PATTERN → Let's follow it

4-Proposition--**Know** what **to expect**....& what **to pray for** our missionaries as they are engaged in the missionary task.

Understand it

INT. What should we expect of our missionaries?

I.-EVANGELIZATION:

A.-Words Used In Acts: "Preached" R.V. rendition in all cases.

1-καταγγελλον == "**Announced**", "Proclaimed", "Told down"
--Acts 13:5, 38; 15:36; 17:3, 13

2-λαληθηναι == "**To be spoken**"
--A general testimony to all with whom they came in contact TALKED
--Acts 13:42; 14:1, 25; 16:6

3-ευαγγελιζομαι == "**Proclaimed good news**" To declare glad tidings
--14:7, 15, 21; 15:35; 16:10; 17:18

4-κηρυσσω == "**Heralding**", "Proclaiming as an official Herald" Preaching
--Acts 20:25; 28:31

B.-Concept Intended:

1-KEY PASSAGE is found in Matt. 28:19-20

"Having been made to go" — "DISCIPLE" (= μαθητεύσατε) — Be baptizing + also Be teaching

ALL nations = worldwide task

--"GO" is not the key verb of this command
** Aorist participle indicates PAST ACTION
** Middle voice shows the person is acted upon, not initiating the action of going = "Having Gone"

--"DISCIPLE" * Present tense = Be discipling"
* IMPERATIVE; No option!!! Key Verb

--"Baptizing" and "Teaching" are present participles, indicating continuing action as the discipling goes on; concommitant action

2-Meaning of "DISCIPLE"
=="A learner"
--Indicates thought accompanied by endeavor
--Disciple is more than one who's been evangelized as to hearing the message
--Disciple is one who follows the teachings he's heard
--Disciple is not just a pupil who hears, but an imitator of what's taught
--Mt. 27:57--"When the even was come there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple"
--Mt. 13:52--"Then said He unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

3-Use of "DISCIPLE" in a missionary context:
NB → --Acts 14:21
=="Made disciples of many" ("taught" KJV) μαθητεύσαντες
--Adherents, followers, imitators
--New life being lived out!!!

4-Result of evangelism is MAKING DISCIPLES (which is a process

"And when they had preached the gospel to that city, + had taught many (= discipled many), they returned again to Lystra, + to Iconium, + Antioch

II.-INDOCTRINATION:

A.-Baptizing:

1-Characteristic of the Christian Church--Acts 2:41 Pentecost
8:11-13 Samaria
8:36-38 Eunuch
9:18 Saul
10:47-48 Cornelius
16:15 Lydia
16:33 Philippian Jailor
18:8 (Chrispus)
19:5 John's disciples

2-Done as an OPEN CONFESSION OF FAITH thru baptism

3-SOON after salvation — Not after long probation!
4-Expression of your intent to live in newness of life
NOT to be long delayed, for it symbolizes OBEDIENCE! + OPEN TESTIMONY (3)

B.-Teaching:
1-Several terms used in N.T
2-Most common-- διδάσκω
==**"To give instruction"** / Doctrine
--Rom. 12:7--"Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth on teaching."
11:26
3-Uses in Acts--15:35; 18:11; 20:20; 28:31 Task of the Pastor-Teacher
*** 4-**BIG PART** of the ministry to the saved who is a "learner or "disciple"
5-Eph. 4:11
Never outgrow our need for MORE OF IT!

C.-Exhorting:
1-παρακαλέω ==**"Called alongside to help"** Acts 11:23 14:22
--Same root as **PARACLETE**
--Also used "to **entreat**"; "to **admonish**"
--Rom. 12:8--"Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation..."
2-Uses in **Acts**--11:23; 14:22; 15:32; 16:40
3-**Idea** is to **PUT TO USE** WHAT YOU'VE **BEEN TAUGHT** Stirred up + encouraged.

D.-Confirming:
1-ἐπιστηρίζω ==**"To make to lean upon", "to prop", "to support", "to establish"**
2-Uses in **Acts--14:22**; 15:32, 41; 18:23 "Buttress" Reinforce
3-General concept of **stabilization** & encouragement by God's man to God's people STRENGTHEN
4-**1 Thess. 3:2, 12-13** is the simplest form. "Buttressing"

E.-Writing:
1-Not emphasized in Book of Acts + people
2-**Wrote letters to Churches** mentioned in Acts
--Solved their problems
--**Taught** them the truth Answered Questions
--Brought **comfort** to their hearts
--**Preserved** for **OUR INSTRUCTION** also
Aren't we glad of this!
Corrected Errors
3-Part of that "care of all the churches" (2 Cor. 11:28)
4-Paul **taught others** whether he was present with them, or if he was absent — So did Peter, John, James, Jude all wrote epistles

F.-Commending:
1-Used by **Jesus**--**LK. 23:46**--"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Thy hands I **commend** my spirit: and having thus said, He gave up the ghost."
--Sense of **putting over onto another**; of **"rendering up"**
2-When Paul's ability to indoctrinate & Pastor them was coming to an end, then he would "commend them to the Lord on Whom they had believed." (14:23) + 14:26
3-Same thought in **Acts 20:32** And now, brethren I commend you to God, + To the word of His grace...
4-Putting believers out on their own in dependence upon the Holy Spirit

III.-ORGANIZATION:

A.-The Officers:

Phil. 1:1 — Both named

1-"Deacons" not named in Acts 6, or anywhere in Acts

- -Phil. 1:1--"Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons."
- -1 Tim. 3:8-13 (4 times)

Spiritual men over the PHYSICAL affairs of the Church

2-"Bishops"=="Elders"=="Overseers" — 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-10

- --Function as Bishops or overseers w/ the PASTOR!
- --Qualification as Elders (or mature men, spiritually)

Spiritual men over the SPIRITUAL affairs of the Church.

B.-The Ordination:

1-ALWAYS A PLURALITY; NEVER A SINGULARITY of Elders or Deacons in a N. T. Church

* 2-Uses of "Elder" in Acts--14:23; 15:4, 6, 22, 23; 16:4; 20:17, 18, 28, etc.

3-Spiritual men over the spiritual affairs of the Church

* 4-"ORDAINED"=="Designated by the hand"

- --Either by a congregational vote (Acts 14:23)
- --Or by Pastoral appointment (Titus 1:5)

NB 5-CHURCHES WERE THE GOAL and these were to be organized with indigenous leadership

First among equals — Pastor is one of these elders

Self-governing churches

C.-The Outreach:

1-With an organized body of baptized believers:

- --Membership
- --Officers
- --Ordinances
- --Pastor
- --Discipline
- --Worship
- --Fellowship

BIBLICALLY ORGANIZED for service

2-Then stability and outreach was expected to result

* * 3-EXAMPLE--1 Thess. 1:5-8

IV.-CONTINUATION:

"REHEARSED"

ανηγγελλον = "brought back word"

This is a VITAL NECESSITY

A.-Reporting:

1-Back to the same people who sent out the missionary

2-Acts 14:26-27

3-Necessary--For information
--For inspiration
--For sense of participation & progress

CO-LABORERS

4-1 Cor. 3:5-7--"What then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

* 5-Need for direction by leaders of the sending church; SUPERVISION

B.-Recuperating/Refreshing:

1-Acts 14:28 — "And there they abode long time..."

2-Areas of need
- -Physically
- -Mentally
- -Spiritually
- -Familially

3-TIME w/ the home church

Intake not just output

C.-Refining:

1-By controversy---Acts 15:1-35 — Focus is Sharpened! (5)

2-By exposure & experience — Each is a learning opportunity

3-By education — Fill in the GAPS

4-So the missionary goes back even better prepared!

** 5-CONTINUOUS EDUCATION concept needed

We must continue to learn + GROW!

Live on the growing edge!

15:36-41 **D.-Returning:**

1-Sometimes to the former field--Barnabas (Acts 15:39)

--Paul (Acts 15:40-41) in second journey

--Alice Sand

Charles Robinson Paraguay

2-Sometimes to a new field

--Paul to Rome & Tarshish

--Shelleys to a pastorate in USA after India

--Stonehouse to deputation work

Niemeyer Frozier Moore

3-Probasco--"The will of God is not static, but dynamic"

4-CONTRAST

--Man in Dallas when China closed, he left off any ministry, saying his only call was to CHINA.

* I beg to differ! Our call is To THE LORD.

CONCLUSION: The assignment is only Geographical + can be changed several times

A.-Learn "THE WORK OF THE MISSIONARY":

1-Evangelization of the lost

2-Indoctrination of the saved

3-Organization of churches

4-Continuation of his ministry

5-Is the job ever COMPLETED????

--NO!!

--Always more to reach, teach, train & send — A WORLD that is our field in our generation

B.-Lessons For The Whole Church:

1-Know what to expect of our missionaries

2-Expect our "outreach staff" to be actively involved in GOD'S PROGRAM, doing it GOD'S WAY

3-Evaluate the missionary's performance — ① Evangelizing ② Church Planting ③ Contributing to these goals.

HOW are they performing?

4-DO THE SAME JOB HERE, also!!!

5-"Mission field" has too long been presented as being ....."somewhere else", and that is Really — Outside our doors — arbitrary and unbiblical!!

6-What we expect of our missionaries...

7-We need to expect of ourselves also!! HERE

Westbrae--9/8/74--#32--"Bring Them In" (2)

Ivis Bible Ch, Ky - 11/12/79 #471--"O Zion, Haste" (3)

OKBC - 2/9/86 475 - Send The Light (1)

BMW - URUGUAY - 8/4/98

Salina Bible Church - 10/30/88

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

"I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE" Acts 15:1-35; Josh. 24:14-15

INTRO: A.-Meaning Of Pledge Of Allegiance:

1-"I Pledge allegiance to the flag & to the republic for which it stands.."

2-What does that mean??

3-It means--Willingness to live under the government represented by that flag
--Undying loyalty (allegiance) to MY COUNTRY
--LOVE IT....or ...LEAVE IT !
--I am proud to be an American

4-HYPOCRISY abroad today
--Profess allegiance
--Practice treason

5-Same thing is going on today in the churche of christendom--Professing to know God
--Professing to serve God
--Meaningless words
--2 Tim.2:19a--"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His
--You can't fool God!!
--Tit. 1:16--"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, & disobedient, & unto every good work reprobate."

B.-My Personal Pledge Of Allegiance:

1-CHRIST-----Savior; makes me a Christian
2-BIBLE------Authority; makes me a Fundamentalist
3-CHURCH-----Local family; makes me an Independent
4-Explain these "levels" of cooperation & fellowship
5-EXCLUDES as well as INCLUDES !!

C.-Proper Philosophy On How To Correct Error:

1-REVIVAL--Always primary; always in order
--Revitalization of believers
--Reemphasis on evangelism
--Enlargement of missions
--Meet God's conditions by MEETING GOD

2-REFORMATION purity
--Doctrinal laxity "tightened up" & returned to /
--As in the Protestant Reformation
--Correction of corrupt practices
--Purifying of organization & its reasons for being

3-BUT sometimes these are not enough
--Error is too deeply entrenched
--Revival is spurned
--Reformation is buried in committees
--TERMITES have destroyed the foundations & CANCER has eaten away the vitals
--Not enough moral & spiritual courage left to "TAKE A STAND"
--Then what?.....???

4-SEPARATION--2 Cor. 6:14-18
--Eph. 5:11

--1 Cor. 10:21
--2 Thess 3:14
--Rom. 16:17-19
--2 John 7-11
--Only way to deal with a "House" that is taken over by termites is to ABANDON IT: SEPARATE FROM IT, if it will not yield to Revival or Reformation

5-Subject for today--Details on the IFCA
--Distinctives Of The IFCA
--Difficulties In The IFCA
--Determination Of The IFCA

I.-DETAILS ON THE IFCA:

A.-WHAT Is The IFCA? :

1-Beginnings--June 26, 1930 (39 years ago)
--Cicero, Ill. in office of Wm. Mc Carrel
--Not founded by a man, but a group of concerned men with Biblical convictions

2-Reasons--Spiritually alert brethren
--Prophetic warnings in Scripture of apostasy in last days
--Rapid decline of Biblical convictions in old denoms.
--Defection of christian schools & Seminaries
--Sensing the great need for a return to the N. T. pattern of INDEPENDENT BIBLE CHURCHES

3-Basis--Haven for fundamentalists
--Fellowship for men and churches
--Freedom from external control
--The NAME ** Independent = Local control
** Fundamental = Biblical faith
** Churches = Grassroots level, not a national body or denomination
** Of America = Source, but extending to many nations & all continents

B.-WHO Is The IFCA?:

1-Pastors & Conference Speakers--R. A. Graves, Sr.
--Harold Freeman
--Charles Woodbridge
--M.R. De Haan (Prss. 1932-33)
--Wm. Mc Carrell

2-In Missions--J. O. Percy; Mr. Missions in the USA
--Henry Heijermans---WEF
--Henry Hawkins------AEF
--David Clark--------UIM
--Reuben Lindquist---BM
--Emil Elbe----------MMC
--Robert Jeffcott----UMF

3-In Schools--Samuel Sutherland-------Biola
--John F. Walvoord--------DTS
--Roger Andrus------------Calvary Bible College
--Lester Pipkin-----------ABI
--John Miles--------------GRSBM
--Charles L. Feinberg-----Talbot Seminary

4-Churches--500 plus IFCA affiliated churches
--500 churches pastored by IFCA men

5-Chaplains--15 at present & up to 20 at times

C.-WHY Have The IFCA?: (4 REASONS)

1-Fellowship--Personal
--Pastoral
--Congregational
--Youth

2-Inspiration & Information--In the Word
--By example
--By Methodology
--Literature & VOICE Magazine
--Directory of men & Churches
--Regional Reporter

3-Cooperation without Compromise--Regional meetings
--Youth rallies
--Camps
--Bible Church Crusade
--UMF began in this Reg.
--Pastorless churches
--Churchless pastors
--Mens & Womens Meetings

4-Identification--Clergy recognition with government
--IRS recognition for churches
--United voice against apostasy & on issue
--Chaplaincy representation

II.-DISTINCTIVES OF THE IFCA:

(A preface is needed. Some distinctives are shared with many other groups. Many distinctives are shared with a few groups NO OTHER GROUP that has them all!!)

A.-Fundamental In Doctrine:

B.-Regenerated Church Membership:
1-No infant baptism or membership
2-Public confession of faith to join

C.-Autonomous Church Government:
1-Choose its own Pastor
2-Choose its own missionaries
3-Choose its own S.S. materials
4-Own its own property outright & in its own name
5-Ordain qualified men to the ministry.
6-No Superintendents or Bishops meddling in local affairs
7-No "COOPERATIVE PROGRAM" to be enslaved to

D.-Separation:
1-Ecclesiastical--From all forms of apostasy
--W.C.C. and N.C.C.
--NAE
--ACC is optional
--Separation from the wrong; unto the right

2-Personally--From wrong practices ** Worldliness
** Lodges, Gambling
** Tobacco & Alcohol

--From Questionable involvements

E.-Dispensational Interpretation:
1-Premillennial
2-Pretribulation rapture
3-Distinguishing Israel from the Church
4-Distinguishing law from grace
5-LITERAL INTERPRETATION i s the foundation stone.

F.-Balanced Program:
1-Evangelistic emphasis locally
2-Missions outreach worldwide
3-Bible teaching to train disciples
4-Open communion for all believers
5-Scriptural means of church finance

G.-Self-Purging Membership:
1-Hard to get in--Doctrinal agreement
--Moral rectitude
--Men to recommend & vouch for you
2-Annual renewal & re-affirmation of position
3-Insurance against defection
4-Costs something to SO STAND !!

H.-All this is characteristic of WESTBRAE BIBLE CHURCH

III.-DIFFICULTIES IN THE IFCA:

A.-Independency That Verges On Isolation:
1-Lack of cooperation from some
2-Lack of coordination with others
3-Lack of an integrated program
4-But that's better than a regimented control from OUTSIDE

B.-Need For More Churches:
1-Men to found & nurture them
2-Finances to underwrite them
3-Recruitment to our ranks--Not soft or easy
--No place for "little" men=
--No place for light convictions
4-The need of hundreds & thousands of communities is SO VERY GREAT !!

C.-Separation Decline:
1-IFCA began as a MILITANT organization
2-"Cooling"--as the years progressed
--As young men came in who had not been burnt or unfrocked
--As "old war-horses" have softened in old age
--As fear of men & concern for finances have gripped schools & missions
3-Areas of problems:
D.-A --N.A.E. ** THE ORGANIZATIONAL MANIFESTATION
** Soft in doctrine (Security, Tongues, Healing,)
** Dominance by Arminians
** Inclusive policies toward NCC & Rome

--Neo-Evangelicalism ** THE PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT
** Scholasticism
** Accommodation to science
** Social implication emphasis
** Doctrinal "RETHINKING"
** Wheaton, Westmont, Barrington, Denver, Fuller.

--ECUMENICAL EVANGELISM ** THE OUTREACH ARM
** Linking liberals & fundamentalists & Pentecostals in evangelistic enterprise
** GOING WITH them with the gospel, rather than GOING TO them with the gospel
** Campus Crusade, Evangelism in Depth, World Vision & Billy Graham

--These are VIOLATIONS of Biblical principles

4-Local pressures & lack of convictions have ensnared some of our IFCA men--Southern California
--Northeastern States
--Graham Crusades

Spurgeon Quote
2 Cor. 6

IV.-DETERMINATION OF THE IFCA:

A.-Convention Of 1969:

1-Outgrowth of years of concern
--Lack of forthright "stand" in VOICE for some yrs.
--Resolutions at National Conventions, but they were not binding
--Regional resolutions from 14 Regionals
--Floor debate at several conventions
--Constitutional amendment proposed

2-Due process followed--Committee proposed an amendment
--Executive Committee recommended it for constituent action
--Duly published & explained

3-OVERWHELMINGLY ADOPTED--300 to 20 (+/-)
--Acts 15:22a, 28a

4-Attempt to reconsider debated & defeated

5-WE ARE ON RECORD !!!

6-We've fought for the truth.....& WON!..Hallelujah

B.-Consensus Of 1969:

1-Strong separatists elected to NEC

2-Evangelism emphasis re-sounded

3-Resolutions passed--Sex Education
--Pornography
--Black Reparations

4-Those not in agreement are free to withdraw, but we do not want to see the fellowship weakened by being inclusive

CONCLUSION:

A.-Recapitulation:

1-Details----------History & men
2-Distinctives-----Bible churches
3-Difficulties-----Not insurmountable
4-Determination----TO STAND as a movement for God

B.-Reaffirmation:

1-ILLUS--Josh. 24:1-13----What God has done
24:14-15a--What Israel should do
24:15b------What Joshua will do

2-Parallel today
--What God has done-------Raised up the IFCA
--What Church should do---Fear, Serve, Put away, & CHOOSE
--What I will do----------I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE
** To Christ as my Savior
** To the Bible as my authoritative standard of divine revelation
** To the Bible Church as the one & only divinely ordained organization for the propagation & proclamation of the truth.

3-I'm glad to "own" my allegiance

4-ARE YOU? ------Can you be counted on as an active participator in such a fundamental Bible Ch.???

5-I'm glad for a fellowship of Biblically oriented churches

6-ARE YOU?

I.F.C.A-------Of Asia
Of Asia Minor
Of Achaia
Of Africa
Of America
--I FIND CHRIST ADEQUATE ---and I reaffirm my pledge of allegiance to HIM thru this fellowship while it shall continue to stand for the truth.

Westbrae--7/13/69--

See Also "INDEPENDENT, BUT NOT ISOLATED" under Phs. 1:1-30

"THE GOSPEL COMES TO THESSALONICA" Acts 17:1-15
TOWN" 1 Cor. 9:19-23

1

INTRO:

A.-Paul's Encounter:
1-In Galatia of Asia Minor (Now Turkey)--Acts 16:6-8
2-A VISION--16:9
--Of a Man in need
--A Macedonian
--"Come over into Macedonia and help us"
--VOCAL INSTRUCTION
--Today it is not a VOICE, but a VERSE for our leading
3-Closed doors followed by definite leading
4-Paul turns his back on Asia Minor
5-Gospel comes to EUROPE
--Set the course of christianity westward
--Probably not so momentous to Paul as to us
--Just passing from one Roman Province to another
--But for us it is crucial, for because of this, Europe would be gospelized
--Our ancestors.....and eventually us!

B.-Paul's Entourage.
1-Acts 16:10--"WE" section indicates Luke was along from here on for a while
--"THEY" in 16:6 indicates more than Paul
--Silas (Silvanus) & Timothy (Timotheus) were along (1 Thess. 1:1) & there could have been others also
--JOINT REACTION to the Man of Macedonia--"assuredly gathering that the Lord had calle us for to preach the gospel unto them (16:10
2-IMMEDIATE ACTION--16:11
--When they knew....they acted
--No delay--"THE NEXT DAY"

C.-Paul's Expedition:
1-First strategic center--Philippi
--Acts 16 tells the story
--Small Jewish population there
--Lydia & Jailor heard & responded
--Church established
--LUKE appears to have temporarily remained in Philippi---Perhaps as PASTOR
2-Small towns of Amphipolis & Apollonia passed by (17:1)
3-STRATEGIC CENTER of Thessalonica is next gospel target
4-Our Outline:
I.-The METROPOLIS:
II.-The METHOD:
III.-The MESSAGE:
IV.-The MULTITUDE:

5-**Prop**--Paul's missionary **techniques** in Thessalonica give us
--[redacted]
--Lessons for our own lives & ministries

(2)

I.-THE METROPOLIS:

A.-Its Importance:

1-Thessalonica was the **largest** & most **important** city in Macedonia & the capital of the province

2-**Located** between the Adriatic & the Hellespont at the head of the THERMAIC GULF
- --Fine **harbor** at the mouth of 3 rivers
- --Outlet for **trade** of Macedonia
- --Center where many **roads met**
- --Melitius: "So long as nature does not change, Thessalonica will remain wealthy & fortunate." (Cited by J. B. Lightfoot, BIBLICAL ESSAYS, P. 255)

B.-Its History:

1-In early days the **hot springs** gave the name THERMA to a small settlement

2-In **315** B.C. **Cassander named** the place THESSALONICA after his **wife**, who was a half-sister to Alexander the Great

3-When the Romans conquered Greece, they recognized the importance of Thessalonica
- --Made it **Capital** of 1 of 4 parts into which they divided Macedonia
- --Later Capital of the united province of Macedonia
- --Ultimately made a **FREE CITY**
- --Many **Romans** there
- --But still essentially a **Greek** city
- --Many extraneous elements in the population, including a strong **JEWISH** COMMUNITY because of the city's commercial prominence

4-Still there; Modern city of SALONIKI

C.-Its Strategic Character:

1-Kind of "**center**" Paul sought--
- --Population concentration
- --Trade center
- --Roads & port
- --Polyglot population, including a Jewish element
- --Roman governmental authority

2-Roland Allen (MISSIONARY METHODS, ST. PAUL'S OR OURS, P. 23) "Thus at first sight it seems to be a rule which may be unhesitatingly accepted that St. Paul struck at **the centres** of Roman administration, the centres of Hellenic civilization, the centres of Jewish influence, the keys of the great trade routes."

3-Paul was amply **justified** in this choice
- --**Ready reception** of the gospel by some
- --Open teachableness for new ideas
- --Faithfulness to "sound out" the gospel after they had received it
- --**1 Thess. 1:6-8**

II.-THE METHOD:

A.-Paul's Practice:

1-"As his manner was"--Used also of Christ in Lk. 4:16
--Settled pattern of life
--Apostle to the Gentiles always began in a new area by reaching out to the JEWS (16:13; 17:10; 19:8)
--Rom. 1:16

2-Synagogue--Go where he'd have a crowd
--Go where he'd get a hearing
--Usual practice to allow any visiting Rabbi or Teacher to speak in the Jewish Synagogues

3-Three Sabbath Days
--Not the Christian day of worship
--That was on SUNDAY (Acts 20:6-7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2)
--But the day of JEWISH GATHERING — Sabbath
--If you want to catch fish, you go where the fish are
--If you want to catch people, you go where the people are
--Paul KEPT AT IT
--3 weeks worth of preaching & teaching
--Probably DAILY as well as on the 3 Sabbaths

4-His Authority--Not his personality
--Not his eloquence
--BUT HIS BIBLE
--The O. T. was what he used to reach these people

5-His methods:
--"Reasoning with them"=="To discuss by Question & Answer so as to convince"
** Paul was after DECISIONS!
--"Out of the Scriptures" (as did Jesus--Lk. 24:27, 32 & 45)
--"Opening"=="EXPOUNDING"
--"Alleging"="Bringing forth evidence
** Paul was a man of logic & argument
--Paul appealed to the MINDS of the hearers with arguments of fact
** If a man is to be convinced, he must be willin to consider the facts fairly
** C.S. Lewis aptly observed that, to the man who has convinced himself that miracles CANNOT occur, no amount of argument for the validity of scriptural miracles will change his mind.
** POWER that brought forth decisions of faith was the power of the HOLY SPIRIT
--Lessons for us---1 Pet. 3:15

B.-Paul's Principle:

1-Stated in 1 Cor. 9:19-23

2-John Miles quote: "Men are attempting to read into this the idea that we can violate God's standards & principles for the worthy goal of reaching men. NOT AT ALL...God never permits the violation of His principles to achieve the end of reaching others. Paul was a servant of

others, no doubt shared their fare whether meagre or plenteous, & sought not to offend them by stressing non-essentials, but Paul did **not compromise** righteousness. To violate would be to be disapproved himself."

3-What was **this PRINCIPLE** in Paul's Ministry?? (4)

--Matter of Paul's approach
--Meet men "**where they are**"
--ILLUS ** **Jews** were met in Synagogues with the Scriptures as the meeting ground
** **Philosophical Gentiles** (17:15+) were met with argument from creation & quotations from their own poetic literature
** **Cretians** were dealt with via a quotation from their own prophets

4-**W H Y** these divergent methods??

5-**Principle:** Man of God meets people where they are to lead them to where they need to be taken.
ADAPTABILITY !!

III.-THE MESSAGE:

A.-Four Strains Seen In Acts:

1-MESSIAHSHIP of Jesus
2-RESURRECTION of Jesus
3-RETURN of Jesus + REPENTANCE REQUIREMENT
4-Peter, Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy & Apollos all preached these **basic themes**

B.-This Specific Situation In Acts:

1-"Christ" = "**Messiah**"
--**Link** of O.T.'s promised Deliverer **with** Paul's message now
--Jewish promise
--**Fulfillment** in Christ and His Church

2-"Must needs have **suffered** & **risen** again from the dead"
--Combination of the REDEEMER and the RULER
--**Not TWO** Messiahs
--But only ONE
--Not a popular message
--1 Cor. 1:18, 23--"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God...But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness."
--Paul lays out the **SCRIPTURAL CASE**

3-**Then** Paul adds "the **KICKER**"
--Acts 17:3b
● -**IDENTIFIES Messiah** of O.T. promise **as JESUS** OF NAZARETH
--Acts 9:20-23
--Acts 18:4-5
--Acts 18:27-28

4-To get the "**WHOLE SALVATION**", you've got to get the "WHOLE GOSPEL"

5-Anything less---Spiritual abortion
--Spiritual cripples
● -GREAT HARM done by watering down the gospel in encouraging "EASY BELIEVISM"

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

(5)

--Danger of incomplete gospelization

6-Notice: --RETURN of Christ as a part of Paul's message at Thessalonica is not mentioned in the Book of Acts

--But this theme is almost "harped upon" in the Epistles of 1 & 2 Thessalonians

--Evidence Paul had preached Christ's RETURN in Thessalonica as he did elsewhere

--Implication of this seen in that the Jews accused Paul of saying "there is another King, one Jesus" (17:7)

IV.-THE MULTITUDE:

A.-Some Believed:

1-Acts 17:4

2-"Some of them believed"

--By no means all did !!

--But there were some !!

--Contrast with Berea (17:12) where MANY believ

--"BELIEVED" =="were persuaded"

** Responded to the Scriptural presentation of the gospel on the basis of O. T. revelation

** John 1:12

3-N.B. --"Belief was not the end"

--Rather, that exercise of faith was ONLY THE BEGINNING !!

--"And consorted with"=="And cast their lot wit

--These believers became glued to the Apostle & his co-laborers

--THEY HAD MUCH TO LEARN

** Doctrine for their knowledge

** Practice for their lives

** Message for their neighbors

--Just how long Paul was in Thessalonica is not really clear

** Some think only 3 weeks before persecution erupted

** Others think as much as 5-6 months (Rams

** In any case, A VERY SHORT TIME !!

NB -New believers (& old ones) need to avail themselves of every opportunity to learn & to grow in their faith!!!.....NOW

4-More on WHO believed

--"Some of them" from among the JEWS of the synagogue

--"Of the devout Greeks a great multitude" indicates GENTILES who were proselytes to the Jewish faith

--"And of the chief women not a few"

--WOMEN found much aid & solace in the gospel of Christ

**Philosophy of Greece & Religion of Aphrodite only offered degradation to them

** Christ gave LIFE and HOPE to women

5-HOWEVER--Along with those that believed
--There were "OTHERS" also
--TRIUMPH of the gospel is never unchallenged
--There was also almost immediate TRIAL, for...

B.-Some Rejected:

1-Acts 17:5-9

2-Inevitable reactions--Revival or Riot
--Receiving or Rejecting

3-Not content to "GO DOWN" alone--Envy & jealousy as motives
--Ally themselves with the rabble who were market-loungers; LAZY non-workers
--Drag others down with them

4-PERSECUTION--Against Paul primarily
--Couldn't find him
--Vented opposition against Jason, who probably was a Jew named Joshua, who had taken the Gk. equivalent name
--CHARGES * Upset the public order
* Treason--Preach another King instead of Caesar
--Charge grew out of Paul's teaching on Christ's RETURN
--Only abated when Jason posted bond that Paul would not soon return
--EXTENDED THEIR OPPOSITION even over into Berea against the gospel, those who preached it, & those who believed it
--Blind hatred by the Jews
--Hearts darkened to the truth

5-Reminder:
--TRIUMPHS with some who hear, believe and "CONSORT" with the bringers of truth
--TRIALS from some who hear, reject and rebel against the truth
--NO MIDDLE GROUND ! !
--One is either a receiver of the good news
--Or else one is a rejector of the Eternal Life-giving message of Christ

6-QUESTION--Which is with YOU ??
--Receiver of Christ as YOUR SAVIOR ??
--Rejector of your only hope as promised in the O.T. and fulfilled in the Person of Jesus Christ ??

CONCLUSION:

A.-Background Of Gospel Coming To Thessalonica:

1-The Metropolis--A POLYGLOT

2-The Method--Gospel preaching to men where they are according to their backgrounds as we adapt to "their wavelength"

3-The Message--Jesus Christ of Nazareth is the fulfillment of all the O.T. promises
--"The hopes and fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight"

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

--NO ADAPTING of the the message;
--Only an adaptation in the method of presentation.

4-The Multitude
--EACH ONE makes a personal decision
--True then with the Apostle Paul preaching in Thessalonica and Berea
--Still true today as you hear the gospel

B.-Beneficial Lessons:

PRINCIPLES

1-Different reactions to the gospel are to be expected

2-Opposition and persecution are "Normal"
ILLUS--J. Ellwood Evans when accused in Business Meeting at Beracha Church let the man have "his say" to the astonishment of all who heard.
--When he had apparently "run out", Dr. Evans asked him: "Have you anything more to say?"
--When the man replied: "No, that's all", Dr. Evans proceded with the meeting without "answering again" to the charges

3-WHAT THEN--MOVE ON from those who don't respond
--STILL AVAILABLE if they later "come around"
--Our task is to
GO TO the unsaved with the gospel, but not to GO WITH the unsaved in the gospel ministry
--CONTINUE TO REACH BACK to help those who do respond as Paul did in 1 & 2 Thessalonians.

Inspiring Hymns "Blessed Redeemer" #112 Great Hymns

- Westbrae 5/27/73--#96--"Calvary Covers It All"
- Community Baptist Temple - 5/29/88 #108--"Grace! 'Tis A Charming Sound" 219
  #195--"I Am Praying For You" 245

Read Acts 17:1-4---Text 17:3-4---"Resurrection-The Seal of the Finished Work."

"WHO WAS DELIVERED FOR OUR OFFENCES, & WAS RAISED AGAIN FOR OUR JUSTIFICATION."

Intro.--A-Regardless of what else is said of the Resurrection of Christ---it was a MIRACLE. The DEAD was made to LIVE.
B*Death of Christ was for our sins--Rom. 4:25a
C-Resurrection of Christ was because of our justification Rom. 4:25b
D-ILLUS--The two birds-one dead, one alive--takes both of them to picture what Christ did in dying for sin & rising for our justification. (Lev. 14:4-7)

I.--CHRIST MUST NEEDS HAVE SUFFERED.

Dr. A. W. Hare once said: "If you saw a half-dozen doors with as many locks to them, so new & strange that not a locksmith in the country could make a key to fit any one of them, and if a man then came with a key which fitted all these different locks & opened all the 6 doors, could you doubt that his was the right key? This is just the kind of proof which the prophecies afford of the truth & deity of Christ. The weight of this proof rests on 2 simple facts: One is that the prophecies were written many hundreds of years before the birth of Christ. The other is that Jesus died the death related in the N. T. Jesus is the true key for the prophetic lock; and all the prophets who fortold these things hundreds of years before must assuredly spoken as Peter says, 'not by the willof man; but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' Nowhere outside the Bible do you find prophecy made & fulfilled. Today, with all of our scientific knowledge, we can't even predict the weather, yet God gives us the foregleams of Christ centuries ahead.

A.-Took Our Place.
1-"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."
2-Jesus Christ took what was rightfully our punishment--Pilate found no fault in Christ.
3-He did it voluntarily--John 10:18
4-ILLUS--The judge who passes sentence, and then takes the place of the guilty man and pays the debt to justice--Rom. 5:6-8.

B.-Paid The Price.
1-Christ was a sacrifice for sin--John 1:29
2-Christ was obedient unto death--Phs. 2:7-8, Isa. 53:10
3-Christ made peace for us--Col. 1:20
4-ILLUS--"The war is over"

C.-The chorus we often sing--
Living He loved me, Dying He saved me,
Buried He carried, my sins far away.
Rising He justified, freely forever,
One day He's coming, Oh glorious day.

II.--AND RISEN AGAIN FROM THE DEAD.

A.-He died a true death and paid the penalty of sin for us.
B.-His Resurrection---"The proof of the pudding..."
1-illus--Ironside & man who planned to start a new religion
2-Christ rose from the grave because of WHO HE WAS--Acts 2:22-24
3-Christwas raised by the Spirit of God to prove the acceptability of the sacrifice to the Father--Rom.1:4; 8:11

4-Christ was raised to give assurance to the believer of the sureness of the believer's resurrection (which is a proof that the sacrifice was acceptable) 1 Cor. 15:12-20, Jn.14:19

5-ILLUS--Mary wept at the tomb when she found that Christ was not there. Much more cause for weeping there would have been if she had found Him there, for then we would have had no hope.

6-Christ was raised to give the believer HOPE -1 Pet 1:3-4

a-of resurrection

b-of our inheritance--incorruptable, undefiled, fadeth not away, RESERVED.

c-illus Jesus Christ is now in Heaven preparing your accomadations that there might be a RESERVED place for you of matchless perfection--Jn. 14:1-3 "that seat belongs to the President's Son"

III.--THIS JESUS. . .IS CHRIST.

A-Christ did these things as it was promised to be true of Messiah. He alone fulfills the predictions of the O. T. Just as Samson burst his bands, so Christ burst the bands of death & came forth victor.-----Truly His Resurrection is the SEAL of His Finished work.

B-Paul's constant message was that Jesus was this Messiah-Acts 18:5, 28.

C-Peter's message was the same. --Acts 2:36, 4:10

D--Doubt of Thomas:

1-He had been with Jesus------yet he did not believe.

2-He had heard the predictions---yet he did not believe.

3-He had seen the crucifixion----yet he did not believe.

4-He heard the disciples' testimony---yet he refused to believe.

5-Seeing Jesus---the doubt fled away--Jn. 20:24-29, 1Pet.1:8-9.

IV.---REACTION

A.-"Some believed"---not all (we can't expect 100% results, for even Paul didn't win them all)

1-Some did get ahold of this PERSON--Jesus Christ by BELIEVING. Trusting the good news brought to them

2-Some consorted--went on in the things of the Lord--became the church to which I & II Thess. were written.

Concl.--1-Christ had to suffer to pay the price of our sins.

2-Christ had to rise to prove that the price had been accepted The Father was SATISFIED. Res. is God's SEAL on the NT, + X- Sacred pages bear the IMPRINT of this Seal, Authentic

3-Some--to whom this message was brought--were SATISFIED with Jesus, because God had been satisfied. "It is finished" was proven by the words at the tomb, "He is risen."

4-WON'T YOU BE SATISFIED WITH HIM AND ACCEPT HIM AS SAVIOR???

Someone has told me that a Colored preacher in Africa was speaking, and used this illustration. "When a heathen is dying, the witch doctors put in his hand a dead bone as a passport into the world beyond. But we do not grasp a dead bone as we pass through the veil, but We grasp the hand of the LIVING LORD."

"PAUL'S MESSAGE ON THE RESURRECTION" OR MAKING KNOWN THE UNKNOWN GOD — Acts 17:15-34; 10:38-43

1

INTRO:

A.-Theme Of Easter Sunday:

1-Easter is the commemoration of Christ's Res.

2-Historic facts concerning Christ
- --Virgin birth
- --Sinless life
- --Unequalled teachings
- --Supernatural miracles
- --Mockery of a trial
- --Death by crucifixion
- --Burial in a borrowed tomb
- --AND His bodily RESURRECTION

3-Over 1900 years ago

4-He's ALIVE TODAY !!

5-Hebrews 7:25--"Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

6-Meet on the 1st day of the week as a commemoration of the NEW CREATION, not on the 7th day, which was the day off rest after God's creation of the universe, so EVERY SUNDAY is a reminder of His RESURRECTION

B.-Theme Of N. T. Preaching:

1-Various preachers recorded in Bk. of Acts.
- --Peter
- --Stephen
- --Phillip
- --Paul
- --Barnabas
- --Silas
- --Titus
- --Timothy
- --and all the believers

2-Three "strains" in their preaching
- --Messiahship of Jesus (1)
- --Resurrection of Jesus (2)
- --Return of Jesus (3)

3-TODAY we'll look at
- --NOT the historic record of resurrect'n
- --But a historic occasion of the preaching of the message of the resurrection

4-Especially appropriate
- --Looking at Paul's message to the Athens of history

Quit

C.-This Message: ...

1-The Confrontation-----17:15-23

2-The Affirmation-------17:24-30a

3-The Proclamation------17:30b-31

4-The Personalization---17:32-34

5-PROP:
- --To show the centrality of the message of the Resurrection in the ministry of Paul as he spoke to a city like ours
- --To see that the Resurrection is the guarantee of judgment to come, and...
- --To drive home the necessity of a personal decision for Christ

God makes Himself known through people who know Him

I.-THE CONFRONTATION ----- (17:15-23):

A.-The City Paul Saw (17:15-16):

1-Accompanied by Berean Christians to Athens
2-Waiting for 4-6 weeks to be joined by co-workers
--Not a vacation
--Redeeming the time while he waited) Led to the right place,
3-ATHENS--Most celebrated city in ancient Greece
--Home of classical literature & art
--Gloried in a long history of political & intellectual fame
--Cradle of Democracy
--Stronghold of MYTHOLOGY
* --"THE" University city of the Roman world
--But---"The city wholly given over to IDOLATRY"
NB 4-PETRONIUS--"IT is easier to find a god in Athens than to find a man"
5-Paul could--Appreciate its learning
--Admire its beauties
* --But most of all, Pity its spiritual blindness
--And Mourn its idolatries = Any worship toward any God but the God of revelation,
6-"His spirit was stirred in him"--Paul's evaluation of the city and its spiritual need MAN's IDOLS
7-Paul didn't allow himself to be blinded to the true nature of idolatry by architectural or sculptural beauty, for that idolatry was an insult to the majesty of the God of heaven RELIGIOUS ERROR HATRED for idolatry LOVE for souls of men.

B.-The Contacts Paul Made (17:17-18a):

1-Didn't sit idly by for 4-6 weeks
NB 2-Moved among the populace (17:1-2 for method)
--Disputed with Jews in the Synagogue
--Discussed with uncircumcised Gentiles in the Agora
--Dialogued with Philosophers
** Epicureans--Materialists; seeking pleasures
** Stoics--Fatalists; expounding human self-sufficiency MAN's PHILOSOPHIES
Led to the right people
3-Saw "The city" of Athens as THE PEOPLE who lived there
4-In the spirit of Mt. 9:36 — "But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted & were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd."
5-Method--Meet them
--Minister to them
--Win them
--Begin WHERE THEY ARE ! — GO TO THEM

C.-The Commotion Paul Caused (17:18b-21):

1-Called a "BABBLER" =="Seed-Picker"
--Ignorant plagarist Having picked up his doctrines from many others
2-Accused--"He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods"
3-Paul's message--"He preached unto them JESUS & the RES."
--Athenians deified virtues
** Charity
** Beauty
** Virtue
** Healing, etc.
MESSAGE Seem to have thot Paul preached 2 gods
** JESUS and
** God of RESURRECTION

4-"Took him" to Areopagus
--When a man, especially an educated man, goes so far as to lay his hands on another man, it is obvious that his feelings have been moved
--Areopagus = Hill of Mars (Ares), God of war
--"May we know""
--Wanted a NEW MESSAGE Continually
--Spiritual gadflies because they did not have the satifying experience of the old, old story of Jesus and His love

D.-The Comment Paul Made (17:22-23):

1-Paul seizes the opportunity to preach
--"Ye men of Athens"
--His tone is concilliatory — POLITE, RESPECTFUL
--His manner is courteous
--But his message is fearless & uncompromising

NB 2-"Too SUPERSTITIOUS" = = "eminently religious" ARV.
= = "More religious than the average"
--Very religious, but LOST
--ILLUS--Dr. Ironside & his family were coming to the west coast one summer by train. His oldest son walked down the aisle, giving out tracts to the passengers. Later a woman came and sat down by Dr. Ironside, saying, "That was your son who gave me this tract, I believe."

"That's right," said Dr. Ironside.

The woman said, "I am so glad to know that there are other religious people on the train besides me. I have been religious all my life. My uncle and my two brothers are clergymen."

Dr. Ironside replied, "That's interesting, but have you been converted yourself?"

"Why, you don't seem to understand," said the woman. "My father was a teacher of a Bible class, and my uncle and two brothers are clergymen."

"But you don't expect to get to heaven hanging on to their coattails, even if they were born-again Christians, do you?" asked Dr. Ironside.

"No," she said, "but I thought if I put it that way you'd understand that RELIGION RUNS IN OUR FAMILY."

Dr. Ironside thought---what you'd have thought--RELIGIOUS,.....BUT LOST

3-Altar--"To the Unknown God"
--Only one among the many altars, but one of special note to Paul
--History records that more than 600 years before Paul, Epinerides, the poet-prophet of Crete, had visited Athens upon invitation to deliver it from plague, since none of the gods they applied to answered them. The counsel of Epinerides was that they offer a sheep "to the befitting god", whoever he might be.

The plague was stopped, according to the story. This may well be the beginning of Athens' devotion to THE UNKNOWN GOD.

--It is this God, whom they ignorantly worship, Whom Paul declares to them.

- God is not merely a **virtue**, or an **influence**, but He is **a PERSON**
- Paul says: "The true God may be **unknown**, but He is **not unknowable**!
- Jn. 17:3--"And this is life eternal, that they might know **thee**, the **only true God**, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

II.-THE AFFIRMATION---(17:24-30a):

THE TRUTH about the TRUE GOD

A.-The Nature Of God (17:24-28a):

1-God is **CREATOR**--17:24
- --He is **maker** of all
- --As creatures of His hands, He is our Creator
- --He is **too big to be limited** by temples made by men's hands

Doubtless Paul gestured to all the temples on the Acropolis + in the Agora

2-God is **SUSTAINER**--17:25 (Keeper)
- --He doesn't need us
- --But we constantly **need Him**
- --He gives **life, breath, & all** things
- --Heb. 1:3--"Who being the brightness of His glory, + the express image of His person, + upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.

3-God is **GOVERNOR**--17:26
- --**UNITY** of the whole race of men
- --FLAVEL cites the Latin Proverb--"Omnis Sanguis Concolor" == "**All blood** is of **one color**"
- --It is all **tainted** in Adam & **mingled** in his posterity
- --Determines the **times**, or **seasons** of the year
- --Set the **bounds** of men's habitations
- --**Sovereign government** of God

4-God is **TRANSCENDER**--17:27 (Immanent)
- --**High above** the level of man
- --Man is thus **WITHOUT EXCUSE**
- --Yet, "He is **not far** from every one of us
- --God is **available** in your time of need
- --"In Him we live, & move & have our being
- --ANSELM--"The **idea of God** in the mind of man is the one **unanswerable evidence** of the existence of God."

Creator Who Sustains

B.-The Nature Of Man (17:28b-30a):

1-Cites one of the **Greek Poets**
- --17:28b
- --Exemplifies Paul's **adaptability**
- --1 Cor. 9:22-23a--"I am made all things to all men that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake..."
- --To the **Jew**, he cites Scripture
- --To the **Cretians** he cites one of their own prophets
- --To the **Athenians**, he cites one of their writers

2-"For we are **His OFFSPRING**"
- --Not embracing all that this poet wrote
- --Not espousing "Fatherhood of God, & Brotherhood..."
- --But saying that **the nature of man** is that he is the **creature** of God's creation

3-17:29--Idolatry **degrades God** when he is so represented
--Idolatry **degrades man** when he bows to the work of his own hands (5)
--**Dignity** of God & man are both **violated** by idolatr
--**Man** is a **PERSONAL SPIRIT**
--**God**, who made man, must also be a **PERSONAL SPIRIT**
--God **could not be less** than His creature
--**THEREFORE**, idolatry is the height of folly for a man who was made to walk with the true God

4-17:30a--**Before** the gospel, "God paid no attention to those seasons of ignorance" (Berkeley Version)
--In those days God did not immediately rise to punish sin & sinners
--God **witheld** judgment **then**
BUT --Those days are **PAST** with the message of Christ and the resurrection

Longsuffering

But no longer!

Savior Who redeems

III.-THE PROCLAMATION----(17:30b-31):

A.-Repentance Demanded---THE FACT:

1-17:30b

2-**"BUT NOW"**--Words of **change**
--Words of **Divine intervention**
--Days of withheld judgment are past
--**A new day** has come
--Christ has been **raised**
--So a **new "Word from God"** comes.....

3-(God) **"commandeth** all men everywhere to **repent"**
--No longer just Israel in view
--Addressed to **all men**
--That included these men of Athens
--That includes **us** [redacted] today

4-**What is REPENTANCE?**
--Neglected doctrine
--Biblical doctrine
--**Def.**--"A change of mind & attitude toward the one true God, which issues in a change of life"
--**Military equivalent** == **"ABOUT FACE"**
--Lk. 13:1-5--"I tell you, NAY: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"
--**Jailor's question** in Acts **16:30**
--**Paul's answer** in **16:31**
--It is true that Paul said nothing of repentance to the Jailor, because--as Harry Ironside has well expressed it--"The man's **whole attitude** bespoke the **repentance already produced** in his soul."
--Acts **17:30b**--"but now commandeth all men every where to repent"
--UNGER--"The Apostle is not omitting saving **faith** in Christ. Genuine **repentance** is **always inseparable** from **saving faith**. They are **2 sides** of the **same coin**. Man cannot change his attitude toward God, sin, and himself without seeing his lostness apart from God's salvation and trusting in the divine way of deliverance." (Acts, P. 85)
--Acts **20:21**--"Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, **repentance** toward God, &

SOLUTION TO MAN'S NEED

faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." --1 Th. 1:9-10

--ILLUS--A Hospital Chaplain kept a record of the people he visited during a period of 20 years. Some 2,000 of those who recovered seemingly repented and turned to God when they thought death was near, but only 2 proved afterward that their repentance was genuine. The others returned to their former sinful ways.

The Bible tells us of one repentance at death. True repentance is never too late, but late repentance is seldom true. REPENT....or.....PERISH----Which will it be?

5-Summary of Repentance:
- Repudiation of the past (1)
- Reversal of attitude (2)
- Receiving Christ as Savior (3)

B. Judgment Determined--THE REASON FOR REPENTANCE:

1-17:31

2-The DAY is set for judgment--WARNING!
--Not known as a certain day on the calendar
--But, Heb. 9:27
--Rev. 20:11--"And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them...."
--No pleading the statute of limitations then
--It's certain that YOUR case will be called
--Therefore---Be ready---NOW
*--ILLUS--Doubtless you have heard the story of Archaeus, the Grecian despot, who was going to a feast. On the way a messenger brought him a letter & seriously importuned him to read it immediately. The letter contained tidings of a conspiracy that had been formed against him, and that he would be killed at the feast.

He took the letter & put it in his pocket. In vain did the messenger urge that it concerned a SERIOUS MATTER. Archaeus said: "Serious matters tomorrow; FEASTING TONIGHT."

That night the dagger reached his heart, while he carried on his person the letter of warning which--had he heeded it--could have averted the peril.

Alas! Many men say "Serious things tomorrow" They give themselves to pleasure and business today. Were it not the wiser to set grave matters in order first?

3-The PRINCIPLE of judgment is set:
--In Righteousness
--Ex. 34:6-7 "...The LORD God, merciful + gracious, longsuffering, + abundant in goodness + truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity + transgression + sin, + that will by no means clear the guilty;"
--Ps. 7:11-12
--Reasons from God as Creator to God as Judge
--All the facts will be known; Justice will be done
--No excuses will be tolerated
--Absolute righteousness in that verdict

4-The AGENT of judgment is chosen
--"By that Man whom He hath ordained"
--Christ is "THAT MAN"
--Jn. 5:25-27 READ!
--"Ordained"=="Set in place" by God
--Christ is alive from the grave, so nothing can befall this Judge to keep Him from serving in this task

--Job's Counsel--"Although thou sayest thou shalt not see Him, yet judgment is before Him; therefore trust thou in Him." (35:14)

7

5-The ASSURANCE of Judgment is clarified
--"Whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."
--This is PROOF of divine power
--He Who came as SAVIOR will serve as JUDGE
--Christ's resurrection guarantees future judgment
Encyclopaedia Britannica well says: "The resurrection of Christ is one of the best authenticated facts of history."

6-So, we see Paul's proclamation
- THE FACT---Repentance is essential
- THE REASON--Judgment is sure
  - ** Day is set
  - ** Principle is determined
  - ** Judge is ordained
  - ** Guarantee has been given

ONLY EVER One Message
** To the Jews in the Synagogue
** To the crowd in the marketplace
** To the Council on Mars Hill
** To us today
** Aimed at the HEART & CONSCIENCE, not just at the head — Need to KNOW GOD

PAUL began where they were in dealt with ATHENIANS greatest need

IV. THE PERSONALIZATION---(17:32-34):

A.-By Message Heard:

1-17:32a--"And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead..."
2-No doubt what Paul's message was
3-No misunderstanding of the issue
4-This is THE CRUX of christianity
5-Our message is of THE RISEN SAVIOR !

NB NB

B.-By Message Heeded: — MIXED REACTIONS

1-"Some mocked"--17:32b
--Rejectors of the truth
--Deriders of the message
--Exclude themselves — They said "NEVER"
--No hope for them!

2-"Others said, 'We will hear thee again of this matter'"--17:32c
--Procrastinators
--Delayers of decision — They said "LATER"
--Unwilling to presently commit themselves
--2 Cor. 6:2

3-17:34--Decision made immediately by these
--Deciders for Christ
--Their hope was centered on the One Who was Resurrected to be their Savior
--"Dionysius" ** An Areopagite
** Member of the Council of Mars Hill
** A man

Some said "YES, NOW"

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®
BOORUM & PEASE "NOTEAR" ®

--"Damaris" ** Vulgarism for DAMALIS: "Heifer"
** A reference to a foreign woman
** A woman of low esteem & respect, for a high-born woman would not have been at Mars Hill

--"And others" — Not "high" or "low", but in between

4-We can expect MIXED REACTIONS to the gospel message
--Rejectors
--Procrastinators
--Believers who CLEAVE to the Lord & to those who bring them the gospel while BELIEVING the Savior
--ALL responded in some fashion....and still do

* 5-Did Paul fail at Athens?------NO, but the Athenians did !

6-What Christ and His gospel of resurrection mean to a man determines both his character and his destiny

7-Question:--Have you decided?
--HOW ??
--Why not "believe and cleave" now ?

CONCL: A.-Three Things Of Note About Athens:
1-It aroused Paul's interest
2-It stirred Paul's emotions
3-It inspired Paul's service as he strove to discharge his debt
4-Paul "preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection"

5-That's our message---our hope---for you today also
● REJOICE in God
● RESOLVE to make Him Known

B.-Illustration:

1-A criminal who had often been before the courts was scheduled to appear once more. He rejoiced when he heard that an attorney who had defended him on a previous occasion was now the trial judge.

His attitude changed, however, when the judge stated: "When I was an attorney, I defended you, but I am no longer your attorney. It is not now my business to defend, but to judge. I shall hear the evidence, and then I MUST DEAL WITH YOU IN KEEPING WITH THE OATH I have taken in the office of Judge."

Jesus once came to this earth as Savior. He is even now at the right hand of God as our intercessor, our Advocate with the Father. But the day is coming when He will return as JUDGE. As Judge He must perform His duty in keeping with the name of His office.

HOW WILL YOU MEET HIM? --Today as your Savior ?
● Later as your Judge ?
--You must decide !

Westbrae--4/14/68--
Hotchkiss, Colo — 11/17/68
McCarrol Memorial — Denver — 11/24/68
Fremont-Berean 10/25/70
Santa Chinese — 4/4/71
Lookout Bapt. Ch — 4/22/84
Old Kanawha Bapt. Ch - 4/7/85
Mt. Tabor Bapt. - 3/24/91

One Day — #103 - 1-4
Christ Arose — #121 #138
Christ The Lord Is Risen Today #122
He Lives #124
Crown Him With Many Crowns #62 - 1-3

THE INDIGENOUS CHURCH Acts 18:1-11

Intro: A.-Purpose Of Christ:
1-Mt. 16:18
2-Means--Acts 1:1-2
--By the Spirit
--Thru the means of the disciples

B.-Pattern Of Paul:
1-Itinerant evangelism
2-Choosing logical centers of outreach into the area
3-Develop local independent churches
--Independent of control by man
--Dependent upon the control of the Spirit
--Obedient to Christ, the Head of the Body
4-Letters of the N. T. Show how this was accomplished
5-Churches of the N. T. were the results
6-These churches lacked perfection, yet labored on for a testimony for Christ

C.-The Indigenous Church:
1-Self-governing
2-Self-supporting
3-Self-propagating
4-Self-teaching
} DEFINITION
5-This was the pattern of the N. T.
6-Lost until recent years
--marriage of church & state in Romanism
--Dark ages & their spiritual eclipse
--"Great White Father" approach in a Mission compound
--NOW trying to build a NATIONAL CHURCH in the hands of the people – Illus – CIM in China; WIM in Cuba
--Need to avoid being JUDAIZERS or AMERICANIZERS.

I.-SELF-GOVERNING CHURCH:

A.-New Testament Pattern:
1-Organization develops & enlarges out of need
2-Qualified male leadership in charge
3-Spirit-gifted men elected--Acts 6:5
4-Responsible to God & to the church--"It seemed good to the Holy Ghost & to us"– Acts 15:28
5-Practicing the ordinances
6-Engaged in spiritual pursuits

B.-Central American Situation:
1-Many preaching points not yet organized
2-~~650~~ congregations by the hundreds + thousands
3-Hundreds of organized churches
4-Spiritual men elected BY and FROM the people
5-Responsible to God & the local church — No law to themselves
6-NOT under jurisdiction of the mission
--ILLUS--Turrialba Pastor & Board who consulted with me about a local problem & then made up their own mind.
--ILLUS--Baby is to be held, Toddler is to be led, Child is to be helped,, Adolescent is to be

advised, Mature man is to be treated as an equal. So also the church needs to be helped, but not dominated by the missionary.

7-Voluntary organization of local churches into Consejos nacional organizations in Guat. & C. R. for more effective cooperation.

II.-SELF-SUPPORTING CHURCH:

A.-New Testament Pattern:

1-Missionary Support Plans
- --Private funds--Barnabas — Few can do this
- --Make tents on the side--Paul — Few can get the work done + do this too
- --Supported by churches in the more developed areas--Paul in later years — Pattern for this age!

2-National Church Support
- --Always from the people themselves
- --Never doled out, but sacrificially given.

B.-Central American Situation:

1-Grace-giving taught — Because of reciprocal love
2-Sacrificial giving stressed
3-ILLUS--Don Rubancindo Gusman from coffee finca near El Tumbador walks 2 hrs. each way to services twice on Sunday & again on Wednesday. On several occasions he has dug into his meagere savings from working at 60¢ per day & raising 8 children. Once for construction of the church---$100.00; Once for completion of the church construction--$50.00; and then for an evangelistic effort to reach more of the people in El Tumbador---$100.00----His FULL LIFE'S SAVINGS given over for the proclamation of the gospel of the Christ he loves.

4-ALL land & buildings are nationally paid for.

5-ILLUS--In Santa Anna, El Salvador, there is a church. When I was there, its Pastor was away for 3 months Post-Graduate work at CABI. Three years ago this church built itself a fine new building seating 500. It was built by its 150 members & is fully paid for in 3 years time.

5-Many INSTITUTIONS are still run by & built by funds from the USA, but this is being worked on.

~~Distinguish 3 Levels of Indigenous~~ Policy

III.-SELF-PROPAGATING CHURCH:

A.-New Testament Pattern:

1-Every lost man a mission field
2-Every saved man a missionary---to somewhere
3-Church grows as BELIEVERS reproduce "after their kind"

B.-Central American Situation:

1-Weak spot in most churches due to "FEAR OF MAN"
2-Yet, much being done
- --The churches in C. R. have a "home missions" program
- --Some Pastors serve in other countries as pastors, evangelists & missionaries
- --Individuals labor much in personal work--ILLUS--"Moncho" in Santa Lucia who is saving to purchase a phonograph to evangelize his employer.

(Sheep have not Lambs, the Shepherd

--Huehuetenango Church
*Gospel Texts over door
*400 active members
*Numerous preaching points with growing groups
*Four out-churches
*Christian Day school of 140; mostly from homes where parents are unsaved.
*Bicycle Brigade of about 20 men.
*-Don Misael's church in Managua
* 2 branch works in [illegible] 6 months.

3-Key is that LAYMEN see that this their grand opportunity to serve God + that their job is only a means of livli-hood to support them in their work for God,

IV.-SELF-TEACHING CHURCH:

A.-New Testament Pattern:
1-Acts 18:7-8 raises up born-again believers
2-Acts 18:11 is soon necessitated
3-TRAINED believers are essential to an ongoing christian life, a growing testimony, and a truly indigenous church

B.-Central American Situation: Radio plays its part here
1-Self-trained men
* Ixtahuacan's lay-pastor Pasqualie (Indian) who labors without formal training
2-Correspondence school-trained men
* Simon who qualified thru correspondence school & is now pastoring 12 churches on a circuit
3-Brief Bible Institutes
* 1, 2, or 3 week meetings in the local churches in O.T &N.T. survey, arithmetic, literacy, Bible doctrine, music, teacher training, and church organization
* Special "camp-meeting style" Bible intitutes where believers come to us for a month of instruction in one of the centers where we are equipped for such sessions of ministry.
4-Specialized Training Institutions
* Robinson Bible Institute
*-Central American Bible Institute
* Mexico Bible Schools

Nicaragua Barrillas

5-Must also include all the believers so they're prepared for their work of ministering

CONCLUSION:

A.-Provinces Of The Missionary:
1-Origin of the church
2-Nurture of the Church
3-Maturing of the church

B.-Province Of Believers & The Church At Home:
1-ILLUS--Pastor Don Raphael (San Pedro, Guat.) had me greet & speak to his congregation thru Mrs. Olive Digby as interpreter. Unbeknownst to us he recorded it. Olive was embarrassed because of linguistic blunders. His application to his congregation that God is making a "RECORDING" which will be "PLAYED BACK" in His presence.

Will we---You & I--be ashamed of our lack of support both here & on the mission field, of God's plan for the establishment of INDIGENOUS CHURCHES?...Pray...Give...GO...

"Take Heed, Overseeers" Acts 20:17-38

Intro: A.-Background:
1-In Ephesus--Uproar led by silversmith Demetrius
2-In Church--Three years of Paul's ministry
3-Ephesian LAY LEADERS called to conference
--"Bishop"--"Elder"--"Overseers" Acts 20:17, 28
--Not a preacher's, but LAY LEADERS CONFERENCE
--Always a plurality of elders in a church

B.-Paul, Their Ministry: Pattern
1-Manner Of Ministry---20:19:
--Humility--Not highminded
--Tears--Ps. 126:6 "He that goeth forth + weepeth bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."
--Temptations = TRIALS — 2 Cor 4(4), 6(28) + 11(28) = 60
2-Matter Of Ministry---20:20:
--Nothing kept back — Total Dedication
--All that was given was profitable
--Both a public ministry & a private one
--Whole counsel of God--20:27.
--ILLUS--The Pope requests a Dominican bishop to repair to Florence & answer Savonarola's sermons. "Holy Father, I will obey; but I must be supplied with arms."...."What arms?"....This preacher says we ought not to keep concubines, commit simony, or be guilty of licentiousness. If in this he speaks truly, what shall I reply?"....."What shall we do?" said the Pope. "I know. Reward him, give him a red hat, make a Cardinal and a friend of him at once."......Savonarola kindly receives the papal messenger, and for 3 days listens to his arguments, but is unconvinced. The tempting bribe is then offered....."Come tomorrow morning to my sermon and you shall hear my answer."
How great was the surprise of the Pope's emmisary's surprise at hearing even more denunciations than ever from Savonarola, who exclaimed, "NO OTHER RED HAT WILL I HAVE THAN THAT OF MARTYRDOM, COLORED WITH MY OWN BLOOD." — And they gave it to him in Florence
3-Means Of Salvation---20:21:
--Open to all
--Two-fold action---FAITH & REPENTANCE
---both essential to genuine salvation
**ILLUS---Reminds of an old frontier preacher who was known in his area as "OLD FAITH AND REPENTANCE JONES."
----so also Paul.

Warning the lost + Teaching the saints

"The great requirements of the Gospel"

C.-Exhortation-----"Take Heed..."----Only speech in Acts that Luke ~~heard~~ records Paul preaching to believers — Message for today also!

I.-TAKE HEED UNTO YOURSELVES:

A.-Place To Begin:
1-No help to OTHERS until o.k. YOURSELF — Song of Sol. 1:6
2-Clean & right before taking part in His Work
3-Look at SELF before the FLOCK — Character comes before service

B.-Divine Requirements: Elder — Maturity in the Faith
1-Not to be taken lightly----HIGH SPIRITUAL OFFICE & RESPONSIBILITY
2**Home--1 Tim. 3:2, 4; Tit. 1:6
3-Habits--1 Tim. 3:3
4-Permanence in the faith--1 Tim. 3:6
5-Work & Witness---1 Tim. 3:7
6-Church Reputation and Performance--Tit. 1:7-9
--Head & shoulders ABOVE fellows

Public

7- Spiritual men over spiritual affairs of the church

Relation + To Church + To God
To World + To Wife

II.-TAKE HEED UNTO YOUR JOBS:

A.-Overseers:

Acts 20:17 + 28 — Elders = Overseers. Deals w/ Duties

1-Of all the flock
--no partiality
--great position, but great responsibility too
2-"Over the which"--R.V. renders "IN the which"
--Not superior, but one of the flock
--1 Pet. 5:1-3
--Not for earthly rewards
--Not as LORDS, but as EXAMPLES = Patterns for others to follow
3-Duties Of Overseers:
--Bishop is one who sees and sets right (Discipline unto restoration)
--Visit the people--Jas. 1:27
--Heal the wounds
--Counsel the people — Heb. 13:7
--Rule the House of God--1 Tim. 3:4-5
--ILLUS--Oriental Law---"Sheep shall be delivered over to the sheep cowherd in the morning; the sheep cowherd shall tend them during the whole day with grass and water; and in the evening shall redeliver them to the master, in the same mannner as they were entrusted to him. If by the fault of the sheep cowherd, any of the cattle be lost or stolen, that sheep cowherd shall make it good. When a sheep cowherd has led cattle to any distant place to feed, if any die of distemper, inspite of the fact that the sheep cowherd applied the proper remedy, the sheep cowherd shall carry the head, the tail, the fore-foot, or some such convincing proof taken from the animal's body, to the owner of the sheep cattle. Having done this, he shall be no further answerable. If he neglects to act thus, he shall make good the loss."..... Paul, therefore, compares the Ephesian church to a flock of sheep, seeking pasturage under the guidance of their shepherds WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEM

B.-To Feed:

1-Provide SPIRITUAL nourishment
2-Men of the Book
3-Responsibility is linked TO THE CHURCH — God puts a PREMIUM on the Ch. because it cost His Blood
--outside things o.k. too
--but never in place of the church
--first place in the believer's service is CH. RELATED
4-"Apt to teach"--1 Tim. 3:2
--Not, "If I get caught"
--but, an excellent teacher
--Primary responsibility---Know & communicate the Book
--By Precept and by Example

C.-High Calling:

1-"If a man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good thing." 1 Tim. 3:1
2-Shares responsibilities with the Pastor--1 Tim. 4:14-16

III.-TAKE HEED UNTO YOUR ENEMIES:

A.-Enemies From Without: — EXTERNAL

1-Described as grevious wolves
2-Actions are "not sparing the flock"
3-Disruptive & Divisive
4-Unsaved from OUTSIDE
5-Not too hard to recognize---2 Cor. 11:13-15 — Masquerading as angels of light.

B.-Enemies From Within: (INTERNAL) Unsaved in the Ch.

1-"Of your own selves"--not necessarily from among elders, but from inside the church — but may be elders
2-Message--"perverse things" — Unspiritual + Unholy
--not even given dignity of "doctrines"

--Not altogether falsehoods, but perversions
--2 Pet. 2:1-3 BY UNSAVED & SAVED
--ILLUS---Dislocated arm is grotesque & useless-----so also dislocated & distorted truth

3-Can't help but wonder if Elders didn't ask as did the disciples in Mt. 26:22, "Lord, is it I?"

4-No idle warning--Only 6 departures from the faith named in the New Testament
--ALL 6 of these were from Ephesus where Elders are here addressed
--Hymanaeus & Alexander--1 Tim. 1:20
--Phygellus&Hermogenes--2 Tim. 1:15
--Philetus--2 Tim. 2:17
--Diotrophes--3 Jn. 9-11

5-Provision for such circumstances---1 Tim. 5:19-20--for Elders

6-Elders are to PROTECT THE CHURCH FROM ALL ENEMIES--w/i & w/o

IV.-TAKE HEED UNTO YOUR WARNING:

A.-Watch: (As a military sentry in the night)

1-"Therefore" watch due to evil influences
2-"Watch"--unsleeping alertness which can never be taken by surprise
3-Vigilance is the price of survival

B.-Remember:

1-Paul's example---20:31
2-Paul's teaching---20:27
3-Paul's ministry---20:20
4-Need for CONTENT & EARNESTNESS
5-ILLUS---The celebrated actor Mr. Betterton, being one day at dinner at the Archbishop of Canterbury's place, his Grace expressed his astonishment that the representation of fables in their pieces should make more impression upon the mind than that of the truth in the sermons of preachers; upon which Mr. Betterton, desiring leave to explain the reason of it, & obtaining it, on condition of preserving due respect, said, "May it please your grace, IT IS BECAUSE THE CLERGY IN READING THEIR SERMONS, PRONOUNCE THEM AS IF THEY WERE READING FABLES: BUT WE, IN ACTING OUR PARTS, AND USING THEM IN PROPER GESTURE, REPRESENT THEM AS MATTERS OF FACT"-----Both content & earnestness needed

Nation
Home
Business
Church !

V.-TAKE HEED UNTO YOUR RESOURCES:

A.-What These Resources Were Not:

1-Paul the Apostle---leaving + not expecting to return
2-Apostolic succession----no word of it in Scr.
3-Pastor--Pastorless for over a year as far as Scr. records
--Ready any time to CONTINUE ministry when a Pastor goes elsewhere; not to THEN BEGIN a ministry.

B.-What These Resources Were:-----20:32:

1-Commended To God
--Only "brethren" can be
--Only true source of life & power
--Commended IN prayer, but not TO prayer — TO GOD

2-The Word: Commended To
--Shows God's grace to us
--Able to build us up on earth
--Able to give inheritance in heaven
--Able to give weapons & tools of service
--Able to give sanctification or Holiness---Heb. 12:14

VI.-TAKE HEED TO YOUR ORDINATION:

Many overseers in one church, not one overseer over many churches

ORDAINED BY

A.-By The **Holy Ghost:**
1-20:28---Spirit makes men "overseers"
2-Gives qualifications for position to those called of God
3-Gives power & vision for service
4-By directing the leaders & the congregation in choices

B.-By **Church Leaders:**
1-Acts 14:23--Paul ordains elders
2-Tit. 1:5---Pastor Titus ordains elders

Leaders have set you forth for nomination after thorough examination

C.-By The **Congregation:** Designated by the hand = VOTING
1-Acts 6:5-7--Deacons chosen by popular election
2-Acts 13:3---Missionaries sent out by CHURCH decisions
3-ILLUS---As the Divine and Human are one in the Redeemer, so also the Divine and Human are one in the choice of the leaders of the leaders of the church-----PERFECT HARMONY

VII.-TAKE HEED TO YOUR REWARD:

A.-Double Honor:---1 Tim. 5:17 — Reward of Honor — Present
1-If they rule well
2-If they labor in the Word & Doctrine
3-Reward on earth—challenge & growth in self & family
—challenge & growth in others in the Church
4-Reward in Heaven--God sees & records

IMPACT on your generation

B.-Crown Of Glory:---1 Pet. 5:4 — Reward of Glory — Future
1-At Appearance of Christ for believers---Bema
2-Permanent reward
3-Fades not away
4-Crown of glory--from the Chief Shepherd
--To an undershepherd

INPUT into the Body of Christ

CONCL:----A.-Take Heed To...
1-Yourselves
2-Your jobs
3-Your Enemies
4-Your warning
5-Your Resources
6-Your ordination
7-Your reward

Recapitulation

Yours is a HIGH and a HOLY calling to local church leadership.

B.-Acts 20:28--"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood."

C- Ours is the high privilege of serving God and His people in the local church.

At The Cross — 55

Have Thine Own Way — 436

388

- Paul is gone
- Pastors from the past are gone
- God is ever with us
- God's Word is ever the same
  - Apostles are gone
  - Apostolic teaching remains

11/15/81 - Minnick Bible Ch, TN.

INTRO:

A.-The Facts About The Phenomenon Of Saul/Paul:

1-Repeated in 3 passages
--Acts 9--Historical record
--Acts 22--Defense before Jews in Jerus.
--Acts 26--Defense before Agrippa & Festus

Each account adds some of the details

2-TURNING POINT in the life of one of history's ten greatest men of influence

3-Record can be summarized in FOUR WORDS:
I.-Conviction
II.-Conversion
III.-Consecration
IV.-Confusion

B.-The Explanation Of The Phenomenon of Saul/Paul:

1-RENAN in his Les Apotres (The Apostles) says that "it was an uneasy conscience with unstrung nerves, fatigue of the journey, eyes inflamed with the sun & a sudden stroke of FEVER which produced the hallucination." *

2-CRITICS have insisted that it was a thunderstorm which overtook Saul, & that a flash of lightning blinded him, and that in that lightning-flash he imagined that he saw Christ.

3-J. KLAUSNER tried to explain Saul's vision of the ascended Christ with a stroke of EPILEPSY, which the Greeks called 'the holy disease'. They say that this disease put Saul into a state of ecstasy which made him think that he had a vision & heard a voice from heaven.

4-These are inventions from the FATHER OF LIES, Satan

** 5-A.C. Gaebelein-"The fact is that the conversion of Saul is one of the great miracles & evidences of Christianity (Acts, P. 168)

6-Explanation of Lord Lyttleton:

There is an interesting incident which occupied the lives of GILBERT WEST and LORD GEORGE LYTTLETON. They were both avowed skeptics, so much so that they maintained that the Bible was the biggest imposture ever foisted upon mankind. They were not content to say this, however, but purposely set out to prove it.

Mr. West set out to write a book about the irregularities & impossibilities of the RESURRECTION of Christ. Lord Lyttleton was going to make a proper laughing stock of the CONVERSION OF SAUL. With a hearty good will they set to work, leaving no stone untured which would prove the absurdity and inconsistencies about Jesus' resurrection & Saul's conversion.

A year later at a time and place appointed, they met to gloat over their successes in their researches before making their results known to the world. IMAGINE THEIR SURPRISE then, when they met and discovered that both had been converted thru

of God's Word
their studies and had found Christ as their own Savior also. Instead of finding an imposture, they found the very WORDS OF LIFE. Their eyes were opened & they saw that they were sinners, and that it was GOD'S WORD which they were seeking to attack. That Word proved itself again to be "sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul & spirit & of the joints & marrow, & is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

7-PROP:--There are four words which will characterize your experience--as they have for Saul, and as they have for me--if you meet Christ personally.

I-CONVICTION OF SAUL/PAUL:

A.-Personal Background:

1-His name
- -SAUL=="Asked for" (Hebrew name)
- -PAUL=="Little" (Roman name)
- -Of the Tribe of Benjamin, smallest tribe of Israel (Phil. 3:5)

Both given at birth

2-His upbringing
- -Born about 7 A.D.
- -Lived in the DIASPORA in Tarsus, in Cilesia of Asia Minor
- -Citizen of Rome by birth (Acts 16:37)
- -Father was a Pharisee by conviction (Acts 23:6)
- -Strict religious upbringing in the home
- -Hellenist exposure in Tarsus - Greek Culture
- -Some degree of wealth in the family

3-His education
- --In the home as a child taught by parents & a tutor
- --Trade of a tentmaker taught to him so he would always be self-sufficient & independent (Acts 18:3)
- --Brought to Jerusalem as a youth of 12-13 years & there trained by Gamaliel, the greatest Rabbi of his day (Acts 5:34; 22:3)
- --University educated in philosophy, poets, natural sciences & the Greek Games
  - ** Possibly in Tarsus at its University
  - ** More likely in Alexandria, Egypt
- -Hellenistic education made him an able disputer

Home Schooling

B.-Personal Confrontation:

1-Information from Stephen
- --Saul was a member of the Sanhedrin (the ruling council of the Jews) in his early 30's
- --Heard Stephen's sermon (Acts 6:8--7:53) before the Sanhedrin
  - ** Historical review of God's dealing with Israel (7:1-50)
  - ** Personal accusation that these leaders resist the ministry of the Holy Spirit, as did their fathers before them (7:51-53)
- --Present, [illegible] actually participating in Stephen's death (7:58-59)--8:1 Cast his vote (7:59-60)
- --Heard Stephen's prayer for forgiveness of his persecutors

2-Influence from Stephen
--These words were Stephen's which Saul heard
--The impact came by the Holy Spirit empowering Stephen's witness
* Conybeare & Howson -"We cannot dissociate the martyrdom of Stephen from the conversion of Saul. The spectacle of so much constancy, so much faith, so much love could not be lost. It is hardly too much to say with Augustine that 'the church owes Paul to the prayer of Stephen'." (P. 70)
--Certainly the mind of Saul would be one to be influenced by the truth & power of Stephen's witness.

C. Persecution of 'THE WAY':

1-Complicity in Stephen's death--Acts 8:1
--"Consenting unto his death"
--Active verb
* --Saul actually VOTED for the death as a Sanhedrin member

2-Commitment to local persecution (8:1, 3)
"great persecution"; RELIGIOUS INQUISITION !!
--Saul was a ringleader (Acts 26:9-11)
--Directed against "the church"
** Not a building
** Not an organization
** But a "CALLED OUT PEOPLE" who trusted Jesus Christ and followed His teachings
--Acts 8:3 ** Saul "made havock of the church"
● Equal opportunity persecutor against both men and women
--RESULTS ** Christians were scattered (8:4)
** Gospel spread like a tumbleweed before the wind.

3-Carrying persecution to Damascus
--Saul sought to EXTEND the persecution (9:1-3a; 26:12)
9:1 ● "Breathing out threatenings & slaughter"
--Stephen was not the only one done to death (26:10)
--WHY TO DAMASCUS ??
** Oldest city in the world
** 2200 ft. elevation on a fertile plain watered by the Chrysorrhoes River & giving much fruit & grain
** Described as "THE EYE OF THE EAST"
** The desert was its fortification & the river was its life
** Considered one of the TEN cities of Decapolis
** A large Jewish population in Damascus, for Josephus says over 10,000 Jews were martyred there in A.D. 66

D.-Personal Encounter:

1-Confrontation on the Damascus Road
--"LIGHT" from heaven (9:3)

* Brightness outshone the dessert sun !
* Company with Saul "fell to the earth"
--"VOICE" spoke to Saul
** Saul is singled out (9:4)
** Others heard sounds, but not the voice
* Sovereign choice of Saul out of all that group traveling to Damascus that day
--GOD'S QUESTION ** "WHY persecutest thou Me?" ?
** Intimate relationship between God & His people
** Parallel in Zech. 2:8--"...he that toucheth you (Israel), toucheth the apple of his (God's) eye."
The Head in heaven is hurt when His people on earth are touched.
--What a confrontation this was !! !!

2-Conviction in the inner man
--Saul's QUESTION * "WHO art Thou LORD?"
* The Person Saul beholds, shining out of heaven surrounded by the glory light, the Shekinah, which of old dwelt in the midst of Israel can be none other than JEHOVAH. And so the prostrate Saul addresses Him as LORD !!
* Recognition that the heavenly voice is from DEITY !! (Deut. 6:4)
--God's ANSWER ** "I am Jesus, Whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks (=ox goads)" (9:5)
** SHOCKER !!!!
** Deity (and) Jesus are IDENTICAL !! YES
** Conviction hits Saul full-force

3-Define Conviction
-Divine working of the Holy Spirit to bring spiritual enlightenment & awakening
-Jn. 16:7-11 is key text
-Saul is "trembling & astonished" (9:6)
-Mind is reeling with a spiritual EARTHQUAKE which has just shattered all his religious preconceptions
--Because * Jesus of Nazareth Whom Saul has been persecuting is LORD (=Jehovah of the Jews)
Two names describing One Person; SAUL'S GOD
-Kicking against the ox-goads indicates active conviction of the Spirit has been going on in Saul's mind & heart

4-It is noteworthy that though Saul heard the VOICE of the Lord distinctly, others did not. Some hear and respond to the voice of God's call, while others do (not) hear or do not respond to His call to them.

5-Gaebelein--"What infinite grace! Stephen, the Saint of God, beheld an opened heaven and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the next who sees heaven opened and beholds the Lord and hears His voice is the chief of sinners." (Acts, P. 167)

II. CONVERSION OF SAUL/PAUL:

A.-The Circumstances:

1-Right **then** & **there**---**NO DELAY** — Immediate Response of Saul

2-Spiritually **prepared** over a period of months; **OPEN** to God's dealing with his heart

3-In a **single word** Saul was **saved** !!

- ** "**LORD**"
  - -Acknowledgement of **DEITY**
  - -**Total capitulation**
  - -**Rom. 10:11-13**
  - -**Acknowledgement** of the claims of Jesus Christ of Nazareth as **JEHOVAH** of the O. T.
  - -**Admission** that Saul had been **PERSECUTING GOD** when he persecuted Christians, who are Christ's Body

4-**Most important decision** of life !!!

- -**Converted** right there on the Damascus Rd.
- -**Answer** to **Stephen's prayer** of Acts 7:60--"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."
- -Chrysostom--"Christ, like a skillful Physician healed Saul when his fever was at its worst."

B.-The Gospel Message:

1-Not detailed here in Acts because Saul **already knew** it thoroughly from interrogating Christians

DEF. 2-**What** is **THE GOSPEL** !??

1. Man is a sinner before God (Rom. 3:23; 6:23)
2. **God loves** mankind as a whole & each person individually (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8)
3. God provided Jesus Christ as our sin-bearing Substitutionary Sacrifice and Savior
4. Man must **BELIEVE** in his **heart** this message (Rom. 10:9a)
5. Man must **CONFESS** with his **mouth** (Rom. 10:9b-10)

C.-The Open Confession:

1-Conversion of Saul in the **middle** of a **sentence** (9:6)

2-Conversion experienced became the **foundation** of his entire **life** & **ministry** thereafter

3-Heaven sent **CHANGE** !!

NB 4-God did not thereafter recognize Saul by the features of his **first birth** & pedigree, but by the features of his **new birth** by faith in Christ.

5-Lord George **Lyttleton**--"...the conversion & apostleship of St. Paul Alone, duly considered, is of itself a demonstration **sufficient to prove** Christianity to be **a Divine revelation.**" (From 1st paragraph of Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul)

III.-CONSECRATION OF SAUL/PAUL:

A.-The Meaning:

1-By definition--Seen in Acts 9:6--"Lord, WHAT wilt Thou have me to do?"
- --Giving over of the will to Another
- --TOTAL SURRENDER with no limitations
- --No strings attached
- --Set apart for holy use
- --ONE DECISION — Rom. 12:1
  - ** Once, for all, forever
  - ** Then God holds you to it
  - Not repeated in REdedications

2-Two distinct words:
- --"Lord, WHAT...?"
- --Anything, but let it be of YOUR CHOOSING
- --Not, "WHICH" !!
  - ** No proposal of Saul's choices
  - ** No asking for God's approval on one or another of Saul's plans
  - ** Consecration leaves the choice to God !

3-Consecration is TOTAL SURRENDER !!

4-Seen in the use of the word "Lord", which indicates MASTER

5-ILLUS--Removal of self from the throne of one's heart & enthroning there Christ once & for all.

Sheet of paper: "I, Saul of Tarsus, yield myself to do all the will of my God as herein & hereafter set forth." Followed by a BLANK SPACE to be filled in by God. Signed as proof of intention

B.-The Timing:

NB

1-Generally subsequent to salvation for most of us Christians
- --Time to learn
- --Time to grow
- --Time to experience frustration & failure
- --Time to understand our inability to live a holy life in the energy of the flesh
- --CROWDED TO CHRIST for our victory

After failure in the flesh by any other way

2-AT salvation for Saul of Tarsus — Unusual Timing
- --Because of his knowledge of the O.T.
- --Because of his knowledge of the Christian faith which he had been persecuting
- --Because of his exposure to "ALL OUT" Christians
- --Calls himself "Paul, a servant (==bondslave) of Jesus Christ." (Rom. 1:1)
- --Decision of his own heart out of love
- --O.T. ILLUS.-Ex. 21:1-6

C.-The Understanding:

C.-The Understanding:

1-A Romans 12:1-2 decision — Decision
- --Present your body a living sacrifice
- --Stop being conformed to this world system
- --Begin being transformed by the renewing of your mind through the Holy Spirit & the Word — Process

Change of pattern of living

2-Personal Testimony — PCR
- --Saved in February 1949
- --Floundered w/ ups & downs
- --Called to preach in early 1950
- --DEDICATION to the Lord privately in my room — Decision
- --Public declaration several times in church services
- --MANY RENEWALS in my daily experience---Really, I need this almost daily — To remind me, not God.

3-A Decision of the WILL
- --What is meant?
- --Person says: "I choose the will of God as BEST for my life--sight unseen-- I place Jesus Christ in full control of my life by yielding my body to Him. I am at His disposal to work IN me and also to work THRU me for others

My ears have been pierced. I am a willing servant to my Good Master to lovingly serve Him forever!

IV.-CONFUSION IN SAUL/PAUL:

A.-Clarification Is Needed:

1-Do you think that is the end of the story??
- --Conviction
- --Conversion
- --Consecration

= TOTAL BLISS ?

2-NO !! That is just the beginning !!
- --A new life to live
- --Jn. 10:10b--"I am come that they might have life, & that they may have it more abundantly."
- --AND also new battles ahead

B.-Opposition Is To Be Expected:

1-Suspicion from former enemies (who were Christians)
- --Saul faced this (Acts 9:26)
- --Christians had been persecuted by him
- --They were slow to accept Saul as "one of them"
- --Often we are still more like the worldlings from whom we have just been saved, and so we do not immediately "fit" & "feel at home" with Christians

2-Three new enemies are discovered
- (1) The world around us: WORLD SYSTEM
  - --Has been there all along
  - --Now we are in opposition to it
  - --Conflicts are inevitable
  - --New believer's standards are changing

- Any dead carp can float downstream, but it takes LIFE to swim against the current
- (2) The flesh within us--OLD NATURE
  - --Also something we have had with us all our lives
  - --But now we also have the NEW (=Divine) nature
  - --Conflict on the inside
  - --Rom. 7 describes Saul's experience of spiritual SCHIZOPHRENIA
  - --7:14-15--"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I."
- (3) The Devil against us--DEMONIC OPPOSITION
  - --Previously we were children of darkness
  - --Satan was our "father"
  - --Now we are delivered from his kingdom
  - --He seeks our defeat
  - --We have mighty demons opposing us

C.-Progression Will Take Time:

1-Much to UNlearn
- --Pagan perceptions
- --Worldly standards
- --Religious errors

Secular, Worldly, ANTI-GOD

2-Much to LEARN afresh
- --About God/Savior/ Spirit
- --About Bible as our authority & standard
- --Christian life
- --Divine enablement
- --Effective service

3-Grow & gain spiritual strength
- Gradually
- --It takes TIME!!
- Little by little-------be patient
- ILLUS Squash or Oak
  - ---Which do YOU want to be ??

4-Development as a Christian is much like the development of a child
- Newborn // Helpless--Crawling
- Child // Growing & learning--Walking
- Adolescence--Stretching & maturing--Running
- Adulthood.....CONTINUING

5-Saul's experience recorded in Acts 9 & 22 shows us something of these stages of spiritual development

CONCLUSION:

A.-Recapitulation About Saul/Paul:

1-Conviction
2-Conversion
3-Consecration
4-Confusion

B.-Application Related To Our Progress Pattern:

1-Where are YOU in this sequence ?? (1), (2), (3), (4) ??
2-What decisons have you already made?

3-What are your present needs??

--Under CONVICTION ??--Accept God's GIFT of eternal life offered in Jesus Christ

--Been CONVERTED ??--Move on to Dedication of your body for God's service & glory. SECOND most important decision of your earthly life

--CONSECRATED ??--Life changing
--Service developing
--Usefulness of witness
--Reproducing in others

--CONFUSED as to How to experience victory — More in next message

--Realize that these decisions are stepping stones to spiritual progress:
** OUT of the wilderness of sin & self centeredness
** INTO the blessings of maturity, love, fellowship and service.

WHERE ARE YOU ?

4-QUESTIONS--Will you respond TODAY ??
--Respond appropriately in the area in which the Spirit of God has been dealing with you.

#

249--"And Can It Be That I Should Gain?"
#382--"Whiter Than Snow
#512--Christ Liveth In Me"

Westbrae--4/23/72 & 7/18/82
Chinese Independent Baptist; Oakland-9/20/72
Lakewood Baptist Church, Sunnyvale--11/26/72
Daniels Missionary Baptist Church--5/28/78
A.B.C. Chapel--9/10/79
O.K.B.C.--5/24/87
Limerick-7/26/87
Caldwell, OH-Wayne Smith-3/13/89
Charleston Harbor Bible Ch-3/18/89 SC.
Grace Gospel Church, Beaver-3/28+4/5/89
Bible Conf-Taupo, NZ-6/13/92
Hilltop Bapt. Ch.-11/30/94/1/6+13/08
Dunedin Brethren-2/4/96

Judges

On Trial — Acts 26:1-29

Intro: A.-Three Trials:
1-While imprisoned in Ceasarea
2-Before 3 Judges — FELIX, FESTUS, + AGRIPPA
3-One we are considering is typical — before AGRIPPA
4-Judges were really on SPIRITUAL TRIAL
5-Facts were presented concerning Christ
6-They had light---light demands a response
---light increases blessing or judgment
---not to judge a sermon, but to be judged by the sermon
— Responsible for the light which has come to us

I.-PAUL'S PERSONAL TESTIMONY:

A.-Address To Agrippa (26:1-3):
1-Paul spoke for himself
2-Paul consddered it a privilege to testify
3-Paul was polite
4-Paul addressed Agrippa as an expert in religious matters

B.-Recounting Of Former Life (26:4-12):
1-Well known in his early years in religious circles
2-Strict Pharisee
3-Believed & stood on promises of God to Israel--INCLUDING RES.
4-Persecuted Christians
5-Voted for the death of some Christians
6-Sought to persecute Christians who had dispersed too

C.-Conversion Experience (26:13-15):
1-Midday brightness outshining the sun
2-Voice of Jesus heard by Paul
3-Questioned as to why he stood against Jesus
4-Paul acknowledged Jesus as LORD and was saved
5-Rom. 10:9-10

Note in my Bible's margin

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD Jesus & shalt believe in thine heartt that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved"

D.-Commission Into Apostolate (26:16-22a):
1-Acc. to the purpose of God--made a minister = SERVANT
--made a witness = TESTIFIER
2-Testimony about--things already seen
--things which were yet to be revealed
3-Commissioned to go to the GENTILES--to open their eyes
--to turn them FROM darkness & Satan
--to turn them TO the light of Christ
--that they might receive FORGIVENESS of sins
--that they might have an INHERITANCE among the saved
--appropriation is "BY FAITH THAT IS IN ME (Jesus)"
26:18
4-Paul's obedience--Preached in Damascus
--Preached in Jerusalem
--Preached in Judea
--Preached to the GENTILES
—26:19-20

5-Paul's message--Repent & turn to God — 26:20c
20:20-21
--Do works meet for repentance
--John 6:29
--For this he was accused & imprisoned
--Yet even imprisonment hasn't stopped his witnessing--of the help of God
--to the great & small
--ILLUS---Circumstances that gave P.C.R. an opportunity to speak to P*T.A. 11/4/58

Jesus answered + said, This is the WORK OF GOD, that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent

II.-PAUL'S PUBLIC MINISTRY:

A.-Rests On The Infallible Scriptures (26:22b):

1-Never dealt in terms of any other authority

2-Rather, he believed--2 Tim. 3:16-17
--Rom. 15:4
--1 Cor. 10:6, 11

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning ~~[illegible]~~ that we thru patience + comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

3-Preached Moses & Prophets----Lk. 24:47
--Law shows sin of man
--O. T. shows PROMISE OF THE RE*DEEMER---Gen. 3:15
--Jer. 23:28
--CONTRAST--The Roman church, for instance, claims the apostolic prerogative, but refuses the apostolic rule, not only going beyond scripture in its dogmas, and practices, but giving tradition & Papal bulls and canons of councils precedence over the very word of God.

The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; + he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord.

B.-Centers In The Promised Christ (26:23):

1-Suffering--liability to suffering
--this fact was conceded by Jews
--but they were OFFENDED BY THE CROSS
--1 Cor. 1:18
--1 Cor. 3:11

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us that are saved, the power of God"

For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ

2-The Resurrection of Christ--Capstone of Christian truth
--1 Cor. 15:3-6, 12, 19
--Truly dead to pay for our sins
--Truly alive to declare our justification & to be the first fruits of resurrection

3-Light to BOTH the Jews & Gentiles
--prophesied in the O.T.
--But Jews didn't forsee the EQUALITY in Christ which is given both Jews & Gentiles in the Body of Christ
--Expected a different & lower level for Gentiles
--"Lo in the volume of the Book it is written of me"
--ILLUS---There isan interesting incident which occured in the lives of GILBERT WEST and LORD George LYTTLETON. They were both avowed skeptics, so much so that they maintained that the Bible was t the biggest imposture ever foisted upon mankind. They were not content to say this, however, but purposely set out to prove it. Mr. West set out to write a book about the irregularities & impossibilities of the resurrection of Christ. Lord Lyttleton was going to make a proper laughting stock of the conversion of Paul. With a hearty good will

they set to work, leaving no stone unturned which would prove the absurdity and inconsistencies of either Paul's conversion or the resurrection of Christ. At the time & place appointed they met to gloat over their successes in their respective researches before making the results known to the world. Imagine their surprise, then, when they met each other, to discover that they had BOTH BEEN CONVERTED to Christ thru their studies. Instead of finding an imposture they found the very WORDS OF LIFE. Their eyes were opened and they saw that they were sinners and that it was GOD'S WORD they were seeking to attack. It proved itself again, however, to be "sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul & spirit and of the joints & marrow, and is a discerning of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

III.-RESONSES OF THE JUDGES:

A.-Felix-----Procrastination (24:25-27):

1-Offended by Paul's presenting
- --justice in the face of his sinfulness
- --temperance in the face of his lust
- --judgment as his end if he does not repent

2-"Trembled"==="was terrified"---convicted
- --but not enough to forsake his sin & trust Jesus Christ
- --Rather, he procrastinated
- --Put off this important decision

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, & have tasted of the heavenly gift, & were made partakers of the Holy Ghost & have tasted the good word of God, & the powers of the age to come, If they fall away to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh & put Him to open shame ← --Heb. 6:4-6

"Tomorrow and tomorrow
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death"----Macbeth, Shakespear

3-More interested in money & sin than in salvation of his soul

4-"Procrastination is the thief of time,
Year after year it steals 'til all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves,
The vast concern of an eternal time." Young

5-Felix expected SOME TIME to be saved--but put it off
- --but no record he was
- --but no more trembling

at the Word of God. Thereafter he could listen, unmoved, not knowing that this was the symptom of spiritual death. When the pain & fear of freezing give place to a sweet insensibility & desire to sleep, then DEATH IS NEAR.

B.-Festus-------Ignorance (26:24):

1-Abrupt & interrupting
2-Discourteous
3-Good breeding of the world's veneer is discarded when they are faced with God's message & messenger
4-Jn. 15:18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you"
5-Accuses Paul of being MAD!
6-One of them was, but it wasn't Paul!
7-IGNORANCE drives the mad sinner from mercy to death & hell
8-Festus condemned himself

C.-Agrippa-------Scorn (26:25-29):

1-Paul insists---he is not mad
--but speaking the truth & soberness
--the facts are clear
--Christ was raised from the dead OPENLY & as a matter of common knowledge, not in a corner

2-Paul thrusts--"Believest thou the prophets"
--"I know that thou believest"
--Logic would inexorably bring Agrippa to a knowledge & acknowledging of Christ

3-Agrippa scorns---Explain the Greek Text
--the notion of an "ALMOST CHRISTIAN" is a mistake
--ILLUS---When after safely navigating the globe, the ROYAL CHARTER went to pieces in Moelfra Bay, on the coast of Wales, it was the melancholy duty of a minister in Liverpool to visit & seek to comfort the wife of the first officer, made a widow by that calamity. The ship had telegraphed from Queenstown & she was sitting in the parlor expecting her husband with the table set for his evening meal, when the messenger came to tell her he was drowned. "Never can I forget the grief, so stricken & tearless with which she rung her hands, saying, 'SO NEAR HOME, AND YET LOST!'-------and many there will be who will say, "Once I was at the very gate of heaven, and I had ALMOST ENTERED IN, but now I am in hell."
--Agrippa was willing to listen to FACTS
--Agrippa was unsettled by the PERSONAL APP* LICATION-----"Believest thou"
--Aggripa scorned salvation

4-Paul--even then still desires his salvation
--even then still desires the salvation of all of those with Agrippa
--recommends Christ & Christianity "as I am," except for the bonds

D.-Actually:

1-Gospel is not for mass consumption, but for personal acceptance
2-Judges were on trial, not Paul

E.-You:

Procrastination Ignorance

1-Forsake the company of those that would hinder you
2-Leave the crowd of Felix, Festus, & Agrippa——Scorn
3-TODAY these would like to CHANGE THEIR DECISIONS and ACCEPT Christ, but they can't-------Lk. 16:25-26——READ
4-But YOU STILL CAN CHANGE YOUR DECISION
5-You still can decide for Christ
6-YOU ARE ON TRIAL
7-"Believest thou?"
8-Some of you have had much reasoning, much persuasion, & you are not yet saved. I beseech you, go not the way of Felix, the way of procrastination; go not the way of Festus, the way of ignorance; go not the way of Agrippa, the way of the scorner. Give you the answer of consent to the Lord Jesus, & pass this day from death into life, from darkness into light, from bondage into freedom.----

MAY THE LORD GIVE YOU GRACE SO TO DO!

When We All Get to Heaven
He Included Me

11/17/63 — Westbrae

"WHY SHOULD I BEAR WITNESS?

INTRO: **A.-The Question Tonight:**

1-"Why sould I bear wtness?

2-**Meaning**==Share the gospel with those not now saved
--Atively reach out to the lost
--CONTACT that leads to IMPACT

3-**Methods**--Tracts
--Testimonies
--Conversations
--Lifestyle input & impact
--Concern shown & shared

B.-The Question Targeted:

1-What we face--CULTS--Hare Krishna
** S.D.A./ Mormons
--RELIGIONS ** Romanism
** Buddhism
** Islam
--Experiences ** Tongues speaking
** Healing meetings
** Snake handling
**Visions & prophecies
--Denominations ** Old ones declining
**A few fundamemtal ones surging
--A WORLD IN NEED

2-Church as a **community**
--Of the redeemed
--Of the redeeming as we reach others
--Not static, but dynamic
--Both **growing** spiritually and numerically
--Fearful obligation
--2 Cor. 5:10-14

3-Where can I get understanding of God's will and my role in this?

4-**PROP:** Paul's testimony clarified
WHY SHOULD I BEAR WITNESS!

I.- PAUL'S CALL TO WITNESS:

A.-First--TO Jesus As Savior: (26:13-15)

1-Receive Him before giving to others
2-Settle one's own personal relationship
3-"I AM Jesus"--The ascendad & enthroned Savior Who speaks from Heaven
--Revelation of Himself to Paul

B.-Second--FOR Jesus: (26:16)

1-"As a minister"--διάκονος
--Emphasis is on service
--Proper response of a saved person

2-As "a witness"-- μαρτυς
--Emphasis on testifying
--Expected sharing by a saved one
-ILLUS.-In January 1985 just before SUPER BOWL XIX the Los Angeles Times published an article in the sports section about Bubba Paris, an offensive tackle for the San Francisco 49ers. It told of a BBC reporter interviewing Paris & asking "What goes on--by that, I mean the kind of conversation that goes on--between players? Are there any instances we could repeat?"
"To be truthful, on the left side of the 49ers line there's an awful lot of conversation," Paris said.
"What kind of conversation?" the interviewer asked.
"Like, 'HAVE YOU BEEN SAVED?', Paris replied!

3-As "an eyewitness"--"Of those things which thou hast seen" (namely, the ASCENDED CHRIST)
--Qualified Paul as an apostle
--Credibility is established
--We lack this, though we do testify that which we know

4-As "a revelation receiver"
--"Of those things in which I will appear unto thee"
** On the Damascus Road
** In Arabia for 3 years
** In later visions
--Message received DIRECTLY from Christ to Paul
--Message not received by consultation with the the Apostles
--Chanel by which 13 of the 27 N.T. books came to us

II.-PAUL'S CONFIDENCE WHILE A WITNESS: (Acts 26:17)

A.-Deliverance From "The People" (=the Jews):

1-In Damascas in Jewish synagogue
2-In Jerusalem from the temple mob
3-On trips such as to Thessalonica
4-At Caesarea
5-Many plots, but no success at snuffing out his witness
6-Still, Paul had a heart burden for his own people: Rom. 10:1-4

B.-Deliverance From The Gentiles:

1-Apostle to these non-Jews throughout the Roman world
2-Appointed to this as his sphere of service
3-Not easily received by the in many places
4-Many "close calls"--2 Cor. 4:8-10 (4)
6:4-10 (28)
11:24-33 (28)

C.-Point Of Deliverance:

1-IMMORTAL while in & doing the will of God
2-Kept by the power of God (1 Pet. 1:4-5)
3-Some, in the will of God, do experience "DELIVERANCE TO GLORY"

--Five men martyred by Incas in Peru in 1955
--John & Betty Stam martyred by the Communists in China in 1930's
--"Blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church"
--John 12:24-26

4-**Safe** to commit ones self to a faithful Creator & Redeemer while we do His willl--- WHEREEVER !!

III.-PAUL'S COMMISSION AS A WITNESS: (26:18)

A.-"To Open Eyes":

1-Spiritual cataract surgery to remove scales of spiritual blindness
2-See anew with spiritual sight
3-A DOCTOR of diseased eyesight

B.-"To Turn Them(men & women):

1-**FROM** darkness to light(=spiritual condition)
2-**FROM** power of Satan to God (=spiritual energizer behind their condition)
3-Human responsibility in sharing the gospel & calling people "TO TURN" or to REPENT
** Matt 3:1-12
** ILLUS--

John the Baptist had the proper perspective; he knew who he was. He stated clearly, "I am not the Christ" (John 1:20). He had no Messiah complex, imagining that he had power over people such that he could change them. Rather, he said, "I am the voice..." (John 1:23).

Now that's interesting, especially in light of the fact that in John's Gospel, Jesus is the Word (John 1:1,14). Christ is the message; John was only the means of communicating the message. The power is not in the voice but in the message.

In John 5, Jesus called John the lamp (John 5:35 NKJV). I find this fascinating, since in John's Gospel, Jesus is also called the Light (John 8:12; 9:5). Jesus is the content; John was only the container. The lamp is not to be the light but to display the light so that all can see.

We need a proper perspective like John the Baptist. As a witness, you are a voice and a lamp, so speak and shine. Accept the reality that that's what you are and what you can do. It prevents frustration.

A person in darkness must have a light if he is to see which way to go. The lantern holds the light. It cannot force the one who has lost his way to follow. As long as we understand and operate on that premise, we "lamps" can do our job with joy. Only when we forget who we are and what we are called to do, do we end up frustrated.

C.-"That They May Receive":

1-**FORGIVENESS** of sins-NEGATIVE ASPECT
-Subtraction of guilt
2-"**INHERITANCE** among those that are sanctified by faith that is in ME"-Positive aspect
-Addition of all the "package" rcd.

3-Precious privilege to be so involved !!
--PAUL as the apostle to the Gentiles
--P.C.R. as Pastor-Teacher to this congregation
--You as a witness ** In yourfamiily
** In your neighborhood
** In school
** In employment place
** In Christian service

4-Locus of our witness is the
"ME" of 26:18 related to Jeus Christ in HisPERSON & WORK

IV.-PAUL'S COMPLIANCE AS A WITNESS: (26:19-23)

A.-Not Disobedient": (26:19)

1-Call of Christ led to personal compliance
2-Not thought of disobedience
3-Salvation implies a WHOLE LIFE CHANGE !!
4-Not simply a "fire escape from hell"
5-To be saved is to be engrafted into a new life to live
6-UNTHINKABLE
to do less than be totally involved !!

B.-But Actively Witnessing: (26:20)

1-Witnessed to many locations
2-Witnessed to many people * FIRST the Jews
* Fully to the Gentiles
3-SPIRITUAL DECISION
--"Repent & turn to God"
**Salvation is a decision of the min & will
**Reaction to THE FACTS with a choice of Christ
**Acts 20:20-21
--"And do works meet for repentance"
** Evidence outwardly of a decision inwardly
** Salvation affects the LIFE as well as theDESTINY
** No change in lifee/////no reality to salvation !!
** Thomas Walker:
"Real repentance and sincere faith lead to true amendment of life according to God's Holy will and to rectitude of conduct."
--Reality of faith is
both INWARD and also OUTWARD !!

C.-And Experiencing Help From God (26:22):

1-Opposition was inevitable (26:21)
2-Help was available (26:22)
--Succor in time of need ===WHAT Paul got
--Ally in time of need ====WHO provided succor; ("of God")
--"A very present help in time of need"
--ILLUS-- Acts 27:21-26
3-Result of that "HELP"--"I continue to this day witnessing"
--STANDS up to be counted & to serve
--No quitting; No retiring; No slacking off

- Holds his ground as long as God gives life & breath
- Testimony reaches all strata:
  - ** "Witnessing to the small & great"
  - ** Parallel in Jesus' ministry
    - Friendly//Unfriendly
    - Intimate//Opposers
    - Small groups//Large groups
- Rests his testimony on the Word
  ("saying none other things than those which the prophets & Moses did say should come.")

CONCLUSION

A. Power Of Example: (Resume')

1-Paul was called of God
2-Paul was confident in the face of opposition
3-Paul was commissioned to witness
4-Paul complied with God's call

B. Personalization Of Paul's Example:

(Answer to: "Why sould I bear witness?")

1-CALLED
- To know Jesus as Savior
- To share Jesus with others

2-CONFIDENT
- "Never leave or forsake us"
- Experience God's deliverance only as we step out to serve Him

3-COMMISSION
- Blind eyes all around that need to be OPENED
- DARKNESS overwhelms those wo lack knowledge of Christ & faith in Him
- POWER of Satan engulfs many, but the gates of hell will not prevail as we "move out" to serve the Lord
- The "PACKAGE" is still the same & still available to all who believe:
  - ** Forgiveness
  - ** Inheritance

4-COMPLIANCE
- Experienced by Paul
- Expected of this generation also
- What is at atake is the ongoing & expansion of the Christian faith
- Dare we be disobedient in our generation ??

C. ILLUSTRATION:

over

Early in his ministry, Dr. Lyman Beecher, a prominent preacher of the past, exchanged pulpits with the pastor of a small country church. A heavy, mid-winter snowfall made travelling virtually impossible, and Dr. Beecher found himself bringing an earnest message to an audience of one — as the Lord often did. At the conclusion of his sermon, he went to greet the lone worshipper, but the man was already gone.

Years later, a stranger greeted Dr. Beecher as he stepped off a train. "Do you remember preaching twenty years ago in a small country church to an audience of one man?" the man asked. Dr. Beecher replied, "Yes, sir, I do, and if you are the man, I have been wishing to see you ever since." The stranger explained, "I'm that man, and the sermon you preached that Sunday morning brought me to God and made a minister of me. The converts from that sermon, sir, are all over the country!"

If we do our part, God will do His. Only the day of Christ will reveal how greatly He has used a ten-minute conversation, a kind word, an evangelistic booklet, or a word of testimony. If you are faithful in presenting the Gospel, He'll be faithful in honoring it!

OKBC--12/1/85 (PM)

385 "Amazing Grace"
400 "Throw Out The Lifeline"
399 "Seeking The Lost"
251 "Let The Lower Lights Be Burning"

INTRO: A.-ILLUS: (Story told by H. A. Ironside)

A parishoner asked his pastor to preach on the text "EXCEPT YE BE CONVERTED, AND BECOME AS LITTLE CHILDREN, YE SHALL NOT ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN." The pastor readily consented. He thought, "Let me see, how will I divide it? Conversion: WHAT: Conversion: HOW? Conversion: WHEN? Conversion: WHERE?

He thought of conversion----WHAT? Well, conversion must be a turning of the heart to God, and he elaborated on that. And then he came to conversion--HOW? How is a man converted? A little perplexed, "Well, let me see, how was I converted, Why, I don't know. I think I'll pass over that just now."

He came to the next point: Conversion---WHEN? "Well, one may be converted as a child; as a youth; or one may be converted in mature years." But then the thought came constantly to him, "WHEN WAS I CONVERTED: Was I converted when I was a child? I can't ever remember. Well, was I converted when I was a youth? No, I'm sure I was not, for I got far away from God out in the world. No, not as a youth. Was I converted when I came to more mature years? I do not recall."

And so he passed on to the next point: Conversion---WHERE? It might take place in the home, in the church, or in the Sunday School, or out in the open. God is ready to meet men wherever they may be. Then the thought came to him, "Where did it take place with me? Was I converted at home? Was I converted in church?.....HAVE I EVER BEEN CONVERTED?"

Suddenly, it came to him with tremendous power, "I am preaching to other people, and I have never been converted myself. I don't know when I was converted. I don't know how I was converted. I don't know where I was converted. I HAVE NEVER BEEN CONVERTED AT ALL.!"

He preached his own sermon to himself and got down on his knees and told the Lord Jesus that he would trust Him as his Savior that very day.....that very minute.

That was the beginning of a new life, and a NEW MINISTRY!

So it was, too, for Paul when he was converted!

B.-Paul's Pre-Conversion Life:

1-Early training & background in Tarsus & home
2-Names---Saul; Jewish
--Paul; Gentile
3-Influences
--Jewish parentage--RELIGION
--Greek environment--CULTURE
--Roman citizenship--EMPIRE
4-High intellectual and moral endowment
5-Education
--Trade as a tent-maker
--Rabbinical (Acts 22:3)
--Liberal arts---Both in Tarsus, and likely in Egypt during Christ's ministry in Palestine
6-Zeal for Judaism--Stephen's stoning
--Persecution of the church

C.-Conversion:

1-Aged just a little over 30 in 37 A.D.
2-Recorded in Acts 9:1-30
3-13th personal appearance recorded of the resurrected Savior, Jesus Christ.

I.-IMPORTANCE WHICH PAUL ATTACHED TO HIS CONVERSION EXP.:

A.-Sole Apology For His Life Work:

1-Acts 9--the historical account
2-Acts 22--Testimony before his brethren the Jews
3-Acts 26--Before King Agrippa of Judea
4-Especially Acts 26:24-26

B.-Conversion is a creative act of God:

1-2 Cor. 4:6-7
2-Divine treasure in earthen vessels
3-As Jonah said, "Salvation is of the Lord"

C.-Conversion is Paul's Ground Of Assurance:

1-1 Tim. 1:12-14
2-Acceptable in person with God
3-Acceptable in service for God
4-All because he is converted

D.-Conversion Is Paul's Ground Of Confidence:

1-1 Cor. 15:8-10
2-Unshakable ground of his belief in the gospel is rooted in his own experience of conversion

E.-Conversion Is Paul's Call From God:

1-Gal. 1:1, 11, 12
2-Life work as an apostle is because of his conversion
3-All who are saved are called---to something of a ministry and service
4-Paul's teaching stemms from this--Gal. 1:12, 15-18
5-What is your conversion experience?
6-What is your call to ministry?
7-ILLUS:---During World War I the Chaplain General to the English Forces, Bishop Taylor Smith, had been visiting a military hospital. On his way out he passed a party of convalescents who were seated around a table on which his quick eyes spied a bowl turned upside down.

He said to the men, "Do you know the two things inside that bowl? No? DARKNESS AND USELESSNESS!" Then he turned it the right way up. "Now," he said, "it is full of light and ready to hold porridge, or soup, or anything you like to use it for. IT IS A CONVERTED BOWL. Which are you men like???? The converted, lighted, useful bowl because you have turned from darkness to light, from Satan to God.....OR the inverted, dark, and useless bowl."....WHICH?

II.-PAUL'S TEACHINGS REGARDING CONVERSION:

A.-Turning From Works of the Law to the Person And Works Of Christ:

1-Gal. 3:24--law is a schoolmaster
2-Rom 7:13---law shows sinfulness of self
3-Gal. 6:14--World & self are crucified in the cross
4-Col. 2:20-21--Converted person is not subject to ordinances of legalism
5-Gal. 2:15-21--Justification is not by the law, else Christ died in vain.

B.-A Change Wrought By God--Conversion:

1-Eph. 2:10

C.-New Moral And Spiritual Relationship:

1-Col. 1:13--Translated
2-Rom. 8:2--new law superseeds the old

D.-New Nature:

1-Gal. 6:15--New creature
2-Eph. 2:1--Old nature remains, but is joined by a new one

E.-Repentance Is Induced:

1-Not by anything in man himself
2-But solely by the goodness & grace of God
3-Rom. 2:4
4-One of the several reasons we are Calvinists & not Arminian in theology

F.-Hjman Responsibility In The Light Of True Conversion:

1-Rom. 6:11
2-We are to reckon==="write it down as true"
3-After we've reckoned it, we're to live it!
4-Rom. 6:16-17
5-New obedience.....because of conversion

III.-FRUITAGE OF CONVERSION IN PAUL'S LIFE:

A.-Conversion Must Show!:

1-No such thing as a "secret believer"
2-Open confession will be sure.....one way or another
3-No changed life; indicates no changed heart..... or....in other words, no conversion.
4-ILLUS---There was in a certain village a very mean man who sold wood to his neighbors, and who always took advantage of them by cutting his logs a few inches under the required 4 feet. One day the report was circulated that the wood-chopper had been converted. Nobody believed the report, for they all declared that he was beyond being reached. One man, however, slipped quietly out of the grocery store where the "conversion" was being discussed & soon came running back in excitement & shouted: "Its so! He has been!"
They all asked: "How do you know?"
"Why I just went over and measured the wood he cut today. It is over four feet long!" That testimony convinced the

crowd. This is, to be sure, a very homely incident, but it brings out the pertinent truth that the person who accepts Christ must become a new man-----his faith, his new faith, must make a difference in his life.

B.-Fruitage Seen In Paul's Life:

1-Three missionary journies to the then-known world

2-His tactics--To the Jew first; chronologically, not preferentially
--Apostle to the Gentiles
--Not building on the foundation of others (Rom. 15:20)
--Dealt with PEOPLE.....see them in his letters

3-Transmission of the heavenly vision
--to qualified men
--to churches via letters; 13 of them excluding Hebrews
--every important truth and duty of the christian faith is expounded by Paul
--written in the heat of battle & because of the problems current for christians then.....and now
--These 13 letters are the means of Christ, through Paul, having fruitage in YOU ! ! !

4-Shows What God can do with a converted and surrendered life

CONCLUSION:

A.-Closing Thoughts:

1-Do you see the importance of personal conversion?

2-Have you experienced the joy of personal conversion?
--not enough to have saved relatives
--not enough to have a converted wife or husband
--not enough to be in a Bible church
--not enough to have received the church's ordinances
--not enough to be a "suppose-so" christian!
--ARE YOU CONVERTED?

3-What fruits do you have to show from your conversion?
--sharing the gospel
--helping the helpless
--teaching the unlearned
--souls being saved thru you
--growth in the Lord your daily experience
--joy in serving and loving the Lord.....

4-How is it.....
with.....
YOU!?!

Hymns

My Savior

Jesus, I Come

Westbrae 10/27/63