



# new wine

MAY 1973

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE  
DEDICATED TO CHRISTIAN GROWTH

## WATER BAPTISM: WHAT'S UNDER THE SURFACE?

PHOTO BY RUSH J. McCOY

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF WATER BAPTISM?  
Water Baptism • Bob Mumford • Page 4  
Testimony • Vicki Bohl • Page 9  
New Wine Forum • Page 27



## ONE-SIDED TEACHING

Dear Editor:

Since the Bible teaches the "priesthood of all believers", I believe I have a right to question some of the teaching I read in *New Wine* on the subject of "submission of wives to husbands". Will you pardon me if I air my views a little as I see it in the Word of God, and from experience of being married for over 49 years, and being a minister's wife.

This subject is dealt with quite often in *New Wine*. I am going to be very blunt and say I think this is treated in a one-sided way, and as far as I see it, makes women out mere chattel and servants of their husbands and nothing more. This is not Scripturally sound.

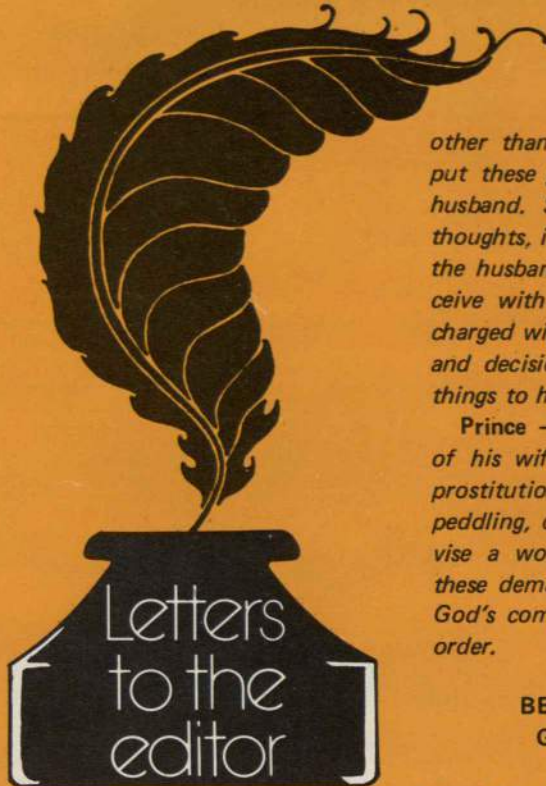
If my memory serves me right, not once has Colossians 3:18 been mentioned where it says, "Wives be subject to their husbands as is proper in the Lord." Sometimes husbands (even professing Christians) can ask their wives to do very improper things, and a wife does not have to obey in such matters. God created a woman to be a *helpmeet*, not a servant or slave. A helpmeet is a *companion* and one who complements a man in qualities that he is lacking in.

The gifts and talents of Proverbs 31 are not properties that are to be found in ignorant servants and slaves, but rather in good, upright, intelligent and thoughtful women. Women do not have to be lower in rank, ability, or importance to husbands. They are, however, to "respect" their husbands, and as I said, "obey" also in those times when there are differences. I believe God gave women a will and a mind and intelligence just as much as he gave a man these qualities. And a woman will someday have to give an account to God for herself.

Then, after all, the final word is, "All of you be subject one to another."

M. M. — California

*Ed—Perhaps the best way to clarify the teaching of those who write for us*



would be to excerpt portions of the March FORUM, "Marriage Relationships" —

Prince — *That wives are to submit to their husbands is only one part of the Bible's total teaching on marriage. Mutual submission to each other comes first. This involves both husband submitting to wife, and wife to husband. . . . The responsibility of the husband is to love his wife as himself, even as Christ loved the church . . . the love of Christ is primary, the response of the church is secondary. So it should be in the relationship between husband and wife.*

Christenson — *There is a distinct difference between submission and slavishness. Robert Burns expresses the thought this way:*

*"Husband, husband, cease your strife  
No longer idly rave, sir:  
Though I am your wedded wife  
I am not your slave, sir."*

*The wife is the helpmate of her husband, not his slave. The husband who rules over his wife and children with an "iron hand" is following the wrong model — the rulers of this world rather than Christ.*

*To be submissive in the Spirit does not at all mean to lose one's identity. The wife who has brains, insight, and good judgment is being something*

*other than submissive if she fails to put these gifts at the disposal of her husband. She should share fully her thoughts, ideas, and opinions — which the husband, under Christ, should receive with gratitude. The husband is charged with the responsibility of rule and decision, but he needs in many things to have the counsel of his wife.*

Prince — *A husband might demand of his wife that she should practice prostitution, or drunkenness, or dope peddling, or murder. I would not advise a woman to submit to any of these demands. It is important to put God's commandments in their proper order.*

## BEST OF NEW WINE GOES OVERSEAS

Dear Friends:

Your December Issue has been read and reread here in Africa and we long to have more information on what is taking place as the Holy Spirit is being poured out today. We long — yea, plead with God for a revival in our country of Mali. We know that it must start with us first! God bless you in your work of making Him known.

Bud and Betty Schubert  
Mali, W. Africa

Dear Fellow-Laborers in Christ:

We are independent missionaries here in Columbia, South America, and two sets of friends have subscribed to your magazine in our behalf. Therefore, we are receiving duplicate copies, but have given extras to other missionaries. May I add, this is an excellent ministry — giving a subscription to *New Wine* to missionaries.

Of course, we have no preaching — no church in English — no pastor, so we have looked to *New Wine* for much valuable teaching. Thank you so much and praise to our incomparable Lord.

We appreciated the *Best of New Wine, 1972*, and appreciate your various ministries. Be encouraged in the Lord today for what He is doing with *New Wine*!

Our fondest regards,  
Bill and Lauri Slade — Columbia



# Editorial

Early in my Christian life I established an image of what a Christian should do. I also knew what a Christian *shouldn't* do. He shouldn't experience frustration, make mistakes, or get angry — the abundant life. I trained myself to fit that image, on the outside; but inside I hadn't changed as much as it would have appeared. How I wanted someone to be real with! I was tired of my game.

If someone had ever said to me, "I'm discouraged" or "I have a bad attitude, please forgive me", I think I would have shouted for glory. Surely I wasn't the only person who ever had a doubt or fear, or felt like punching my brother in the nose.

Many of us go about, lonely, defeated on the inside and "shouting the victory" on the outside. So much of the defeat, failure, division and bitterness that exists in the body of Christ today comes from a lack of honesty. Because we are afraid to come down from our spiritual ivory tower — afraid to destroy our self-image — we will not let anyone come inside and know the real us.

Why are we afraid? We are afraid of what others will think. To be real is to die to that self-image that stands between us and real life.

Dying is not pleasant — Jesus never said it would be. He died in public, naked; and so must we. Our problems are *real*; but so is Christ. If we are to experience the reality of Christ, we must be real about our problems.

Somewhere there must be the individual brave enough to take the first step and tear down his half of the wall. When he does, then his neighbor will not be threatened and can tear down his wall.

The world is looking for reality — do we have any to offer from our own lives?

—RS

## new wine MAGAZINE

VOL. 5 NO. 5  
MAY 1973

### CONTENTS

WATER BAPTISM .....	4
<i>Bob Mumford</i>	
THANK YOU, JESUS .....	9
<i>Vicki Bohl</i>	
GOD DOESN'T MAKE MISTAKES! .....	10
<i>Don Bohl</i>	
IMPERFECTION ONLY IS INTOLERANT OF IMPERFECTION. ....	13
<i>Fenelon</i>	
THE LOCAL CHURCH .....	14
<i>Derek Prince</i>	
BIBLE STUDY .....	19
<i>Howard Coffey</i>	
COMMUNICATION COMES FIRST .....	21
<i>Jay E. Adams</i>	
NEW WINE FORUM .....	27

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New Wine is published monthly, except combined July/August issue, by Christian Growth Ministries, P.O. Box 22888, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33315.

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**SUBSCRIPTION RATES:** New Wine is a non-subscription magazine supported by the contributions of its readers. Single copies and back issues (except December issues): 50 cents each. Bulk prices for regular issues (minimum order of 6) 6-24, 40 cents each; 25-49, 35 cents each; 50-99, 30 cents each; 100 or more, 25 cents each. Foreign contributions, except Canada, should be made by International Money Order.

Material submitted for publication should be typewritten double spaced on one side of the paper and addressed to New Wine at the above address. If return of manuscript is desired, a stamped addressed envelope should be included. All material becomes the property of New Wine when published.

The views expressed in New Wine are those of the writers and not necessarily those of the Editors or Directors.

CREDITS: Designer, Larry Rice.

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A person is kneeling on a sandy beach, looking down into the ocean waves. The person is wearing a dark shirt and shorts. The waves are dark and turbulent, contrasting with the lighter sand. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

WHAT  
WE NEED TO SEE

# WATER BAPTISM

by BOB MUMFORD



**M**uch of the schism and division that has racked two thousand years of church history has come from controversy over the subject of *Water Baptism*.

This, of course, is man's doing and not God's intent. Baptism was ordained to have a unifying effect on the members of the Body of Christ. Listen to Paul speaking to the members of the first-century church in Galatia:

*"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus."* Galatians 3:27-28.

As we ask ourselves some questions about Water Baptism, and search for answers, we seek *basic* unity, which is God's desire for His people of every age and generation.

#### WHY BAPTISM?

*First*, let us establish a fact upon which all Christendom is united: Baptism should not be an empty ritual — an outward act carried over from past traditions. Baptism should carry meaning and have an edifying effect upon the believer.

*Secondly*, there is a tendency which has colored the general understanding of the meaning and purpose of baptism. Baptism is often presented as *only* "an outward act picturing an inward experience". The "inward experience" involved, in most cases, is coming out of "lostness" into the new life in Christ. This coming out of lostness into the new life in Christ is expressed as "being saved", "being born again", "regeneration". These expressions picture this inward experience, but each word carries more meaning than just a movement from one position (lost) to another (saved).

Following the initial quickening in the spirit of man by the Spirit of God, comes a personal repentance for sins, confession of these sins and turning away from them, acceptance of the finished work of Jesus Christ upon the cross, and an experience of the for-

giveness of God and a renewed right relationship before Him. The believer has been cleansed by the Blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God — John 1:29: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

This is the "inward experience". "Being born again" is only the beginning of the life in Christ. The words themselves imply a beginning — and growth! "Salvation" is a *process* the believer is now launched upon. The Apostle Paul put it this way to his converts in Galatia: "Who (Jesus Christ) gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father . . ." (Galatians 1:4).

The phrase, "deliver us out of this present evil age", can be expanded as, "*rooted out of this present evil age.*" To me that says it better. This is the salvation process — being rooted out of this evil world and moved on toward completeness in Christ. Everyone agrees, "It's a good thing to do." But the question is always, "How?"

Peter touched on the answer at Pentecost, as he preached to a rebellious Jewish nation, "Save yourselves from this untoward (perverse) generation." Acts 2:40. The fact that he tells them to *do* something, implies that there is *something* they could do! Three verses earlier (vs. 37), the same crowd had asked Peter, "What can we do to be saved?" His answer contained three parts. First, repent (this is part of the new birth, the initial inward experience). Secondly, be baptized (this means in water). Thirdly, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

These three experiences form the foundation of the Christian walk. Those who heard and received Peter's word that day were baptized, and received the Holy Spirit.

We start, then, with our initial inward experience of the new birth. Because of this experience with Christ, and as a result of it, the believer is instructed by the word of God to take two other steps; be baptized in water, and receive the Holy Spirit. These two steps which follow our initial ex-

perience with Christ are designed by God to begin moving us out of this present evil age toward completeness in Christ. As Peter put it, to save us from an "untoward generation."

Our immediate concern is step number two, water baptism. It is my conviction that in water baptism we have an actual transition which is necessary to the *completeness* of Christians. Baptism is designed to be the experience which "roots us out of this present evil age." Peter pointed toward the open door of the Kingdom of God — toward completeness.

#### TWO KINGDOMS

Taking another teaching given to the first-century believers, this time by Paul, let's see how water baptism is used for the two purposes we have mentioned: rooted out of this present evil age, and moved toward completeness in the Kingdom of God. In Romans 6, Paul contrasts two Kingdoms — one of light, where King Jesus reigns . . . the other, the kingdom of darkness where Satan rules. If you have been a Christian very long, you are probably acutely aware of these two distinct kingdoms and the conflict they cause.

Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Paul speaks of these two opposing kingdoms within us in terms of the "old nature" and the "new nature". The problem is being "rooted out" of the old nature, and getting into the new nature in our daily walk. Paul attacks the problem this way:

*"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto 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."* (Romans 6:4)

The "we" that is being buried is the old nature — the troublemaker. You cannot mend, change or improve your old nature, so the best thing you can do is bury it! We bury it in the water of baptism. The fact that we are buried means we are covered up in a grave — this pictures for us the mode

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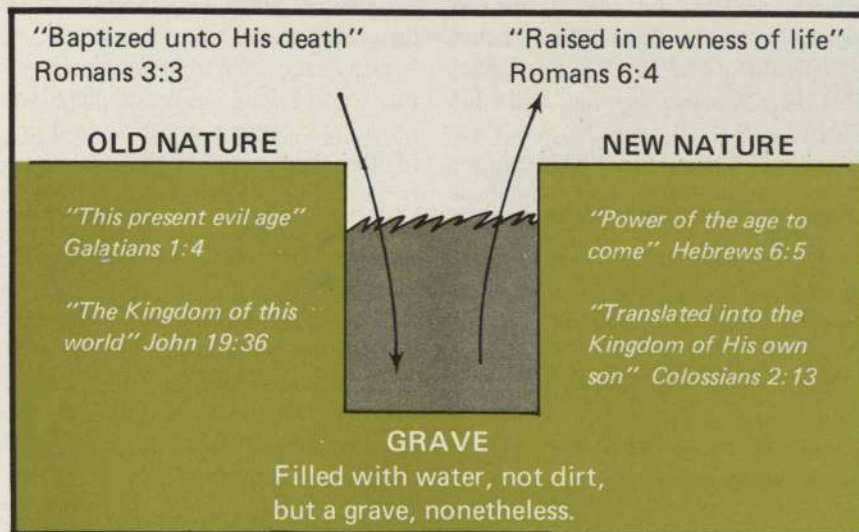
of the baptism mentioned here, immersion.

The idea is leaving all of "this present evil age" in the grave — its ideas, conduct, attitudes, habits, etc. Once buried we can be resurrected to a new life — to live in a new kingdom!

In "Burial by Baptism", Derek Prince says, "One thing is clear. We do not bury a person in order to make him dead. A person must already be dead before we have any right to bury him. Likewise, the death of the old nature must already have taken place through faith in Christ, before we can bury the old nature by baptism. Baptism does not make the old nature dead. It is the outward evidence that the death of the old nature has already taken place."

Two diagrams may help us to visualize the truths we have been sharing:

*Number One:* Can you see how water baptism "roots us out" of this present evil age? We testify by our act of submissive obedience in allowing ourselves to be buried that we are searching for that *completeness* which relates us more fully to the King and His Kingdom.

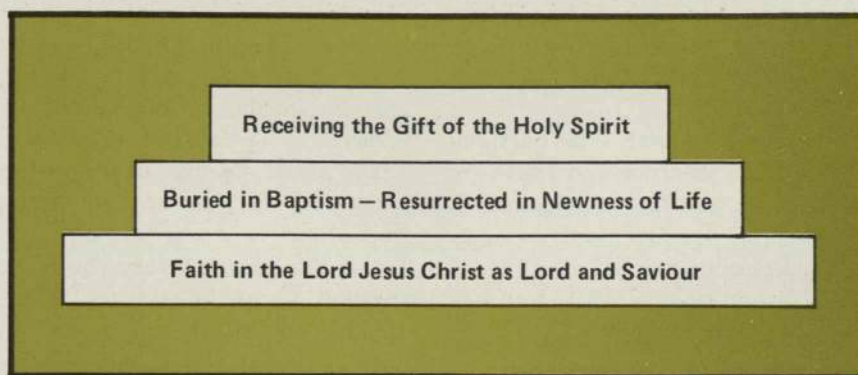


*Number Two:* The serious believer who desires to move toward maturity and completeness (Hebrews 6:3) should realize that water baptism can be compared to one of the foundations necessary for Christian growth. Referring again to those who heard

Peter's Pentecost Day sermon, we hear those whose hearts were opened asking, "What shall we do?"

Again, three parts to that answer: "Then Peter said unto them, *Repent*, and *be baptized* every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall *receive* the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

In that one verse we are given three vital steps in one complete act — that of actuating a new relationship to a new Lord and a new Kingdom. These steps are pictured below.



You will note *the foundational stone is Jesus Christ*. "For no other foundation can any man lay." (I Corinthians 3:11)

from the dead" (Colossians 3:12).

*The third stone is the reception of the promise of the Father — the Gift of the Holy Spirit.* John the Baptist, speaking of Jesus, says: "Indeed I baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:" (Matthew 3:11). And listen to Jesus, the Resurrected Christ, speaking to His disciples just prior to His return to the Father: "And, being assembled to-

gether with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water: but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:4-5).

These three experiences are basic in the New Testament tenor of faith. These aspects of New Testament Salvation *are not super-spiritual experiences for the mature Christian* — rather the necessary foundational ingredients required for a continuing victorious life in the newness of God's Kingdom.

#### WHO IS OUR EXAMPLE AND AUTHORITY?

Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, was baptized as He began His three years of active ministry by John in the Jordan River. Let's listen in on their conversation as this transaction took place:

"Then came Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by him. But John protested strenuously,



having in mind to prevent Him, saying, *It is I who have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me? But Jesus replied to him, Permit it just now, for this is the fitting way for (both of) us to fulfill all righteousness — that is, to perform completely whatever is right.*" (Amplified Bible, Matthew 3:13–15)

John could not reason Jesus out of the necessity for His baptism.

Consider what the noted Jewish historian, Edersheim says in "The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Book II":

*"... (speaking of John's baptism) a consecration to, and preparatory initiation for, the new Covenant of the Kingdom. As applied to sinful men, it was indeed necessarily a 'baptism of repentance', but not as applied to a sinless Jesus. Had it primarily and always been a 'baptism of repentance', He could not have submitted to it."*

In the life of Jesus, He had no motive or reason for baptism apart from *submissive obedience* — which was that of moving toward completeness in doing the will of God. Jesus voluntarily descended into the Jordan River, following simply the principle which should guide each of us: "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

Edersheim continues, *"He followed the Hand that pointed Him to the open door of the kingdom. It was as if, symbolically, in the words of Saint Peter (I Peter 3:21) that baptism had been a new flood, and He who now emerged from it, the Noah (rest and comfort bringer) who took into His Ark the dove bearing the olive branch indicative of new life"* (Op. cit., pg. 283, 284).

Looking at the reference from I Peter, let us read 3:20–21 from the Living Bible:

*"... only eight persons were saved from drowning in that terrible flood. (That, by the way, is what baptism pictures for us: In baptism we show that we have been saved from death and doom by the resurrection of Christ; not because our bodies are washed clean by the water, but be-*

*cause in being baptized we are turning to God and asking him to cleanse our hearts from sin.)"*

Noah's world was in a state that could not be remedied or changed — so God buried it in water. Noah, and the other seven souls were "rooted out of that present evil age" by the use of water. Baptism, says Peter, does the same for us.

Jesus was our *example* of submissive obedience in baptism with John. He then committed to us the *authority* of His work as He prepared to leave the earth!

*"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world"* (Matthew 28:19–20).

In His "great commission", baptism is one of the primary commands of Jesus. We have seen that Peter and Paul obeyed and understood these instructions. They baptized new converts and taught baptism as a foundation of Christian experience.

#### HOW DOES CHURCH HISTORY RECORD MAN'S ASSUMPTION OF GOD'S COMMANDS?

If you see water baptism only from a denominational and traditional perspective, you may feel that discussing a certain "form or mode" of baptism is legalistic. However, I feel there are two reasons for seeing immersion as the mode of baptism: obedience to the plain scriptural pattern; and the implication of the *burial* of our old nature in baptism. Immersion is the mode given for New Testament pattern. Many have argued that immersion is often impractical or inconvenient — or that "we have always done it this way". It is like Rufus Moseley once said, "People who practice scriptural baptism by immersion never have to say, 'our way is just as good'!" However, here are some thoughts of men from many different generations and backgrounds.

Martin Luther, The Protestant Reformer: *"In the primitive church, baptism was a total immersion, or burial, as it were."*

John Calvin, Presbyterian theologian: *"Baptize signifies to immerse, and it is certain that immersion was the practise of the ancient church."*

Archbishop Cranmer, martyred in 1556: *"By baptism we die with Christ, and are buried, as it were."*

John Wesley, founder of Methodism: *"'Buried with Him', alluding to baptism by immersion, according to custom of the first church."*

Dr. Chalmers, first Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland: *"Baptism is immersion."*

Dr. Pain, Congregationalist and Professor of Ecclesiastical History: *"Immersion was the baptism of the Christian church for thirteen centuries."*

Dean Stanley, Episcopalian: *"In the Apostolic age, those who came to baptism came in full age, and of their own choice. Those who were baptized were immersed."*

Bishop Boussuet, Roman Catholic theologian: *"For thirteen hundred years baptism was administered by immersion."*

Dr. Adam Clark, Methodist Bible commentator: *"The mode of administering baptism was by immersion, the whole body being put under water."*

Dr. Philip Schaff, Presbyterian church historian: *"Immersion was unquestionably the original form of baptism."*

Bishop White, an Anglican, preaching in Owensboro, Kentucky: *"Immersion was the primitive and Apostolic baptism. Immersion was the only mode of baptism in the early church. It taught the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus."*

Strange, isn't it how we cling to things that divide rather than those which unite. As I said at the beginning it was God's intention that baptism be a *unifying* experience, as well as being one of the foundational experiences of the believer. Unity in Christ is the end toward which all experiences should point.

*(Continued on next page)*



## WHAT SHALL WE DO?

Some, reading these thoughts for the first time, may find them a comfort. To others, they may be disturbing. Suddenly, you may be aware that you have never had New Testament water baptism with the understanding of its real meaning. If this is the case, I would recommend that you consider:

*Step One:* Since Peter says so plainly (I Peter 3:21) that water baptism is the "demand of a good conscience toward God", please do not avoid, ignore or rationalize your position or experience. If there is any doubt, question, or uneasiness of conscience concerning your own water baptism, search it out until all is settled between you and the Lord. Don't be talked out of it, however, by "enticing words, philosophy, vain deceit, and tradition of men" (Colossians 2:4-8) — compare with Matthew 3:13-15.

*Step Two:* If, or when, you are convinced that you do need to be baptized in water, take seriously the time, place and person chosen to administer to you this act of obedience. If you are in a church or fellowship where immersion is not a problem, you are most blessed! If, however, you are in a situation where this request may cause problems, proceed with a submissive attitude and faith in the Lord Jesus. Most churches, groups and fellowships who do not practice immersion have made special provision for those who may request baptism in this manner.

*Step Three:* Much of the ethical and doctrinal conflict between adult believers' baptism and infant baptism can be avoided. Often there is a tearing between our present need to walk in new understanding and a sense of rejecting our pastor or priest, past experience which has been meaningful, or even our church. This need not happen, because the addition of a conditional "if" into the baptismal formula can substantiate and confirm our past experience, yet permit us to obey the conviction of the Holy Spirit. We may satisfy both requirements with, "If

you have not already been baptized . . . I now baptize you . . ."

This leaves us one baptism, plus an ethical and doctrinal respect toward others who are persuaded differently.

*Step Four:* The conflict which arises over "formula" can also be solved to the satisfaction of most. Those of us who see in the scriptures the power and authority of the Name of Jesus Christ, as related to water baptism (see Colossians 3:17), yet hold firmly to the command of the Lord Jesus Christ as given in Matthew 28:19, can find satisfaction and release of conscience by modification and application of the following:

*"On the basis of your expressed faith in the sacrificial death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 15:1-4), and by the authority invested in me as a servant of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19), I now baptize you in the authority of the Name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38) into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).*

The above may seem like mere

semantics (use of words and speech forms) to some, and like compromise to others. But surely it is genuinely scriptural and it is based on a literal use of the Greek prepositions. Most important of all, it will contribute to the unity of the faith.

## WHEN OUR MOTIVE IS PURE . . .

May we close with repetition of the words used in our initial statement — those words of Paul given in Galatians 3:27-28:

*"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus."*

One way we can tell if we have been "rooted out of this present evil age" is whether or not the grave of water baptism has destroyed the tendency to cling to or stress matters that divide, rather than seek for the basis of unity in Christ Jesus.

*"He that believes and is baptized shall be saved!"* ☞

## MORE OF JESUS — LESS OF ME

*My name is SELF, you know me well,*

*For we walk together in this life.*

*I was the first to tell you, "This is not the thing to do,"*

*That day you gave your heart to Christ.*

*I tried to tell you this was such a foolish thing!*

*But would you listen? No! All you did was sing!*

*And when you prayed for healing, did I laugh!*

*I could tell that you had no real relief.*

*I saw at once my chance — "Consider . . . you could die,"*

*I whispered with pretended sob and sigh.*

*You did consider — briefly — I must admit;*

*Then — "Praise the Lord!" was your reply.*

*The days have passed; the months turned into years.*

*I now and then get in a word or two — that's all.*

*I hear much talk of "crucify" — but that is hard to do.*

*I must admit I'm in the background now — I guess I knew*

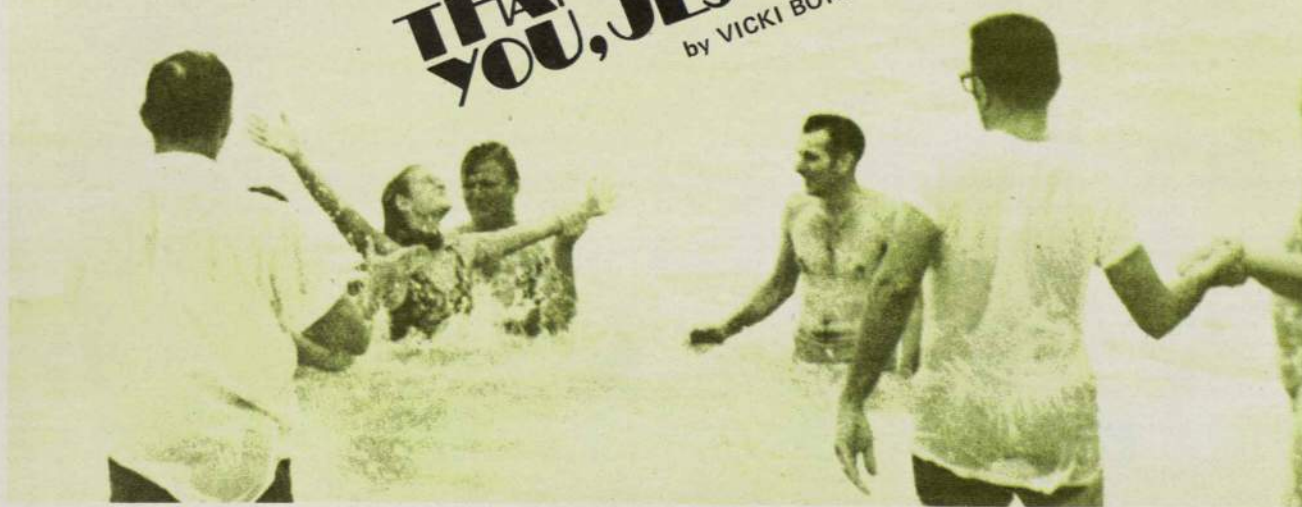
*That if you persisted in your stand, the world and I would see  
A little more of Jesus . . . and less . . . and less . . . of me.*

—Lori Criss  
Indiana



# THANK YOU, JESUS!

by VICKI BOHL



**W**hen I was asked to write my testimony, I had several reactions. I first thought, "Why are they asking me? I don't have an extraordinary testimony. I haven't been on drugs or tried alcohol. Why I've never even run away from home!" Then I realized that although Christ didn't break me of the drug habit, He had to break my habits of pride and self-will, as He is still doing. He gave me the experience that He wanted me to have, and therefore it's precious. Christ was good enough to save an ordinary person like me and that's beautiful and unique in itself.

I was brought up in a Christian family, and was, maybe, just a bit more sincere than the average churchgoer. I was twelve years old when I said my sinner's prayer. My family and I had been watching a Billy Graham Crusade on television. After it was over I went up to bed. As I lay quietly in bed, I started pouring my heart out to Jesus. I had always talked with Him but had never really walked with Him. I told Him that I wasn't sure what He had for me but I was willing to see. Mine wasn't an overly dramatic salvation experience as you can see. It was a quiet and simple one. But it's the experience Christ shared with me and I thank Him for it.

Many people feel that once you're saved, that's it: there's nothing more. And for some people, that's true. However I had another beautiful experience that I would like to share. It

was that of my water baptism. When I speak of water baptism, I don't mean merely sprinkling, but being immersed. There are many people who say it isn't necessary, yet it made an even greater impact on my life than the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, which was also a very special experience.

My first reaction to the immersion style of baptism was, "Gosh, what a dumb idea! Who wants to get all wet just to be baptized, when the minister in the church can just sprinkle a little bit of water on you." Again I changed my mind; or Jesus changed it for me. I received teaching on the subject, which you really must do to understand it. I was told that my body had died to sin when I came to Christ and so now I was just dragging around a dead body. By water baptism I could "bury" that dead body and all memories of my past sins. Why carry them around when they've been paid for already and then washed away?

I was baptized at Hollywood Beach, Florida, on October 19, 1969. I was told to praise the Lord in the best way I knew how when I came out of the water. I've often heard that a drowning person sees his whole life flash before him in a split second. While I was under water, although it was only a matter of seconds, I saw every bad thing I'd ever done flashing in front of me. And then I saw Jesus. I came up out of that water and stretched my arms out as far as I could reach and I shouted, "Praise the Lord!" I couldn't

stop singing for the next three days.

Not only was the experience itself beautiful but what it did to me was the wonderful thing. Now I was living my salvation. I was not only talking with Jesus, I was walking with Him. I used to walk to school every day. I would walk as if Jesus were walking right along side me. Throughout the whole day I would try this. All during school I wouldn't get mad at anyone if I could help it. And I would try to refrain from gossiping because I knew He was standing right next to me listening to every word I said. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could always remain that fully conscious of Jesus' presence.

Since then I have had many more glorious times with Jesus — far too many to share now. Yet all these are only a taste of what Heaven will be like. The Lord has been good enough to give us a little bit of Heaven-on-earth, by giving us a Saviour and experiences as wonderful as those I've had. He offers them and all we have to do is take them.

Praise the Lord that He is with us always. We may not be able to see Him, but we can live daily with the knowledge that He is in our midst. We can walk with Him, talk with Him and LIVE Him. THANK YOU JESUS! 🙏

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*Vickie Bohl, daughter of Don and Dot Bohl, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., originally wrote this article for "Manna", a local Jesus Paper, March, 1972.*



Don Bohl, father of Vicki  
(see preceding page), tells  
of his experience in learning  
the wisdom and grace of God.

# GOD DOESN'T MAKE MISTAKES!

by Don Bohl



Vicki and her boyfriend, Randy stepped into the den where I was watching the ten o'clock news. "Dad?" (I knew by the tone of her voice she was going to ask for something.) "... can Randy and I take the canoe out on the lake for awhile?" She had "please" written in her eyes.

I wished I had that kind of energy! They had been picnicking on the lake most of the day, and then spent the late afternoon water skiing — now they wanted to go some more. Randy had been invited to spend a week with us at Lake Oswawana, New York, and they had hardly stopped since he arrived. I guess you can expect two 17-year-olds in love to have zip like that. During their picnic they had been discussing the time when they could be married, and a moonlit canoe ride would be a perfect way to end the day.

There was more to Vicki's vibrant life than young love — she was also in love with Jesus. Our oldest daughter had brought such joy to our lives as she radiated the love of Christ through her life. She loved to sing about Him. She and Randy had just returned from a choir tour of England and Scotland. She was showing great promise as a singer and the sweetness of her bubbling praise often filled our home. It seemed to bring a little more of heaven into our lives. Maybe that's just the way a father sees it, but I often thought she was too good to be true. How good the Lord was to give her to us.

They hadn't missed an evening ride on the lake since Randy arrived — what else could I say to her. . . "O.K., but be sure you're . . ."

"... back in time, back in time," she laughed as they turned and hurried out the door. They had an eleven o'clock curfew and she knew it meant exactly eleven. The news was over and I went up to bed.

Dot and I had just finished our bedtime prayers and I was settling down when a frantic banging started on our door. It was Nana, Dot's mother. "Randy's calling for you! Vicki's in the water and he can't find her!"

It couldn't be! I just finished thanking God for protecting our three girls and Randy!

We raced downstairs and onto the big porch overlooking the lake. We had spent countless other moonlit nights looking across this beautiful lake toward surrounding hills, praising God for the wonder of His creation. This breath-taking scene was now pitifully marred by Randy sitting in the canoe a few yards off shore moanfully calling, "Vicki . . . Vicki!"

Only moments before these two wholesome kids had been enjoying the peace of the tranquil lake. For a few seconds a cloud had covered the full moon and turned the lake to inky darkness. Out of the night a high-powered speed boat cut through the water and struck the canoe where Vicki was blissfully resting, exhausted from the day's activities. The impact threw them both into the murky water. Randy, slightly injured, managed to climb back into the damaged canoe — Vicki was nowhere to be seen.

I took Dot in my arms and tried to stifle the sickening knot that was tightening in my stomach.

"God, do you really want Vicki now?", I cried as I made my way to the beach area where a crowd was gathering. Police and fire boats had joined other boats already in the search, their spotlights doing a macabre waltz on the water's surface. I caught Randy in my arms as he came to shore and we wept together in shock.

The police wanted Randy to show them the point of impact, so we went out in one of their boats. They had begun dragging the bottom of the lake.

The lake now became a nightmarish dream world . . . the boats slowly plodding back and forth in their search patterns . . . the ugly iron hooks clawing the water for Vicki. The pungent odor of exhaust and gas fumes was sickening. When I could see we were of no further use, I asked the police to take us back to shore where we rejoined Dot and Nana who were watching from the porch.

Our hope came back to life when the men started to search the bushes

along the shoreline, thinking she might have made it to shore and was lying unconscious in the under-growth. We sat down next to Nana on the swing and prayed, "Lord, we believe you can bring Vicki back to us, even now . . . please, Lord, please!" Nana whispered, "Oh, Lord, take me . . . take ME!"

After a very long hour, the boats stopped circling. They were no longer needed. They turned and slipped into the night carrying our last hope with them — the water had yielded up our Vicki.

A few minutes later when a coroner and a police officer came to fill out the necessary reports, we learned that the speeding boat had been driven by a thirteen year old boy. Tears welled up in Dot's eyes, "What is a thirteen year old boy doing out in a speedboat at 10:30 at night?"

The natural guy within me, the Don I know so well, should have pounded the table and railed, "That miserable brat should be locked up for the rest of his life!" In times past my vindictive nature had vented itself on trifles like a neighbor's dog that misbehaved at our doorstep. Now, even in my own hurt, I felt compassion for this boy. This was *not* the Don Bohl I had known so well. I was experiencing something I had never known — forgiving the unforgivable. I know now only Jesus can give the grace to forgive that way.

Dot and I returned to bed and tried to comfort one another. This kind of thing happens to others — not to me! I questioned, "Why Vicki?" She was a radiant Christian. She had no serious problems. She was an "A" student. She was talented and popular. "Why, Lord? Why do you want her NOW . . . WHY?"

Two sleepless hours later we got up and went to the kitchen for some hot tea. I dreaded the morning light that was soon to come. I would have to tell her sleeping sisters — and call her grandfather.

We sat at the kitchen table in the cold light pondering God's Word and found comfort in the Book of Job. We saw the permissive will of God, allow-



ing Satan to attack and strip Job of everything.

God gave us the grace to say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away . . . blessed be the name of the Lord." As we prayed, we felt God's assurance that although the accident was caused by Satan, our Father had allowed it, for He had a higher purpose that we could not understand. As a good friend of ours put it, "God doesn't make mistakes."

The day before the funeral, Dot and I awakened with the same thought — we must contact the parents of the boy who was driving the boat. We imagined they must be in agony over the accident.

They accepted our invitation, and as we gathered in our living room we experienced the same forgiving grace from the presence of God. Dot was peaceful and serene as she comforted the boy's weeping mother. "We're going to miss Vicki so terribly, but we know she will never suffer another pain — her spirit is now with our Lord." I added, "We hold no ill feeling toward your son. This was an accident and you can't carry this burden around with you for the rest of your lives."

Randy experienced the same grace as he put his arm around the boy who was still in a state of shock, and said, "I know you didn't mean to do it and we forgive you."

Mike Reed, a dear friend and a youth minister from Hollywood, Florida, joined Vicki's childhood pastor in conducting the funeral. At the same altar where Dot and I had exchanged our marriage vows and where Vicki had been christened, we gathered for a joyous memorial of her "homegoing".

Mike set the tone for the service by reading from I Thessalonians 4:13, ". . . sorrow not, even as those who have no hope." We had taken great care to see that the service was like Vicki would have wanted it. She would not have wanted us to mourn her, but to lift up her first love — Jesus. There was music of praise and worship . . . much a part of Vicki's

life. Vicki sang at her own funeral. By way of a tape that had been made sometime earlier, she led us in worship with, "Praise Ye the Lord". This is the way she would have wanted it.

Mike read Vicki's testimony, which she had written only a few months before. It ended, "Praise the Lord that He is with us always. We may not be able to see Him, but we can live daily with the knowledge that He is in our midst. We can walk with Him, talk with Him, and Live HIM. THANK YOU, JESUS!"

He ended by saying, "I have never known a teenager who walked with Jesus like Vicki did. She was continually alive with the light of Christ. I believe that if Vicki had been told that she had only an hour to prepare for her end on earth, all she would have needed to do is kiss a few loved ones goodbye. She was ready. I wonder how many of us are as ready as Vicki was to meet her Maker."

Mike then asked if there were some there who would like to have the same assurance and know the same Jesus that Vicki knew. With bowed heads, about forty people raised their hands to show that they, too, wished to have Jesus in their hearts.

Like concentric rings produced by a pebble thrown into the water, Vicki's death continued to produce concentric rings to God's glory. We learned what Jesus meant when He said, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and dies, it cannot give forth life." Lives were changed, family relationships healed, a marriage was mended, souls were saved, and new commitments

were made to Christ. Even now, months later, we are still seeing fruit from Vicki's life.

The weeks and months that followed were not always easy. At times the enemy would have had us question the wisdom and mercy of God. So many times we were sustained only by praise and prayer and thanksgiving. Each time God was faithful to give continued grace.

A few days after the funeral the words began to go through my head, "Sorrow not, even as others who have no hope." Hope?

"For the Lord Himself shall descend . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thessalonians 4:16,17).

These words became real in that moment. They brought the memory of another moonlit evening a few months before Vicki's "homegoing". Dot and I had just returned from a trip to Israel. I can still see Vicki running out to greet us, her long brown hair trailing behind her. She caught me so tightly in her arms, laughing and crying tears of joy as she welcomed us. "Oh, Daddy, I missed you so. I'm so glad you're home!"

I believe we will experience that joyous moment again with Vicki when Jesus comes for His own and we are caught up together with her in the clouds to meet the Lord.

"And so shall we ever be with the Lord!" Hallelujah!

God doesn't make mistakes. ☞

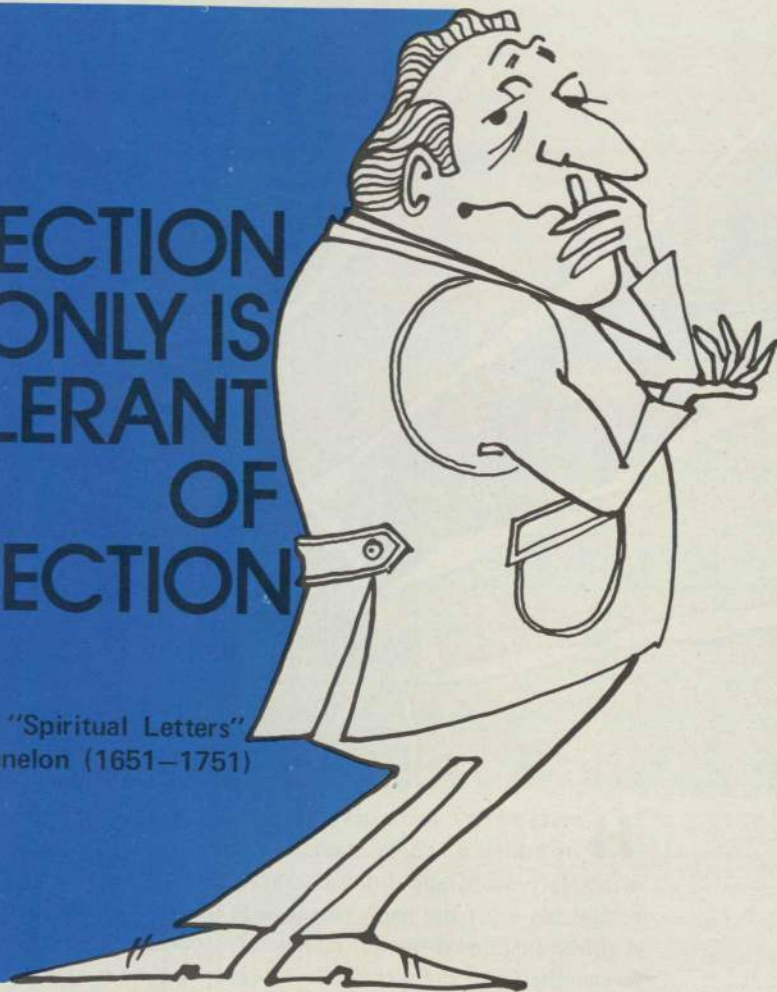
"But I am telling you this strange and wonderful secret: we shall not all die, but we shall all be given new bodies! It will all happen in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For there will be a trumpet blast from the sky and all the Christians who have died will suddenly become alive, with new bodies that will never, never die; and then we who are still alive shall suddenly have new bodies, too. For our earthly bodies, the ones we have now that can die, must be transformed into heavenly bodies that cannot perish but will live forever."

I Corinthians 15:51-53, Living Bible



# IMPERFECTION ONLY IS INTOLERANT OF IMPERFECTION

From "Spiritual Letters"  
by Fenelon (1651–1751)



It has seemed to me that you have need of more enlargedness of heart in relation to the defects of others. I know that you cannot help seeing them when they come before you, nor prevent the opinions you involuntarily form concerning the motives of some of those about you. You cannot even get rid of a certain degree of trouble which these things cause you. It will be enough if you are willing to bear with those defects which are unmistakable, refrain from condemning those which are doubtful, and not suffer yourself to be so afflicted by them as to cause a coolness of feeling between you.

Perfection is easily tolerant of the imperfections of others; it becomes all things to all men. We must not be sur-

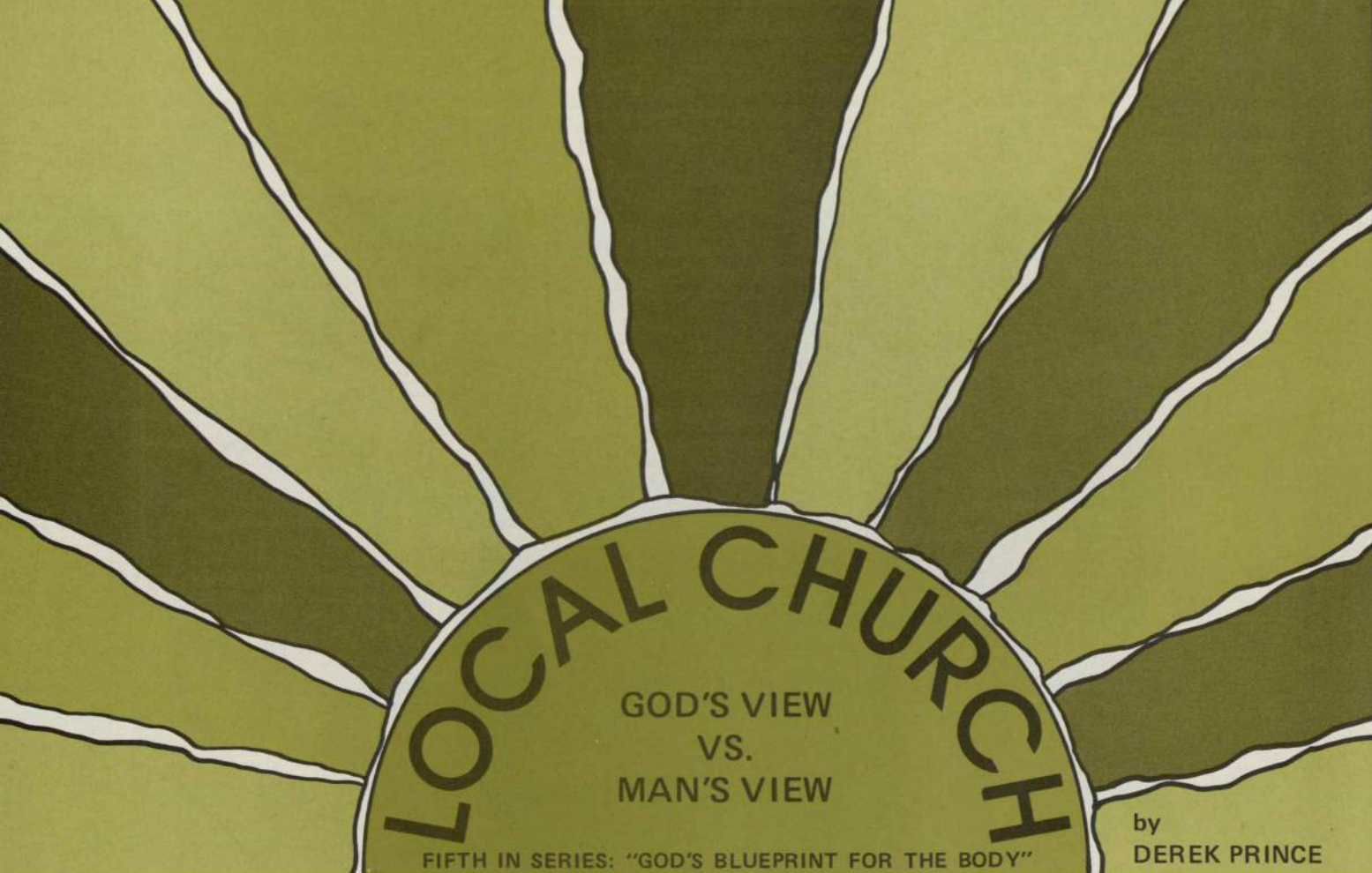
prised at the greatest defects in good souls, and must quietly let them alone until God gives the signal of gradual removal; otherwise we shall pull up the wheat with the tares. God leaves, in the advanced souls, certain weaknesses entirely disproportioned to their eminent state. As workmen, in excavating the soil from a field, leave certain pillars of earth which indicate the original level of the surface, and serve to measure the amount of material removed — God, in the same way, leaves pillars of testimony to the extent of his work in the most pious souls.

Such persons must labor, each one in his degree, for his own correction, and you must labor to bear with their weaknesses. You know from experience the bitterness of the work of correction; strive then to find means

to make it less bitter to others. You have not an eager zeal to correct, but a sensitiveness that easily shuts up your heart.

I pray you more than ever not to spare my faults. If you should think you see one, which is not really there, there is no harm done; if I find that your counsel wounds me, my sensitiveness demonstrates that you have discovered a sore spot; but if not, you will have done me an excellent kindness in exercising my humility, and accustoming me to reproof. I ought to be more lowly than others in proportion as I am higher in position, and God demands of me a more absolute death to everything. I need this simplicity, and I trust it will be the means of cementing rather than weakening our attachment. ♥





# LOCAL CHURCH

GOD'S VIEW  
VS.  
MAN'S VIEW

FIFTH IN SERIES: "GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR THE BODY"

by  
DEREK PRINCE

**H**uman nature has a devious quirk for taking a simple command or principle of God and doing it exactly backwards — in the name of religion! A prime example is the astounding difference between the scriptural pattern for the local church and the pattern which man has developed. Our study will bear this out as we go.

The local church is that part of the universal church which is resident in any given locality. You do not become a member by signing up, taking a pledge, or subscribing to a particular set of doctrines. You are a member of the local church, first by being rightly related to the Lord Jesus, which makes you a member of the universal church. Since the local church is part of the universal church, it is reasonable that you must first belong to the universal church in order to belong to the local church.

The second requirement for local church membership is simply being a resident in a given locality. In other words, every member of the universal church in a given area is, by virtue of

his residence in that area, also a member of the local church in that area. God has not left it to us to make any decision about this matter. The only decision we have to make is how we will be related to Christ.

The church in a local area grows out of a basic cell group. Jesus defined this group in Matthew 18:20: "Where two or three have been led together (by the Holy Spirit) into my name, there am I in the midst." This is the literal meaning of this passage. The focal point of fellowship for those who are led by the Spirit of God is around the name of Jesus Christ. When this little cell is in true harmony, there is no limit to the divine authority and power available to it.

In the second stage of growth, the cell group, which is a *group of disciples*, becomes a *church* when its leadership is appointed (Acts 14:21–23). The appointment of elders, or shepherds, qualifies a group of disciples to be recognized as a church.

Philippians 1:1 gives us a picture of

a church that has completed the third phase of development. There are elders, deacons, and believers. The leadership has been completed by the addition of deacons.

There is one further stage of development; the completion of the ministries. I Corinthians 12:28 gives us a picture of a local church in which all the spiritual ministries are functioning: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers (notice the preeminence of the ministry of the word over the other ministries — this is because of the final authority which is in the word), after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments (I prefer 'steerings') and diverse kinds of tongues." We will not try to analyze the nature of these ministries, but this is a picture of the completed church with the ministries functioning within it.

## CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The leadership of the church functions in two areas: spiritual and ma-



terial. The spiritual leaders, commonly called "elders", have a dual function — to rule and to teach. A great deal of confusion has arisen concerning this office because it is designated by three different names in the original Greek, and these are in turn translated by five different English words in the King James Version of the New Testament. The Greek words for elder, overseer and shepherd, are translated as elder, overseer, bishop, shepherd and pastor.

Some ask, "Why three names for one office?" Quite simply, the *task* is that of an overseer, the *qualification* is that of an elder, and the *ministry* is that of a shepherd. It is, however, only one office, and not two or three separate ones as the church has often represented it.

In the material realm, the task of the deacons is simple — to look after the material needs of the congregation. See Acts 6:2–4.

The qualifications for elders are listed mainly in I Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 2:5–9; and those for deacons are found in Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8–13.

## THE LOCAL CHURCH IS THE SUPREME COURT

It is often supposed that the final authority in church matters is vested in some special group, functioning outside, or above, the local church. This is incorrect. The final authority is vested in the local church itself, functioning under the direction of its God-given leaders. The New Testament clearly establishes the local church as the final court of appeal in all questions of doctrine, ethics, and morality. This makes it of paramount importance to understand the correct operation of the local church, since only in this way can full scriptural authority be exercised by God's people here on earth.

## I — FOR DISPUTES BETWEEN BELIEVERS

In Matthew 18:15–17 Jesus indicates that the local church is the final court of appeal in all disputes be-

tween believers:

(15) *"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."*

(16) *"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."*

(17) *"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and publican."*

Jesus says first of all, "If you have a dispute with another believer, go to him *alone*." In my experience, few Christians ever follow this procedure. If they have a dispute with another believer, they usually go to every other individual in the congregation trying to find people to take sides with them; but they never get around to confronting the individual involved. This is a source of tremendous grief and division in the body of Christ, and it is against the clear command of scripture. If you have a dispute, go to your brother *alone*, and go to him *first*.

If you go to him and he refuses to hear you, then you have scriptural right and obligation to take one or two more to be witnesses and mediators in your discussion.

If he still fails to listen, the only course left is to bring the matter before the local church. This is the *Supreme Court*, and its decision is final. Failure to listen to the decision of the local church means that the individual involved loses his right to be treated as a believer. He is to be outside the fellowship of believers until he repents, returns and submits.

In line with the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 18, Paul says in I Corinthians 6:1, "Dare any of you having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?" If two believers have a dispute, it is wrong to take it to a secular court of law. It is to be settled before the church. Some say it is wrong for a believer to go to law. Paul does not say that. He says it is wrong for a believer

to take a *believer* to law; he says nothing about going to law with an unbeliever. All disputes between believers are to be settled by the church.

It is frightening to me that God has vested such authority in the local church; and at the same time most local congregations are in no condition to exercise this authority.

## II — FOR QUESTIONS OF DOCTRINE

The second area in which the local church has final authority is the matter of doctrine. We find an incident that illustrates this in the fifteenth chapter of Acts. By way of background, Paul and Barnabas had seen scores of Gentiles won to Christ and baptized. Yet they had not required these non-Jewish converts to keep the Law of Moses or receive circumcision, which was the "initiation rite" of the Jewish faith.

When word got out that this was being done, many Jewish Christians in Jerusalem said, "This is all wrong. If these people are going to fellowship with us they must be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses." This caused no small dispute. The future of Gentile Christianity was at stake.

In order to settle the matter, Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem and initially met with the leaders of the Jerusalem church to discuss the matter. When this group reached agreement, they placed their recommendation before the entire church, who finally ratified it.

Picture this scene! There were at least 20,000 Jewish believers in Jerusalem at this time, probably twice that number. This was no small committee meeting — it was a major assembly! I cannot help but marvel at the grace of God that several thousand Jewish believers could come together on a decision as vital as this one and come away in unanimity. Let us read the outcome in Acts 15:22: "Then it pleased the apostles and elders, *with the whole church* (the leadership did not act independently, it was backed up by the entire church) to send



chosen men of their own company to Antioch."

These chosen men were to carry the decision of the Jerusalem church by way of letter. We pick up part of the letter in verse 25:

*"It seemed good to us, being assembled with one accord (please note that) to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,*

*(26) "Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*(27) "We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall tell you the same things by mouth.*

*(28) "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay no greater burden than these necessary things. . ."*

Who made the final decision? The Holy Spirit. But He revealed His decision to the entire local church gathered in official assembly. Paul says, "We have the mind of Christ." In matters such as this, no believer on his own can say, "I have the mind of Christ." It is the collective body that has the mind of Christ through the Holy Spirit.

As a result of this council, the Gentile Christians were required to keep only four points in the Law of Moses — verse 29 — "That they abstain from fornication, idolatry, eating of blood, and of things strangled." This is an extremely important event in church history; and because of it, you and I are not required to keep the Law of Moses.

### III — FOR MORAL CONDUCT

The third area of local church jurisdiction lies in the area of moral conduct. Our example is an incident that occurred in the Corinthian church. Paul writes in I Corinthians 1:2 — ". . . to the church of God which is at Corinth. . ." Notice that Paul is writing to the whole church at Corinth — the entire assembly.

Over in chapter 5, we find that one of the problems in this church was extreme immorality — incest. A man was

living with his father's wife. Let us read:

*(1) "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.*

*(2) "And ye are puffed up (with all their spiritual gifts) and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. (There is no place in the fellowship of God's people for such a person.)*

*(3) "For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,*

*(4) "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together (the whole church), with my spirit, with the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

*(5) "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."*

The action to be taken was the responsibility of the *entire* assembly — not a committee or a group of elders. The New Testament requires that immorality in the church not be swept under the rug; it is to be brought into the open and properly dealt with. The Scripture is frank about such matters; it calls a spade a spade, not an agricultural implement.

The guilty person was to be delivered over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh — not his spirit. This was an act of the grace of God in bringing him under judgment at that time in order to spare him eternal judgment.

In the last two verses of this chapter, Paul says that it is not our place to judge unbelievers, God will do that; but it is our responsibility collectively to bring judgment upon the moral conduct of fellow believers. Many Christians know only one scripture about judgment, "Judge not that ye be not judged." But there are many more that speak of the responsibility of the local church, as a whole, to maintain ethical

and moral purity among its members.

### THE VALLEY OF DECISION

There are two alternatives for the development of the local church, and I must add that they are mutually exclusive.

The present generally accepted pattern is many local churches in a given area, each with *one* leader or pastor. God's pattern, on the other hand, is *one* local church, with *many* leaders. Man has simply taken God's order and reversed it. The New Testament pattern is unity of the church within a given area, and plurality of leadership. Man has set up a plurality of churches within an area, each under a single leader. An exact reversal of God's pattern!

The prophet Joel gives a picture of the sequence of events that will bring the present age to its close. There are three phases: Desolation (Chapter 1); Restoration (Chapter 2); Judgment (Chapter 3). The scene of judgment is pictured in Joel 3:14: "multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision. . ." All who enter "the valley of decision" are obliged to make a decision. The issue is simple, it is to say "Yes" or "No" to God. There is no third alternative, and no way out of the valley until the decision has been made.

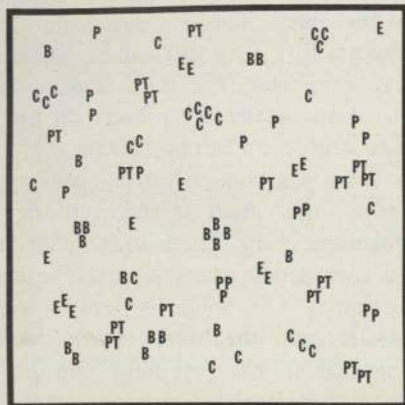
God is now bringing the whole professing church of Christ into this valley of decision. The church must decide: Will it continue on its own way, setting its own standards and following its own plans? Or will it repent, and submit to the pattern of God clearly revealed in Scripture? We cannot go both ways. The time for religious exercises is over. Now is the time for reality and action.

### GOD'S VIEW VS. MAN'S VIEW

I would like to illustrate how these two perspectives of the local church look in practice. First, we want to see the church as it exists in the local situation today. Below is an illustration of the church in a local area — the



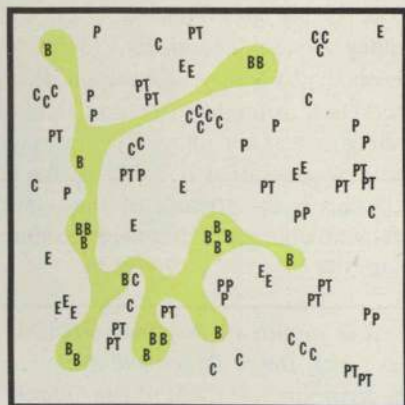
size of the area is not important for present purposes. This is merely a representative section. The different letters represent persons of different denominational affiliations, scattered at random throughout a local area. The denomination is the binding factor, so we must relate the various persons together into a "church" on the basis of denomination.



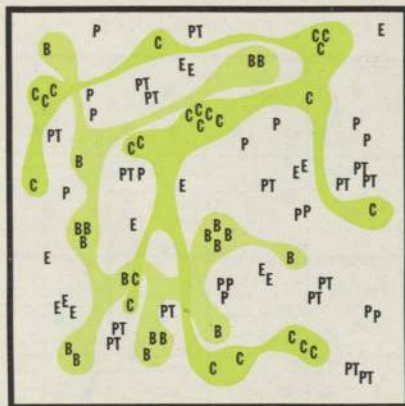
By way of explanation, B = Baptist, C = Catholic, E = Episcopalian, P = Presbyterian, Pt = Pentecostal. Of course, these are only a few of the many different denominations that are found in most areas.

Two letters side by side represent husband and wife. For example BC represents a Baptist married to a Catholic; PtP represents a Pentecostal married to a Presbyterian.

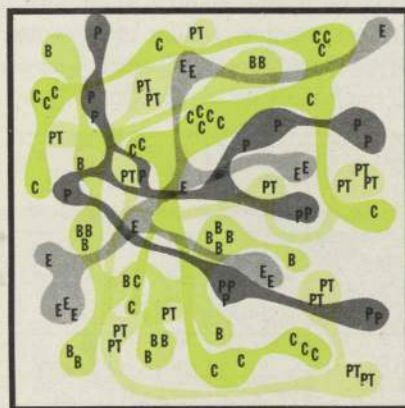
In order to depict "the Baptist Church" in the area, we must draw a line that *includes* all the B's, but *excludes* all the other letters. In the case of BC, the wife will be "out". Diagram No. 2 depicts "the Baptist Church" in the area.



In order to depict "the Catholic Church", we must in like manner draw a line that includes all the C's, but excludes all the other letters. Diagram No. 3 depicts both "the Baptist Church" and "the Catholic Church" in the area.



In order to depict "the Episcopal Church", "the Presbyterian Church" and "the Pentecostal Church" in the area, we must draw similar lines around the E's and P's and the Pt's. Passing over the intermediate stages, Diagram No. 4 shows man's view of the total "church" in the area. Put in simple language, it is a "mess".

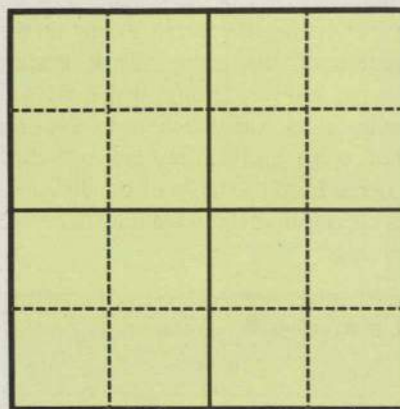


GOD'S PATTERN

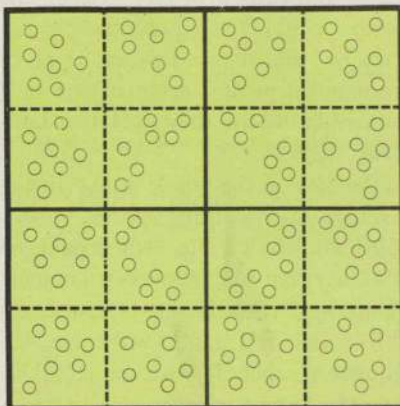
"Brother Prince," you ask, "what other alternative is there?" I would like to suggest what I feel is a reasonable alternative. Please, let me emphasize that this is an *elementary and idealistic pattern*. I do not suggest that it will ever operate in this particular way — but I am not after details, I am seeking principles and patterns which

may be adapted to different situations as the need arises.

I imagine a city divided into four main areas, and each of these areas divided into four sub-divisions, as indicated by the dotted lines.



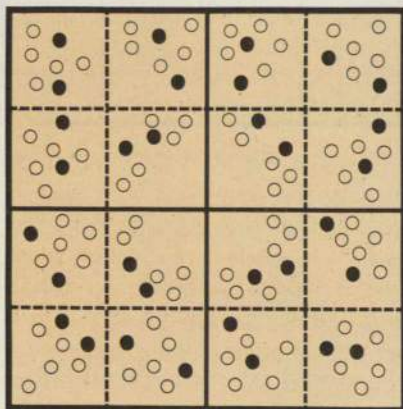
Now the Spirit of God moves on this city and people are born again in every area of the city. These are represented by circles — each circle is one believer. House groups begin to develop and in each sub-division we have one or two homes in which these cell groups meet (Matthew 18:20). These are groups of "disciples" — no leadership has come forth as yet. They are simply prayer and study groups of believers committed to each other all over a city.



Out of these groups the Holy Spirit will begin to bring forth leadership. It never takes very long in any group. There are some who will mature more rapidly and, accepting a greater measure of responsibility, will emerge as leaders. They do not appoint themselves, they are recognized as the Holy Spirit sets them in places of leadership.



Brother Bob's wife is stricken with illness in the middle of the night and he phones Brother Dick almost automatically to come and pray for her, indicating that the group is beginning to treat Dick as an elder. Dick displays other qualities of leadership, and so comes to be recognized as one of the leaders of the group. Thus leaders emerge in every group, which we will indicate by the black dots. Notice, they come up from the group — they emerge from the ranks of the disciples. In every sub-division we now have two leaders.

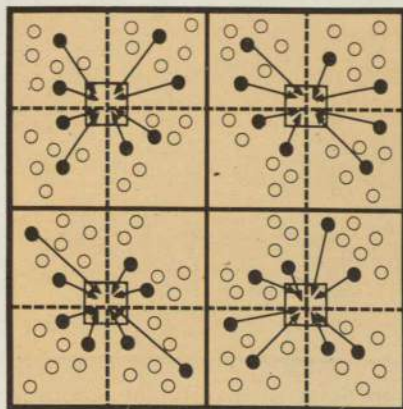


Now, in every area of the city we have numerous groups meeting on, for instance, Tuesday nights. May I suggest that it is good to have all the prayer meetings in a city held on the same night. This prevents "group hopping" and requires people to make a commitment and become part of a fellowship where they feel the Lord wants them.

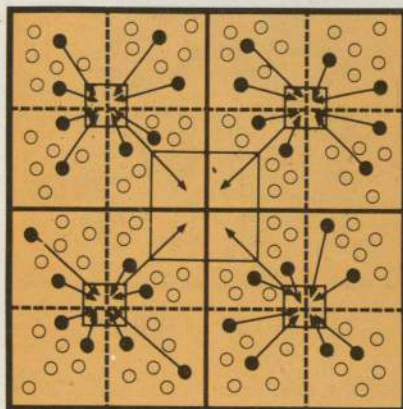
The key to the whole thing fitting together and working comes at this point. Are the various leaders going to join together and fellowship amongst themselves? This is the critical question. If the local leaders will come into fellowship regularly with one another, then the barrier to fellowship between the believers in the entire area is removed.

Let us suppose that the leaders in each area of the city come together once a week for fellowship. They level with each other; they are open and honest. They share their own personal problems and those of their flocks. They pray for each other's needs.

They exchange revelations and check out with their fellow leaders what they are doing in their separate groups. I need not say again that this is highly idealized; it is just an idea of how it can actually be done. Every Monday night the leaders come together and their personal needs are met; then on Tuesday night they are able to meet the needs of their own flocks.



Now we come to one step further. In the center of the city we draw a larger square. Let us say that on the first Monday of each month all the leaders of the entire city come together. They share what God is doing; they are in fellowship; they acknowledge one another's authority. There is now no barrier to the entire city fellowshiping together because all the leaders are in fellowship.



Logically, there is no limit to the number of similar patterns that can be added on all sides of this one, or to the number of house groups that there may be in any given sub-division. Only practical considerations of transportation and accommodation limit the size

of the total area that can be covered.

## UNITY DEPENDS UPON LEADERS

When all the leaders in a city fellowship regularly together, they can speak with one voice. They are open to the leading of the Holy Spirit for the entire city. Together they can invite mobile ministries, such as an evangelist, or a teacher, if they feel a need in their area. Also — which is no less important — they can collectively *refuse* ministries. The local leaders are the door of the sheep-fold. An outsider must enter through them.

When a group of leaders speak together, then there is true authority. But when every little man is a pope in his own group, there is no collective authority. As long as leaders are islands unto themselves, wolves will continue to roam at large and prey upon the flock. A leader standing alone without fellowship or covering, will almost inevitably be picked off by the enemy.

Here is a pivotal point on which God's dealings in this hour are turning. *Is the leadership of the church going to come together?* One day as I was meditating on this, the Lord asked me, "With whom did I have more trouble — the city of Nineveh or the prophet Jonah?" I replied, "Lord, when you got Jonah straightened out, you had no problems with Nineveh." It is exactly the same today. Once the leadership is in order, God will have little problem with the rest of the body of Christ.

The church needs a divine revolution, and it is on the way. If there are those in my generation who are not willing to respond, if they prefer to perish in the Valley of Decision, then there is a younger generation that is willing to hear and obey. The motto of the new generation is, "Tell it like it is." This is the attitude of the openness and willingness that God requires today. ▼

*Next month in his final article in this series, Derek Prince will deal with the Reproductive Cycle of the Church.*



# BIBLE

# STUDY

by Howard Coffey



## THE POETIC BOOKS

### JOB

**SYNOPSIS** — The Book of Job could be called, "The Book of the Mystery of the Suffering of the Righteous" — that dilemma that has plagued men from time immemorial. So great is this problem that God has taken special notice of it, and has given an answer through this intriguing story of Job. It gives us an insight into the scenes behind the scene. Satan, the accuser, in the presence of God, accusing God and man; together with the account of the sufferings of Job, his patience, the accusations of his friends, his decline and revelation of his own imperfections, his repentance and restoration.

The cause for suffering in the case of Job was to set forth a defense of God's character: (1) *Against the accusations of Satan*: "Then the Lord asked Satan, 'Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth — a good man who fears God and will have nothing to do with evil.' 'Why shouldn't he, when you pay him so well?' Satan scoffed." (Job 1:8-9, Living Bible). In other words: "You are not capable of drawing anyone unto yourself without paying him off."

So God replied to Satan that he was permitted to try Job, taking away his possessions and even afflicting his body; and that he would find Job would still love and serve Him, for He was capable of attracting men unto Himself for Who He was, and not for what He gave them. God could be assured of the outcome, not only because of the eternal force of His love, but also because of His foreknowledge of what that love had already accomplished in Job; He knew the inner workings and longings of Job's heart; He knew that Job loved Him and would not forsake Him.

(2) *Against the weakness and consequent accusatory attitude of man*:

NEW WINE

God called Job perfect, for He saw him as he would become; and, also, the perfect attitude of his heart that would bring him into that place God had designed for him. This does not mean that God did not see his faults and weaknesses that would even cause him to complain to the extent of accusing God. In fact, He not only saw them, but set out to correct them through a revelation of Himself.

The beginning of the trial did not affect Job. It is said of Him: "In all of this, Job did not sin or revile God . . . So in all of this Job said nothing wrong." (Job 1:22; 2:10, LB). However, as the pressures increased through the suffering in body, and the accusations came thick and fast from his friends, the hidden flaws were brought to light. His descent to brokenness was made in three steps: (1) He wished he had never been born (rejection and discouragement); (2) He justified himself (self-righteousness); (3) He accused God (rebellion — this was the intrinsic core God was jabbing at): "I cry to you, O God, but you don't answer me. I stand before you and you don't bother to look. You have been cruel toward me, and persecute me with great power and effect. You throw me into the whirlwind and dissolve me in the storm. And I know that your purpose for me is death. I expected my fall to be broken, just as one who falls stretches out his hand or cries for help in his calamity" (Job 30:20-24, LB).

When God confronted Job, He asked him the following questions: (1) "Why are you using your ignorance to deny my providence?" (2) "Do you still want to argue with the Almighty? Or will you yield? Do you — God's critic — have the answers?" (3) "Are you going to discredit my justice and condemn me, so that you can say you are right?" (Job 38:1; 40:2, 3; 40:8, LB).

In these questions, though by in-

ference, God brings to light the *seven sins of Job*: He ignored God's purposes; He denied God's providence; He argued against God's providence; He criticized God's providence; He discredited God's justice; He condemned God; He justified himself. These are all characteristic of the rebellious carnal nature of man, summed up in the question — ". . . will you yield?"

Suffering bore its good fruit. God said to Job's friends: "I am angry with you . . . for you have not been right in what you said about me, as my servant Job was." (Job 42:7, LB).

What was it Job had said that caused God to finally approve him thus? In Job 42:5 (LB) we read Job's words: "I had heard about you before, but now I have seen you, and I loathe myself and repent in dust and ashes." *Repentance was the key*. Suffering had brought a revelation of God, a revelation of himself, and brokenness and repentance.

To this God replied by sending his friends to him for prayer: ". . . my servant Job will pray for you, and I will accept his prayer on your behalf" . . . and the Lord accepted Job's prayer on their behalf. Then, when Job prayed for his friends, the Lord restored his wealth and happiness! In fact, the Lord gave him twice as much as before!" (Job 42:8-10, LB).

Through God's faithfully purifying Job, he did not deny Him in the end; therefore God's character was justified. Satan was proven to be a liar. And from the fiery trial Job "came forth as gold".

Job was an historical personage who lived the literal events set forth in the book. He is attested to by both Old and New Testaments (Ezekiel 14:14,16-20; James 5:11). It would seem that he lived during the Patriarchal Period between the flood and the era of Abraham. Job 22:15-17 probably refers to the flood. He does not mention Israel nor the Law, and



he refers to the most ancient kind of idolatry, the worship of the stars (Job 31:26-28). Calculations seem to indicate that he must have lived to about 200 or 220 years of age. If the span of life is any indication, it would seem that he, perhaps, lived prior to Abraham, who lived 175 years, and who "died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years" (Genesis 28:8).

In answer to objections as to the place of Job in the Canon of Scripture, it must be said there is no contradiction to any other part of Scripture in its teachings. On the contrary, divine truth is presented regarding: the existence and perfection of God; the creation of all things by Him; His universal Lordship; the fall and guilt of Satan and his angels, and, also, of mankind; God's forgiveness on the basis of sacrifice and repentance (Job 33:27-30; 42:6,8); the immorality of the soul and the resurrection of the body (Job 14:7-15; 19:25-27); in addition to the profound truths already mentioned that have to do with God's eternal purposes and designs that duly answer man's inquiry as to the suffering of the righteous.

Some attribute the authorship of the Book of Job to Job himself; others attribute it to Moses while he was in Midian.

## OUTLINE

*Introduction* — 1:1-2:10

A) Job approved by God, 1:1,8.

B) Job afflicted by Satan, 1:2-2:8.

C) Job forsaken by his wife, 2:9,10.

(1) Job confronted by his three friends, 2:11-31:40.

(2) Job confronted by Elihu, 32:1-37:24.

(3) Job confronted by God, 38:1-41:34.

*Conclusion:*

A) Job repents, 42:1-6.

B) Job healed, 42:7-10.

C) Job restored, 42:11-17.

## PSALMS

**SYNOPSIS** — The Hebrew name for this book is *Tehillim* — "praises".

Many of the works within the book bore the epigraph *Mizmor*, poem or song, which was translated in the Septuagint Version *Psalms*, that is, songs to be sung or lyric poems. From the Greek word for stringed instrument, *Psalterion*, comes the expression *Psalter*, the metaphorical title often used for the book.

Josephus implies that the sole writer of the Psalms was David, and that they were written by him during the latter part of his reign, a period of peace and prosperity. However, it is most likely that there were other contributors. There are Psalms attributed to Asaph, the director of David's choir, Moses and Solomon, and others.

The Psalms, though called "Praises", are varied, and may be classified by subject matter or theme:

(1) **HYMNS OF PRAISE:** These are songs directed to Jehovah God as Creator, Deliverer, Redeemer, and Protector, expressing His highest attributes. Examples: 8, 18, 20, 29, 30, 33, 46, 47, 90, 139.

(2) **TEMPLE HYMNS:** These were songs of consecration of the Temple; there can also be included here the "Songs of Pilgrimage", or the "Songs of Degrees", sung by those who went up to the Temple to worship. 120-134.

(3) **RELIGIOUS AND MORAL SONGS:** These are of a general character; they are subjective, expressing the emotions and sentiments of the author, as to repentance, confidence and trust. Examples: 6, 16, 25, 42, 43, 51, 62, 125, 130, 143.

(4) **ELEGIACAL PSALMS:** These are elegies or songs of complaint and lamentation, in which a cry for help is expressed. Examples: 38,60.

(5) **MESSIANIC PSALMS:** These are the songs that contain prophecies relating to the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Examples: 2, 8, 22, 45, 69, 72, 97, 110, 118.

(6) **HISTORIC PSALMS:** These are the songs which relate events of Israel's history, used in form of exhortation. Examples: 78, 105, 106, 114.

(7) **INPRECATORY PSALMS:** In

these God's justice is presented together with the judgment that He shall bring to pass upon the rebellious and unrepentant. Examples: 35, 52, 58, 59, 109, 137.

There are many Psalms that have bits and smatterings of some of each of the foregoing classifications. For example: Besides those Psalms that are generally called Messianic, there are others that show some of His character and works. David, as a forefather and type of Jesus Christ the Messiah, his Son and Lord, foreshadowed, in both his life and his songs, characteristics and events that related to Him. (Compare Psalms 40:6-10 and Hebrews 10:5-9; Psalms 40:15 and Mark 15:29,30). An outstanding example of reference to Jesus Christ our Lord, without insistence that these be called Messianic Psalms necessarily, is the Triology, Psalms 22,23 and 24:

(1) Psalm 22: Christ presented as Savior (Included in the list of Messianic Psalms; compare Matthew 27:45,46; Hebrews 12:2).

(2) Psalm 23: Christ presented as Shepherd. (Compare John 10:11-16; Hebrews 13:20; I Peter 5:4).

(3) Psalm 24: Christ presented as King. (Compare John 19:19-22; I Timothy 6:15; Revelation 19:11-16).

## OUTLINE

**INTRODUCTION** — The PSALMS in the Hebrew Bible are divided into five books, each of which ends with a doxology, an expression of praise.

BOOK I — 1-41, Doxology: 41:13.

BOOK II — 42-72, Doxology: 72:18-20.

BOOK III — 73-89, Doxology: 89:52.

BOOK IV — 90-106, Doxology: 106:48.

BOOK V — 107-150, Doxology: 150.

## CONCLUSION

Fill your heart with praises and in the Spirit exalt His Holy Name! "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord!" 🕊



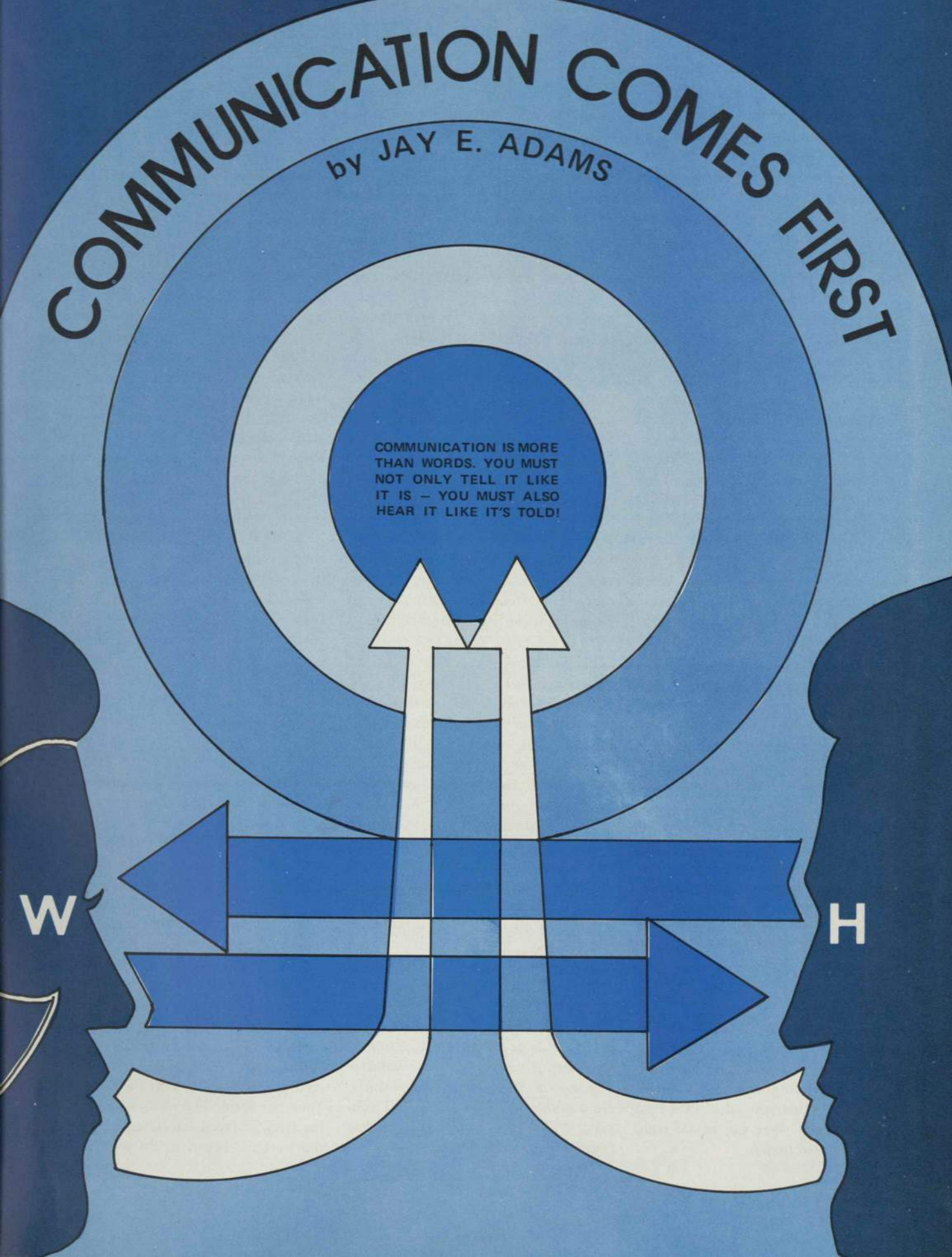
# COMMUNICATION COMES FIRST

by JAY E. ADAMS

COMMUNICATION IS MORE  
THAN WORDS. YOU MUST  
NOT ONLY TELL IT LIKE  
IT IS — YOU MUST ALSO  
HEAR IT LIKE IT'S TOLD!

W

H





In the second half of the Book of Ephesians Paul discussed various relationships between Christians. Beginning at 5:22, he addresses wives and then (25 ff.) their husbands. He describes the fundamental roles and relationships between them. In the next chapter he speaks first to children (v. 1) and then to their parents (v. 4). Finally, he discusses the working or business relationship as he exhorts both slaves (v.5) and their masters (v.6). So it is plain that in chapters 5-6 Paul writes about the basic human relationships that Christians, as well as other men, must sustain.

First of all, Paul stresses the need for vital Christian communication as the basic skill needed to establish and maintain sound relationships. A sound husband and wife relationship is impossible apart from good communication. A healthy relationship between parents and children depends on such communication. Businessmen and employees first must learn to communicate in order to get along. That is why the very first subject discussed after exhortations to restore the image of God in one's daily walk is communication.

Paul's analysis of communication begins at verse 25. He urges: "Therefore, laying aside falsehoods, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members one of another." Christians cannot walk together unless they do so on the basis of honesty, openness, and truth. As members who function together in the same body, we must have truth in order to work in concert. This is Paul's basic point. He elaborates upon this question of Christian communication throughout the rest of chapter 4. We must turn our attention, therefore, to that portion of Ephesians (vv. 25-32).

Communication is fundamental to a Christ centered home because it is the means by which a husband-wife relationship and parent-child relationship is established, grows, and is maintained. Apart from the open channels of truthful communication that Paul discusses here, there can be no truly Christ centered home.

## TELLING THE TRUTH

A missionary and his wife returned from the foreign field several years ago. She had become severely depressed. When she came home, she went for a year to a psychiatrist, who talked separately first to her and then to her husband; but nothing ever happened in that experience. We began to talk, and as we did she turned to her husband and said: "My problem is that when I married you I didn't love you. I haven't loved you since. I've never loved you, but I've never told anyone the truth before." That missionary and his wife are now back on the field, and they love each other. She loves him and he loves her better, too. She had a problem, but nothing could be done to help because she "never told anyone the truth" about it. She did not know how to deal with the problem; and no one else, including her husband, knew what to do. Once communication took place, the problem could be solved. Until then her life had been a miserable, hypocritical farce. The work on the field suffered, she suffered, and her husband suffered. The whole body suffered for want of honest communication. Year after year she suffered; in lonely self-pity she told herself, "If only I had married someone else! I could be out from under his roof, and life would be so different." But pitying herself led gradually to a downward spiral that eventually brought on such a deep depression that her husband found it necessary to curtail his work and at length to return to the United States. The logjam could be freed *only when she finally told the truth*. Once she did, she received help. And the marriage was rebuilt on Biblical love.

Phillip came alone to counseling. He had refused to talk to the secretary; he declined when she asked him to

answer the preliminary questions on the intake data sheet. He sat for the first half of the session without saying a word. Finally his counselor said to him, "There are people who would like to have this time who really want help. Shall I schedule this hour for someone else? We must not waste it if you don't mean business with God. Now are you ready to tell the story?" In response he finally opened up and said, "I've been through shock treatments, mental institutions; I've been everywhere. I've been depressed, discouraged, and defeated; all kinds of things have been said to be wrong with me. But there is only one thing wrong with me, and I know it. I've had something down in my craw for twenty-two years that I've never spoken verbally before. When I got married it wasn't because I wanted to. My mother insisted on it; that is the only reason I married Margaret. I have secretly regretted every day since." Every time he went into the bathroom and saw the cap off the toothpaste tube or the tube squashed in the middle instead of rolled up from the bottom, he became infuriated. He would fly into a rage or become deeply depressed. Instead of thinking, "There's a toothpaste tube squashed in the middle," or "There's a toothpaste tube with the cap off," he said to himself, "That woman has been at it again!" His resentment toward her and his marriage came to the surface in dozens of such small issues. He had never told her or any other human being. The counselor explained how there could be neither happiness nor harmony in a home apart from truth. After spending considerable time explaining how to tell her the truth, mentioning some possible pitfalls and how to avoid them, the counselor sent him home to talk to his wife. "Don't come back until you tell her," he said. She returned with him. They both earnestly dealt with the problem, and after three weeks were dismissed to continue counseling with their pastor. They left acting like newlyweds. Once the truth surfaced and (after the initial shock) they began to do what God

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wanted them to do about it, the whole situation changed. Their problem was that they had been living a lie. Their marriage was based on falsehood. Only speaking the truth could help.

You may be like Phillip. You too may be holding things inside. You know if you are. You know that there are unresolved matters that break down communication between you and other members of your family. How can you expect to have a singing marriage when lies cut off communication? You can't. Yet your marriage can sing if you mean business with God. In spite of everything it *can*. You must begin with this passage which says: "Lay aside falsehood, speak the truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another."

## HOW TO HANDLE ANGER

Where should you begin? Start by admitting the truth to God and to the others involved. Then look at what the next verse has to say: "Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun set on your anger." This is a quotation from Psalm 4, which is a nighttime psalm. This psalm was intended to remind one that before the close of the day his heart should be flushed clean of all the bitterness and anger of the day. Nothing unforgiven, unsettled, uncovered should be carried over to the next day. Anger itself is not sinful; every emotion is from God and is good when Biblically appropriate. But, "Do not let the sun go down on your anger," Paul says.

Anger may be handled wrongly in either one of two ways: blowing up and clamming up. On the one hand, as Proverbs continually stresses, anger may be turned into sin by blowing up (see 25:28; 29:11,22, Berkeley). Losing one's temper is sin. It would surprise some to know how many Christian families suffer from the evil effects of such anger. In some psychological circles ventilation is thought to be therapeutic; so in group therapy sessions, in Encounter sessions, in T groups, and so forth, venting of anger

and hostility is encouraged. Counselees are being told to get it out of their systems. They are urged, "Do the here and now thing — whatever you feel like doing; just get it out. If there is something inside just yell it out, scream at the next person across the table, systematically unlace him, take his stuffings out and throw them around the room. Hit the pillow if it represents your mother — hit it until the feathers fly!" In all such advice, there seems to be concern only for the feelings of one person; certainly not for the feelings of the one on whom the wrath is poured. The other person doesn't count; at all cost ultimately (to him) the counselee is the one who has to feel better.

Well, there is nothing Christian about such a procedure and attitude. Listen to Romans 15:1-2: "We should not please ourselves, but each should please his neighbor for his welfare" (cf Ephesians 4:31-32). Proverbs is very clear about the fact that a man who so vents his wrath is like a city without a wall around it. That is the first extreme to which one can go. Ventilation is plainly un-Christian.

The other (opposite) extreme is the one mentioned in Ephesians 4. Here Paul condemns those who harbor resentment (in the craw for twenty-two years, or two years, or two days).

Some counselees not only let the sun set on their wrath, they let many moons go down. Sue and Wilbur came for counseling. She sat there with arms defiantly folded, he nervously shifting from side to side. You could see before either said a word what it was going to be like. She opened the conversation from her side of the desk with these words: "I'm here because my physician sent me. He said that there is nothing physically wrong with me. He said I'm getting an ulcer, but not from any physical cause." All the while her husband sat cowering. Sue reached down into what looked like a shopping bag, (it was her purse), and she pulled out a manuscript that was at least one inch thick, on 8½" x 11" sized paper, single-spaced, typewritten

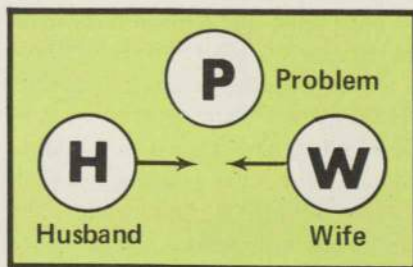
on both sides. She slapped it down on the counselor's desk and said, "There is why I'm getting an ulcer." He said, "Is that a fact?" and took a look at it. He couldn't have read it in a month, even if he cared to. But as he spot-checked through it, flipping along, he saw immediately what it was. It turned out to be a thirteen year record of wrongs that her husband had done to her. They were all listed and catalogued. Now what would you have said to her?

The counselor looked at Sue and said, "It's been a long while since I have met anyone as resentful as you." She was a little taken back and Wilbur sat up a little straighter. The counselor continued, "This is not only a record of what your husband has done to you (incidentally, subsequent sessions showed that it was a very accurate record), it is also a record of what you have done about it. This is a record of your sin against him, your sin against God, and your sin against your own body. This record of bitterness shows that your attitude has been the opposite of I Corinthians 13, where Scripture says that love never keeps records." Only then was there a basis to deal with problems. Wilbur certainly had to change the wrong things that he was doing to his wife, but on the other hand she had to change the wrong way that she had learned to respond to the wrong things that he was doing.

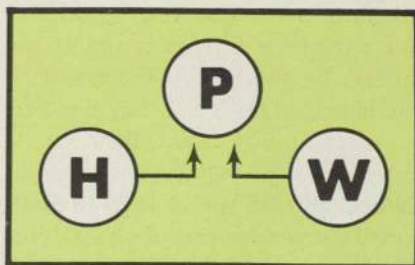
In most cases of marital disruption, counselors find that it is a matter of sorting out each partner's responsibilities before God. Husbands point at their wives; wives point at their husbands. Usually there is plenty to point to on both sides. But pointing at another hardly solves any problems. To solve problems, husbands and wives should begin by pointing to themselves. Scripture says that one must take the log out of his own eye before he is able to see clearly enough to remove the splinter from another's eye (Matthew 7:3-5). That is exactly where so many go wrong. They attack one another like this:

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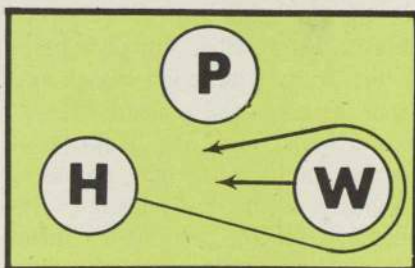




There is no communication when two people are squared off like that against one another. How do we get communication started? Two people communicate when they walk and work unitedly in the same direction.



But how do we move the arrows from the former position to the latter? How do you turn the attack from persons toward problems? How may a quarreling husband and wife begin to expend their energy on solving problems God's way instead of continuing along the destructive course of tearing each other and their marriage apart? *That* is the question. The answer is: through the right kind of communication. That is the only answer. They must begin by pointing both of the arrows in the same direction. Either partner may do this by pointing first at himself:



The other arrow is already pointing at you, so all that you have to do is get lined up alongside: look at your log first. For the first time in a long while the two arrows will be pointing in the same direction. It is truly amazing how much instant agreement you can get

from a person who previously may have disagreed with you concerning nearly everything else under the sun, when you begin to say, "I have wronged *you*." Then specify and sincerely ask forgiveness. That is where reconciliation often must begin. You never ought to begin by taking the lid off the other fellow's trash can until you have cleaned out your own garbage can first. That is where communication begins.

### DON'T WAIT

Perhaps your problem is with your parents; maybe it is between you and your child. Is it your husband, your wife, a friend, a member of the church, or a neighbor with whom you have some kind of bad relationship? Listen! You must begin to communicate with that person. If you can't talk to him about anything else, there is always one thing that you can talk about: the wrongs that you have done to him. If you can't think of any wrongs (and I certainly don't want you to cook up any artificial ones), let me suggest one that probably exists. It is simply the one that we have been discussing. If you have been putting off going to another person to try to achieve reconciliation with him, you have wronged him.

Few things are sapping the strength of the church of Jesus Christ more than the unreconciled state of so many believers. So many have matters deeply imbedded in their craws, like iron wedges forced between themselves and other Christians. There is no excuse for this sad condition, for the Bible does not allow for loose ends. God wants no loose ends. Let us now look at the means He has provided for dealing definitively with such difficulties.

In Matthew 5:23-24, Jesus says that if you are offering your gift at the altar but you remember that you have done something to another person, drop that gift and go "first" (reconciliation takes precedence over worship) and be reconciled to your brother. Then come back and finish

your offering. That is how important it is to get matters settled right away. You must do so right now; do not put it off. Do not "let the sun go down on your wrath" (Ephesians 4:26).

Husbands and wives frequently complain that they are having trouble with sex, but the trouble usually is not with sex. Counselors do not find many difficulties that have to do with sex alone. The real difficulties in bed at night come from the fact that all kinds of problems have been carried into bed from the day, problems that should have been settled before going to bed. That is where the difficulties come from; the problems get in the way. Husbands and wives must learn, literally, not to let the sun go down on their anger.

In Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus also says something about the other side of the picture. If someone has wronged *you*, then you must go and see him. You must seek to win your brother and rebuild the relationship so that the two of you can walk together and talk together as Christians. You see, Jesus won't allow the unreconciled condition to continue among believers. In Matthew 5, if another considers you to have wronged him, Jesus says that *you* must go. In Matthew 18, He says that if the other person has done something wrong to you, *you* must go. There is never a time when you can sit and wait for your brother to come to you. Jesus doesn't allow for that. He gives no opportunity for that. It is always your obligation to go. In the ideal situation (the way Jesus set it up), if two believers have flared up over something and they both go away in a huff, when they cool down they both ought to meet each other on the way to seek reconciliation. That is the way it ought to be.

Jesus once said, when talking about the future, "Sufficient unto the day is the trouble thereof" (Matthew 6:34). You can't worry about tomorrow. Human shoulders are only broad enough to carry one day's load at a time. If that is true about the future, it is also true about the past. You cannot drag around a lifetime full of unsolved



problems and expect to negotiate well in a family. You won't walk straightly. You won't serve very well. You won't do the work of the Lord very effectively if you are carrying such a load. Sufficient unto the day is the trouble thereof. Take up your cross *daily*, said the Lord Jesus; that is, crucify daily the self that is within you. Scripture places a premium on living on a daily basis with God; it makes daily dealing with our brothers an urgent matter.

You don't dare let things go. If there is somebody with whom you are having difficult times or who is having difficult times with you, before this day is over straighten out the matter before God. Write that letter, make that phone call, or if possible pay that visit. In your family sit down and settle matters before nightfall.

### A NEW COMMUNICATION

Once you get this relationship re-established, once you have confessed your sins to each other (and to God, of course) and you have asked forgiveness from one another, you have not finished; you have only begun. You have only cleared away the rubble of the past. Now that affairs at last are on a daily basis, you must never allow them to pile up again. That means a new pattern in your relationship must be formed. Paul continues, "Let no unwholesome word proceed (literally, pour out) from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification (or building up) according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those that hear" (Ephesians 4:29). This shows what communication must be like from now on. It is the pattern for forming the new relationship.

What does Paul mean? He is not talking about foul language when he speaks of unwholesome words. Of course his statement would include that, but it is much broader. The term refers to any word that tears down another. Our young people have an expression that closely approximates the idea: they speak about cutting each other up. It is very sad to hear such

talk. Christians should never talk about using words — God's great gift for communication — to cut up another. That is what Paul condemns: systematically dicing and cubing another by words.

It is not only youth, but also husbands and wives who use words for such purposes. Sometimes they become quite adept in such misuse of language. Recently a couple attempted to use a counseling session to vent their spleen on each other. Not one word came out of either mouth without a surly, sarcastic remark about the other. Their counselor had to say to them, "That is doubtless one reason why you are here. You may do that sort of thing at home, but I will not allow you to do it here. If you continue, I will close the session." Counselors must not permit such a violation of God's will. Scripture says that the same fountain may not produce both bitter and sweet water. Christians must not take the name of the Lord Jesus Christ upon their lips and at the same time use His gift of words to be nasty to other people.

In the Ephesian passage, Paul describes a better usage for words. Instead of pouring our energies into speech that cuts others down, our words ought to build them up. When words are directed toward the *problem* rather than toward the *person*, they will build him up by helping him solve his problems. Instead of attacking persons with words, a Christian must direct all of his energy, including his words, toward the problem, attacking it God's way.

Look at Paul's thought again: "No unwholesome word" is permissible. Instead, Christian speech involves words that "build up" the other person and that are "according to the problem that has arisen." That means that one's words must be aimed at (or concerned with) the problem that has arisen. Attack problems, not persons, with words.

### NEW ATTITUDES

A husband and wife came for coun-

seling with such a communication problem. Jan's and Chris's speech was so nasty that unless their attitudes changed, their problems could never be resolved. You see, there are usually at least two problems involved in any human conflict. There is the *issue* over which the parties differ, and there is also the problem of their *attitudes* toward one another. When Chris originally phoned for an appointment he said, "I've got a problem; it is very delicate." He explained the issue that had arisen between him and his wife. This did involve a very difficult matter — one that was quite hard to settle. Chris and Jan came. There they sat. During the first few minutes she cut down everything he said and he cut down everything she said. The counselor quickly brought this to a halt. He said, "Look, you have been having problems because of this issue; but the issue itself isn't your major problem. You'll never settle that issue or any other until you first settle the prior problem of your attitudes toward one another. Although both of you profess to be Christians, your present attitudes are certainly un-Christian. You are going to make this decision yourselves, and in doing so you are going to learn *how* to talk to one another as well. I want you to know also that ordinarily we don't work with anybody longer than twelve weeks. Most leave in eight weeks. I expect you to solve this problem in that time. We will start on your attitudes first."

At the time Chris and Jan were not living together. He had left her. "First," the counselor explained, "you will have to go back together again. You can't put two people together by keeping them apart. I Corinthians 7 says that you must be reconciled. To begin with, here are the things you are going to do this week . . ." They agreed and went to work. They sought and received forgiveness from God and one another. Then they really began to work on the problem of communication. The issue itself was shelved for the time being. When other matters were cleared up and their attitudes were squared away and their marriage



really began to take shape again, then they were turned loose on the issue. Chris and Jan went to work on the problem *together*. In previous weeks they had discovered how to use words to solve other problems God's way. They really worked hard on the main issue, and at the eleventh session they announced, "We have solved our problem." And they had! The reason why they couldn't do so before was because they did not know how to communicate as Christians should. They were using words to cut each other up; they were expending their energy by tearing each other apart. When in repentance they began to attack problems with words instead of attacking each other, they discovered the joy of researching issues Biblically. Then the whole picture changed. When communication was straightened out, it was possible for the issue to be solved.

### YOU CAN DO IT!

Christians can learn to live without bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, and malice. They must work on maintaining an attitude of good will toward one another. In the soil of such attitudes solutions to life's problems grow thick and tall. Such attitudes can be sustained only by being "kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another *just as* God in Christ has forgiven." What a wonderful Saviour we have. It wasn't lovely people for whose sake He died; it was for ungodly people, for His enemies. It was for law breakers that He suffered. He loved us, says Paul, in spite of how unlovely we were. *Just as* He loved us, Paul insists, we are to love one another.

Love at first is not feeling. Love first can be expressed as giving. That is at the core of love. If one gives, the feeling of love will follow. To love we must give of ourselves, of our time, of our substance, or whatever it takes to show love; for giving is fundamental to the Biblical idea of love. Listen to this: "God so loved the world that he *gave* his only begotten Son" (John 3:16). "He loved me and *gave* himself for

me" (Galatians 2:20). "If your enemy hungers, *give* him something to eat; if your enemy thirsts, *give* him something to drink" (Romans 12:20). It is always *giving* with which love begins. And that spirit of giving brings a new atmosphere into any home. It is an atmosphere that creates a climate in which communication may grow and thrive. Think about all of this; perhaps there is some action that you need to take. Possibly you need to confess

your sin to God and then to somebody else with whom you need to re-establish communication leading to a new relationship in Christ. ♣

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## CHRISTIAN LIVING IN THE HOME



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*"For a husband is in charge of his wife in the same way Christ is in charge of his body the church. (He gave his very life to take care of it and be its Savior!) So you wives must willingly obey your husbands in everything, just as the church obeys Christ.*

*"And you husbands, show the same kind of love to your wives as Christ showed to the church when he died for her, to make her holy and clean, washed by baptism and God's Word, so that he could give her to himself as a glorious church without a single spot or wrinkle or any other blemish, being holy and without a single fault."*

*Ephesians 5:23-27, Living Bible*



forum

# Water Baptism

**"What actually happens to a person when he is water baptized? Is it just a symbolic initiation into the Christian faith, or does a work of grace really occur? What part does it play in the new birth?"**

**Basham** — I believe many, if not most Christians, underestimate the significance of water baptism. Even though my own denomination, the Christian Church, is an immersionist church, its members hold widely varying views about water baptism — all the way from a belief that it is merely a symbolic ritual, to a belief that it is essential for salvation.

According to scripture, water baptism is directly linked to the experience of conversion; and so far as we can tell, everyone who accepted

Christ was baptized; and everyone who accepts Christ *should* be baptized. (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 2:37–38; Mark 16:15–16)

Water baptism is an outward seal, an outward act of obedience in which the one who has accepted Christ by faith fulfills or completes or ratifies the inward righteousness Christ has imputed to him. Scripturally, one's conversion is to be considered in some way lacking or incomplete until it is confirmed or ratified through the obedient step of baptism.

**McAfee** — The scripture clearly states that baptism is part of God's economy for the Christian. So the first thing that happens in water baptism is that the imperative of the Lord is obeyed. Obedience always has immeasurable benefits from our Father.

Jesus appointed material things — water, bread and wine — to represent spiritual truth and to seal His truth to

**PANELIST:**  
Don Basham  
Bob Mumford  
Richard McAfee





*Asking questions this month is Joseph L. Garlington, pastor of Maranatha Gospel Tabernacle in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Joseph and his wife, Barbara, are in active ministry together in teaching conferences, seminars and denominational churches, as well as Full Gospel Business men Fellowship meetings.*

believers. Therefore, in baptism, the seal of Christ is placed upon the person. It is like the personal brand or stamp of God on the individual.

Cleansing and washing away one's sin is included in the act of baptism. Also, we are brought into the household of faith to be joined with other believers in the visible church. The last few verses of Ephesians Chapter 2 present a magnificent reminder of the unity and oneness that is the hope of all who are to become the dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

As for the last part of this question, I am not willing to say that the new birth begins at the precise moment of being touched by water. I see that moment occurring when one says, "Yes, Lord, I believe . . ." The scripture that has meant most to me is the tenth chapter of Romans, particularly verses 8-13.

**Mumford** — When faced with an "either/or" question, I have found the answer is usually, "Yes!" By this I mean dissecting a biblical experience into pieces which are too fine often leaves us dead and frustrated. Yes, it is symbol — and yes, a work of grace really does occur.

The symbol is a grave and by this burial one is taken out of the old life and placed into the new. If this problem is understood, there is a genuine work of grace in the heart of the believer. In a very real way, his past is left in the grave and a whole new way of life is opened to him.

The new birth is a spiritual experience of faith in Jesus as Saviour.

One then is baptized in water *because* of that initial experience. This is true, as well, regarding the baptism in the Holy Spirit; one receives the Promise of the Father *because* of his initial faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**"In what way is the old man affected by water baptism? If it is left in the water, what does it do to the concept of the 'new man' and 'old man' in the Christian?"**

**McAfee** — Among all the world's rituals of washing and cleansing, Christian baptism is unique because one enters into the death and resurrection of the Messiah Himself. For me, the New Testament meaning is best stated when Paul says, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

However, the "old man" is not left in the water any more than the physical man is left there. As you and I did not drown physically in the act of baptism, the old nature did not either. You see, Paul relentlessly admonished the first Christians who were baptized to "put off the old" and "put on the new". As we remember that the New Testament letters are written to the saints, we come to the realization that the old man is not magically left

behind in the watery grave. I wish it did happen that way, don't you?

What does happen, I believe, is that the dominion of the old nature is broken. Then the self-willed, self-seeking, self-glorifying old Adam no longer has claim but must relinquish control to the new man, Jesus. Then you and I are free to do what the New Testament asks, "put off" . . . "put on" (Colossians 3); "rejoice in the Lord always" (Philippians 4); "be subject to one another . . ." (Ephesians 5); ". . . regard no one from the human point of view" (II Corinthians 5); "walk in the Spirit . . ." (Galatians 5); "to become obedient from the heart" (Romans 6). Our freedom is even extended to the possibility of having our life reflect the love of God portrayed in I Corinthians 13.

The reality of our inclusion in Jesus' crucifixion has happened because He has completed what is necessary to free the baptized Christian to walk in the newness of life. The New Testament admonished believers to know that the freedom is therefore a freedom to choose life because the old man of death has had his control cut away by Jesus.

**Basham** — Scripturally, the "old man" was crucified with Christ (Romans 6:6) and was buried in water baptism (Romans 6:4). Coming up out of the waters of baptism we are "new creatures" walking in the "newness of life".

But the doctrinal reality of this experience must also become experiential reality. Only to the degree



*Guest panelist for this month is Richard McAfee, pastor of the Greystone Presbyterian Church in Oklahoma City. A native Oklahoman and graduate of Princeton Theological seminary, Richard is also in demand as a Bible teacher and conference leader.*



that we *apply* the truth of our baptism to our daily life, will we keep the old man “dead and buried”. This is the point of Paul’s teaching; that since the old man *is* dead and buried, we are to reckon or consider ourselves dead to sin.

Nothing in our Christian experience can be considered “automatic”. The lasting spiritual effects of our outward obedience in baptism become apparent only as we walk out its ramifications in faith. It is the faith of the believer in the “burial of the old man” that makes it real. As some one accurately remarked, “If faith is not truly present, the baptismal candidate simply enters the water a dry sinner and comes out a wet one.”

**Mumford** — When attempting to convey an abstract and spiritual principle by means of a concrete example, we need be careful in communicating it.

The old man and the new man are Pauline terms (see Romans 6 and Colossians 3 for best examples). Two things need to be clear. (1) There is the legal, or forensic, burial of the old man in the grave of water baptism (Romans 6:6). (2) There comes the experiential work and walk of faith when the legal experience becomes daily knowledge (Romans 6:11). This reduces to something like this: It happened (old man buried) but to keep him there you need two things; new man put on (displacing the old), plus a daily recognition that all which was old was indeed buried. We are not asking for mental gymnastics but daily *recognition*.

**“What is the difference between the baptism of John and New Testament baptism? What is the baptism for the remission of sins in Acts 2:38 and 22:16?”**

**Mumford** — There has always been uncertainty and discussion about the relationship of John’s baptism to what is called “Christian Baptism”. The reason for this, I believe, is due to the transitional period of Old Testament to New Testament fulness.

John’s baptism had definite spiritual significance as can be seen by Matthew 3:6 and other verses. It was not an empty ceremony, but a definite call to repentance to a people who supposedly knew what repentance was. The coming of the Christ and the new demands of the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of God both required a preparing of the way.

All would recognize that John’s baptism was preparatory and pointed toward another and more significant baptism which Jesus was to bring (Compare Matthew 3:11 with Acts 1:5).

The distinction between the two baptisms is most evident in Acts 18:24–28. See also Acts 19:1–6. Briefly, it could be summarized like this: John’s baptism was more than the Jewish law and teaching had experienced *up until that time*. It was, however, less than the full Kingdom implication of the baptism instituted by Christ in Matthew 28:19.

The second half of your question —

remission of sin — is more problematical than the first. What is usually taught, by first impression, is that water baptism is indeed the cleansing agent. We are dealing with *time, sequence* and *semantics*, so let us not be confused.

**TIME:** Time of water baptism is *following* the initial act of repentance which has to do with the forgiveness and cleansing of the soul by the Blood of Jesus Christ the Lamb of God (Jn. 1:29).

**SEQUENCE:** Sequence of water baptism is *next to* and *in conjunction with* the act of repentance. This establishes the efficacy of water as a type of ceremonial cleansing (Hebrews 10:22) as well as the burial of the old nature (Romans 6:4–6). On the one occasion that Holy Spirit baptism *preceded* the water, Peter commanded that they be baptized (Acts 10:46–48).

**SEMANTICS:** Semantics has to do with the science of meaning of words. A word (often due to its translation from Greek) *appears* to mean one thing, while in actuality it could mean another. This confuses and frightens some, but nonetheless it is true. The words used in Acts 2:38 from Nestle’s Greek Inter-linear read, “. . . with a view to the forgiveness of your sins.”

The verse in Acts 22:16 needs to be related to I Corinthians 6:11 in order to see time and sequence. *Step One* — Repentance, the Blood of the Lamb (Hebrews 9:22 same as Acts 2:28). *Because* we have been forgiven, we take time and sequence — *Step Two* — enter the waters of baptism, which act seals and demonstrates that we have been forgiven and have, by choice, left



the old way of life and have entered the new. The baptism in the Holy Spirit, — *Step Three* — which is the next time-sequence experience, is the approval of God or the promise of the Father, which the Apostle Paul calls the “seal” of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13–14).

**“If an individual was baptized in infancy or before he became a Christian, should he be baptized again now that he has come to Christ?”**

**McAfee** — This is a good question and I have been waiting for a chance to respond to it. Yet I can only answer from where I am in my spiritual walk at the present time.

First of all, only God looks upon the heart of man. He alone knows our intention, motive, emotional state and spiritual understanding when we take any step of faith, whether it is baptism or something else. Only a few who read these comments in *NEW WINE* are not baptized, and I would venture to say that, also only a few understand baptism now the same way we did when we experienced it. Yet our baptism was no less effective because of any lack of revelation and spiritual insight. This is true because God’s grace has preceded each of us in our Christian life.

For me the most meaningful passage in all the Bible on water baptism is Romans 6:1–13. I would like to explain my answer by underlining the three key words that Watchman Nee helps us with in *The Normal Christian Life*. *Know* (verse 6), *reckon* (verse 11), and *yield* (verse 13). To enter more completely into our baptism, whenever it occurred, we must know that our old self was nailed to the cross. Then reckon and consider it personal as happening “to me”. Then yield by presenting ourselves to God, new creatures available for His righteousness. The presenting is extremely important. It seems to me that our baptism depends much more upon the

fulness of the Father than our perception, faithfulness or age. The question is simply: does one have a valid baptism so that he can know, reckon and yield? In my opinion each believer must answer that for himself. The decision should be made with much care so that the experience of baptism does not become repetitious whenever there is an inclination, or even increasing awareness, through more complete revelation.

Therefore, I would lean away from encouraging others to be baptized again. Although, I agree that some would feel led of the Lord to do so.

**Basham** — I suggest the wording of the question itself will prove troublesome for some, since those who hold with infant baptism would claim that in some way the infant “came to Christ” through that ritual.

But those of us who adhere to the position of believer baptism *only*, have the conviction that sound biblical exegesis on the matter of Christian baptism insists that believer baptism by immersion is the only scriptural way.

However, we must also remember that for baptism to be baptism at all it must be done in regard to the response of faith on the part of the one baptized; otherwise, it is a meaningless ritual. So if one *believes* he has received Christian baptism in water (by whatever form and at whatever time) then, for him, he *is* baptized. To force him to conform to some additional ritual would be of no spiritual value whatever.

But, if after careful study of scripture, a believer becomes convinced that his infant ritual of sprinkling is in error or inadequate, and that he has not been baptized, then he may be baptized as a full believer. But this is not *re*-baptism; it is simply baptism. As long as one believes he has been baptized, for *him*, as Dick has said, that is baptism. He cannot be *re*-baptized. He would only perform some additional ritual which has no spiritual significance for him. But, if he comes to the conclusion that he has *never*

been baptized — since whatever ritual he received was performed before he was a believer — then, as a believer, he is a candidate for baptism.

It is interesting to note how literally tens of thousands of believers from Roman Catholic, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and other “infant baptism” traditions, on receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit, soon become convinced that they should be immersed as adult believers. This seems to be a definite work of the Spirit Himself, and not the result of any human pressure. Therefore, it would seem clear that the Holy Spirit is insisting that the scriptural method of believer baptism by immersion be given a much higher priority than many “non-immersionist” traditions have allowed it. Interestingly, *no* Christian tradition, no matter how deeply steeped in “infant baptism”, denies the complete scriptural validity of believer baptism by immersion.

Noting the differences in the two theological positions, an old friend, Rufus Moseley, once drily observed, “Those churches practicing the scriptural form of believer baptism by immersion are never required to justify their position by saying, ‘our way is just as good’.”

**Mumford** — My conviction, and that without arrogance, is that baptism by its very nature requires faith, decision, and consequent action — all of which an infant is incapable.

In seminary, I was quite thoroughly acquainted with the position of infant baptism. Much of the teaching is predicated on Mark 10:14, which cannot include water baptism, except by inference; the covenant of circumcision, which included infants and a position which says, “and your house” (Acts 16:31), would by inference include the smallest of infants.

Quite apart from our conviction on whether we should or should not be baptized again, is a sovereign move of the Holy Spirit — both in this nation and abroad regarding the seriousness and necessity of New Testament baptism.

No one desires to make a contro-





**BOB MUMFORD** — Baptism by its very nature requires faith, decision, and consequent action.

**DON BASHAM** — I believe many, if not most Christians, underestimate the significance of water baptism.



versy, or collect baptismal candidates as an Indian warrior collects scalps. However, if there is any conviction of the Holy Spirit in your life, do not be easily dissuaded by argument of convenience, tradition or problem. Search out what the *scriptures* say and seek to obey them in a spirit of meekness and faithfulness.

**"Does water baptism play the same part in the life of a New Testament believer that circumcision did in the life of the Old Testament believer?" (Colossians 2:11-12)**

**Mumford** — The teaching of Jesus in Matthew 5:17-20 would lead us to believe that every Old Testament type must needs find its New Testament fulfillment. In some sense, this is a "double-witness". See this in regard to Passover (I Corinthians 5:7); Sabbath (Hebrews 4:9); and Temple (Ephesians 2:21).

Circumcision, then, must find its New Testament fulfillment. This is what Paul is teaching in Colossians 2:11-12. Circumcision was, obviously, the way of covenant relationship to the Jewish Church. Baptism in water is the New Testament counterpart signifying entrance into the New Testament community.

This creates a legalistic and exclusive attitude for some, creating the problem of the "haves" and the "have nots". Let us remember the Lord leaves exceptions to every rule so that we do *not* use the scripture to coerce, but rather to persuade.

In Acts 10, to which we have referred, the believers were already *repentant* and had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. True, Peter *commanded* that they should be baptized in water (Acts 10:48). In some instances, those who have sovereignly received a visitation of the Holy Spirit have not had an understanding of time and sequence. Reasoning this: "If I have received the Holy Spirit, and it is greater than that of water, I really do not need to revert to a lesser and controversial baptism of water by immersion."

To these we simply say, the Lord Jesus Christ is my master *and* yours. He is able to bring us light, life and understanding. My plea, however, is that if and when you are moved upon by truth, the conviction of the Spirit regarding water baptism comes, do not cast it off lightly (Hebrews 2:1).

**McAfee** — Yes, Bob, I recall having heard you say that the Old Testament is a physical picture of New Testament spiritual truth. That certainly seems to apply in claiming the covenant promise of the Father.

In Genesis 17, God made a covenant

with Abraham and his descendents indicating the sign of that covenant be circumcision. He then laid on him the heavy words that all who are without circumcision shall be separated from His presence.

In Colossians, the sign of the covenant of God is the spiritual circumcision of the heart. No longer is the physical cutting away recognized as the sign, but rather the circumcision not made with hands. Thus the cutting away of the primacy of the flesh in baptism.

The New Testament tells us that we are all one in Christ Jesus and heirs of God's promise to be the everlasting and ever-loving Father of those who bear the sign of His agreement. Circumcision was the result of the flint and knife before, and now experienced in the cutting edge of the Holy Spirit as He touches our innermost being in baptism.

We would do well to remember all the people of Old Testament Israel, who although circumcised, perished in the wilderness and failed to enter the promised land. What follows the New Testament sign seems equally important, also. Let us be encouraged to continue to do all things in the name of Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

**Basham** — Yes, I agree that Paul certainly makes it plain that there is a relationship between circumcision in the Old Testament and water baptism in the New Testament — in that both represent putting off the flesh, or separation from uncleanness. In that sense, Old Testament circumcision of the flesh is a *type* of baptism.

But, personally, I do not feel that one who has received Christian baptism by faith, once he sees the comparison of the baptism to circumcision, should feel any necessity to be baptized on the basis of that additional insight. ☛

*Next month's topic for discussion: "Civic Responsibility". Guest Panelist will be George C. Bradford, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.*



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